



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF PALOS VERDES PENINSULA**

NOVEMBER 2012

Voter

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CALENDAR 2012

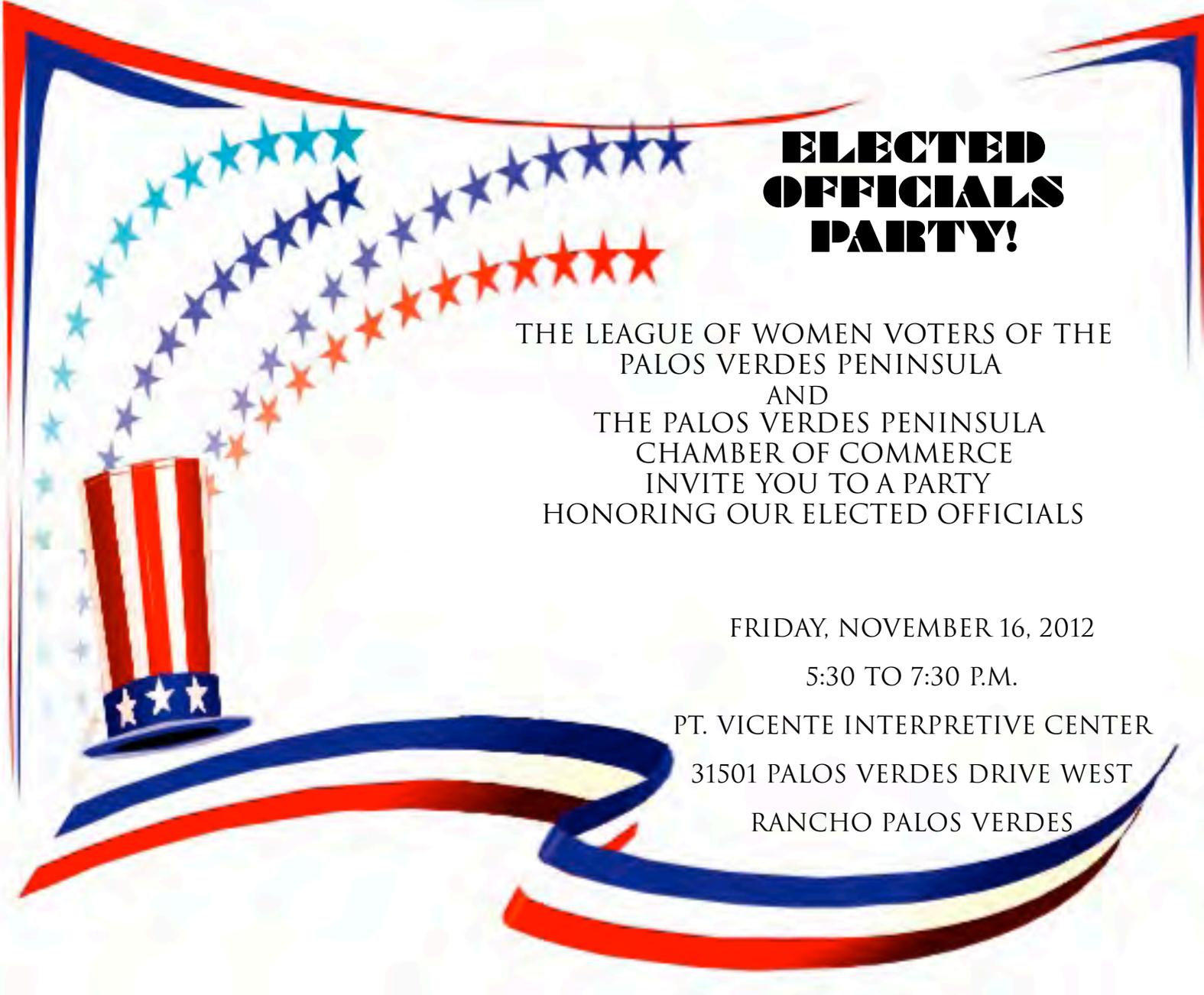
Tues, Nov 13	7:00 pm	Community Cinema: Solar Mamas , San Pedro (page 3)
Wed, Nov 14	12 noon	Board Meeting , Joan Hogan's home
Fri, Nov 16	5:30 - 7:30 pm	Elected Officials Party , Pt. Vicente Interpretive Center (page 2)
Thur, Nov 29	12 noon	Initiative & Referendum Study Committee , Nell Mirel's home
Sat, Dec 1	10:00 - 12 noon	"Coffee & Conversation" Can Your Vote be Bought? Malaga Cove Library (page 3)
Wed, Dec 12	12 noon	Board Meeting , holiday potluck, Joan Hogan's home

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Pictured from left to right: Linda Herman, Arlene Block, Katy Watkins, with Sherry May, AAUW Chair, Nancy Mahr LWV President, and Jo-Anne Waller. These women from League of Women Voters, Palos Verdes Peninsula/San Pedro and from the American Association of University Women Palos Verdes Peninsula Branch gave non-partisan presentations about the statewide ballot measures at Peninsula Center Library.



**ELECTED
OFFICIALS
PARTY!**

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE
PALOS VERDES PENINSULA
AND
THE PALOS VERDES PENINSULA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
INVITE YOU TO A PARTY
HONORING OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2012

5:30 TO 7:30 P.M.

PT. VICENTE INTERPRETIVE CENTER
31501 PALOS VERDES DRIVE WEST
RANCHO PALOS VERDES

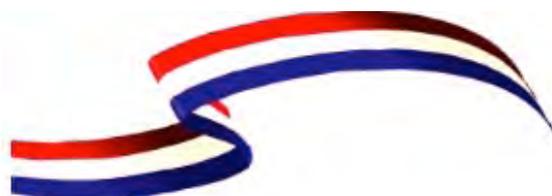
ELECTED OFFICIALS WILL BE INTRODUCED AT 6:30 P.M.

\$15 PER PERSON

MAKE CHECK OUT TO LWVPVP

MAIL TO NANCY MAHR,

28028 ELLA RD., RPV 90275



PLEASE JOIN THE LEAGUE FOR COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Saturday, December 1
From 10:00 AM until Noon
At the Malaga Cove Library meeting room

The topic to be discussed: Can Your Vote Be Bought?

During this November election, BILLIONS were spent to support or defeat candidates and ballot measures. Thanks to the Citizens United decision, outside pacs are free to spend unlimited amounts on contests of their choice. The question to be discussed, now that the results are in, is whether these huge expenditures actually determined outcomes.

Although after all is said and done, for the most part we ended about where we began two years ago, with Barack Obama in the White House, the House in the hands of the Republican Party and the Senate in the Democratic Party's, did the outpouring of funds affect the vote? How did the California voters respond to all the ads pro and con the Propositions?

We look forward to a lively discussion. Friends as well as members are more than welcome.

Nell Mirels

Community Cinema: Solar Mamas

This award-winning documentary highlights a program that recruits semi-literate and illiterate women to attend the Barefoot College in India, where, in six months, they are trained to become solar engineers ready to return to their villages and bring light. Event is free of charge.

Tuesday, November 13, 2012 7:00 p.m.

The Grand Annex

434 West 6th Street, San Pedro

NATURAL RESOURCES: JACK SULLIVAN, LWVLAC

Water continues to be an important policy issue with new developments and new problems. What follows is a brief overview of some current topics.

SUPPLY: Early predictions were that 2012-13 would be an *El Nino* year which would mean much rainfall for California. Now the National Weather Service (NWS) is offering a more cautious estimate suggesting that it might be a mild *El Nino*. The current prediction is ambiguous. The NWS has indicated that it could be another dry year or it could be a wet year. Only time will tell. It is important to keep in mind that the last manual survey of the Sierra snowpack for 2012 indicated that the snowpack was 40% of normal. In 2011, it was 190% of normal.

HUMAN RIGHT TO WATER: This fall, Governor Brown signed AB 685 which states that every human being has a right to clean and affordable water. The bill directs State entities to employ this directive as they develop regulations and fund activities. Thus, AB 685 could be a useful tool in evaluating state activities in the area of water resources.

RAINWATER CAPTURE: Governor Brown also signed AB 1750 which would allow Californians to capture rainwater off their roofs for non-potable purposes without obtaining a permit from the State Water Resources Control Board. The bill provides safeguards to protect public health and potable water systems and also authorizes landscape contractors to install such capture systems. This bill should allow for the development of another source of fresh water supply for people of California.

BAY DELTA: The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta continues to present the state with a myriad of problems. The Delta is in decline and endangered species are threatened by the extraction of water from the Delta. The levees are fragile, and about 22 million people get at least some of their water from Delta. Governor Brown has proposed a solution in the form of two tunnels which would take water from the Sacramento River above the Delta and bring it underground to south of the Delta for export to the San Joaquin Valley and Southern California. This project will not necessarily provide additional water down south but it will make the current supply more reliable. The current plan calls for recipients of the water (farming interests and ratepayers in So Cal) to bear the costs of the system in increased water rates. By taking water from above the Delta, the State avoids a double problem: the threat of the Endangered Species Act halting the flow of water and the danger if fragile levees collapse and allow the intrusion of seawater into California's water supply. Some fear, however, that such a diversion of water will change the ecology of the Delta forever and have a negative effect on Delta farming and other activities.

More information about California water and the Delta can be obtained from <http://www.aquafornia.com/>.



ELECTION MESSAGES FROM LWV PRESIDENTS

A TIME FOR PRIDE:

The League can stand proud in its work this election season – locally and nationally.

Locally, we provided information on the ballot propositions with the publication of *Pros&Cons*. We also distributed the Easy Voter Guide from LWVC. We gave 23 ballot measure pro/con presentations. SmartVoter helped people read about the ballot measures and candidates, and helped many find their polling location. And we spoke out in our advocacy role on those propositions on which LWVC had taken a position. Our Congressional candidate forum enabled the public to meet the candidates face-to-face.

Several state Leagues along with LWVUS have been working on serious voting issues in their states. See message below for some detail on the work of those Leagues.

California is moving forward to improve voter access. Online voter registration for this election was very successful. We can also be proud that LWV is supporting these efforts.

As we move into the new year, there are challenges ahead. Coming up in the Supreme Court: a challenge to the constitutionality of the Voting Rights Act, which was reauthorized two years ago; Arizona's requirement of proof of citizenship to register to vote; affirmative action in Texas for university admissions. Congress must now address the Bush tax cuts due to expire January 1, and the pending sequester (cuts) due to begin in January and totalling \$1.2 trillion over eight years, with cuts totaling \$109 billion in 2013.

California's budget will continue to be challenging – even with the passage of Proposition 30, which avoided the drastic trigger cuts in the budget.

Locally, we continue to monitor land-use issues. The Land Use Committee will be meeting and welcomes new members.

I hope to see many of you at our annual Elected Officials Party on November 16, and again at Coffee with the League discussing Campaign Finance on December 1.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving with family and friends, *Nancy*

THANK YOU FOR MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK:

Another election season has come to an end and I want to give a huge round of applause to all of you – voters, League Leaders, poll workers, poll watchers! Many of you worked tirelessly registering voters at thousands of registration events, providing millions of voters with the information they needed through printed materials, online resources, hosting candidate debates and forums, encouraging your friends and family to vote, and engaging your community in other ways.

Voters around the country recognized the importance of this election. And on Election Day you took control and waited in long lines to have your votes recorded and to have a say on the issues that are most important to you. And with narrow margins in many races, we see just how valuable our one vote can be.

[These hurdles have no place in America's great democracy.](#) The League of Women Voters has fought back against these cynical attempts to disenfranchise voters and manipulate elections. And on Tuesday after a long education campaign, we celebrated a significant win in Minnesota – for the first time – voters themselves spoke loud and clear stating that photo voter ID has no place in America's great democracy. We have been a leading force at the state and national levels in this fight for years and we won't let up now!

We worked to protect voting rights all across the nation. We knocked down several restrictive voter photo ID laws; went to court to block vote photo ID laws passed by four states; overturned Arizona's proof-of-citizenship law; and defeated attempts by some anti-democratic lawmakers in Florida to obstruct voter registration drives and early voting. We also registered tens of thousands of new voters in all 50 states and increased our efforts to expand the electorate and engage new voters through our work at naturalization ceremonies, community colleges, and our groundbreaking high school voter registration project. In addition, the League served more than 2 million voters this year alone through VOTE411.org, (& SmartVoter in California) providing voters with the answers to the questions they ask most often.

We must build on these wins; we have so much more to do to get our democracy back on track and back in the hands of the people. Free, fair and accessible elections are the cornerstone of our democracy, and we will continue to fight for these principles in the coming months and years.

Thank you again for being active participants in our government and helping to make democracy work.

Sincerely, Elisabeth MacNamara LWVUS

INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM REFORM: SOME PRELIMINARY IDEAS

Our Initiative and Referendum Committee met and is now sifting through a number of ideas to reform California's initiative and referendum process. The Committee is examining initiative and referendum history, process, and key concerns to uncover policy matters and solutions that will stand the test of time in shaping the League's positions in the future.

While the breadth of the reform areas is extensive, it helps to categorize them. Although this is not an exhaustive list of the ideas being studied by the Committee, below are some of the more popular themes:

- Level the Imbalance of Money Interests – Money spent by proponents *before* an initiative qualifies for the ballot can determine which measures even get qualified. To level the playing field, adjust qualification requirements to allow fewer signatures or allow more time to qualify an initiative. Some say the State could benefit by just charging proponents \$2 million to put an item on the ballot, rather than gathering signatures!
- Increase Transparency – The shocking sums of money spent to influence voters *after* a measure has qualified for the ballot, while unlimited according to the Courts, can at least become more easily viewable. Improve accountability, disclosure and easy public access to information about the money that flows into and through the initiative process.
- Engage Citizens – Use *deliberative polling* or a citizen's initiative review panel to engage and educate the voting public about ballot measures. In Oregon panels of 24 voters, randomly-selected and demographically-balance, come together from across the state to evaluate a ballot measure. The panels hear directly from campaigns for and against each measure and call upon policy experts during the multi-day public review. At the conclusion, each panel then drafts a *Citizens' Statement* highlighting the most important findings about the measure. Separate panels are used for each ballot measure.
- Think Slowly; Work Together - Restructure the *people's initiative process* to include steps which are normally part of the *legislative process* – adding analysis, deliberation, debate, negotiation and the ability to amend the measure before balloting. Revisit the *indirect* initiative process by providing incentives of a lower signature threshold or longer circulation time to initiative proponents for *indirect* initiatives submitted to the Legislature.
- Use Technology – Allow *e-gathering of signatures* on the Internet, or other utilization of technology to streamline or enhance the qualification process such as allow a “no” to indicate an item should not appear on the ballot (balanced with concerns of disenfranchisement of non-computer literate or citizens without access to computers.)

We invite all who are interested to join us. Call Julie or Linda.

Co-Chairs

Julie Craemer and Linda Herman

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lhermanpg@cox.net (310-541-3373)

REPORT FROM SCHOOL DISTRICT - MEASURING PROGRESS

PVPUSD has once again had a very successful 2011-12 school year.

HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL RANKING Both high schools have been recognized by U.S. News and World Report as among the best high schools in the country. Palos Verdes High School was number 53 in California (# 266 nationally).

STUDENT AWARDS AND RECOGNITION Our schools and students have received awards and recognition in the areas of scientific research, engineering and robotics, math, spelling, art, music and debate. Three high school students were named Presidential scholars semi-finalists. Palos Verdes High School student, David Wang was one of the 141 high school seniors in America named a 2012 Presidential Scholar, Amanda Wang, a Miraleste Intermediate school student, won first place in a nationwide cartoon contest asking students to demonstrate their knowledge of the First Amendment.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT Thanks to the generous support of the Peninsula Education Foundation (PEF), PTA, community organizations, grants and donations our elementary school students also benefit from: Art at your Fingertips sponsored by the Palos Verdes Art Center, and Elementary Music sponsored by the Peninsula Education Foundation providing funding for thirty weeks of general music instruction.

STATE UPGRADING COMMON CORE STANDARDS Despite the budget meltdown in Sacramento, the State is in the process of transitioning from the California Content Standards that have been in place since 1999 to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). According to current plans, the new curriculum and assessment system will be in place by 2014-15. The CCSS will be more rigorous with a focus on College readiness and workplace preparation. As the PVPUSD transitions to the CCSS in 2014-15, including preparing students for the new assessment system, the District must have plans in place to prepare our teachers and students for these changes. This will include a commitment to high quality, professional development for teachers, principals, and Staff. The Board of education has made preparation for the CCSS a district goal in 2012-13.

UPDATE ON CONSTRUCTION AND MODERNIZATION PROJECTS Thanks to community support for measures R & S (school construction bonds), state matching funds, developer fees, and other resources, the District:

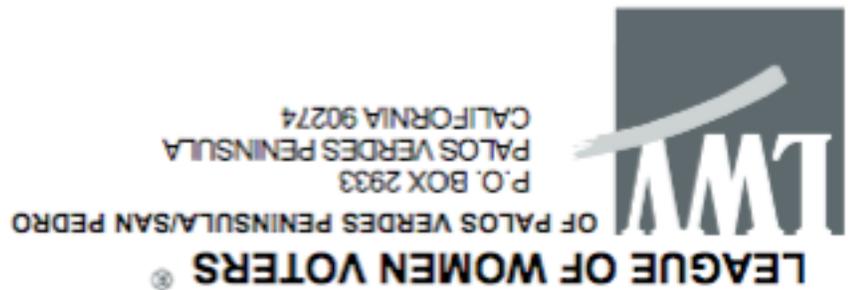
- Has opened a new 12 classroom building at Palos Verdes Peninsula High School
- Will complete a second gym/band room at Palos Verdes Peninsula HS this summer
- Is in the bidding stage for another classroom wing at Palos Verdes High School
- Will replace the pool at Palos Verdes Peninsula High School
- Is completing plumbing and asphalt projects at various schools.

In November, the community once again demonstrated its strong support for local schools by passing Measure M (parcel tax). Measure M provides over \$7 million in annual income that help to alleviate some of the pain from drastic cuts in state funding.

UPDATE ON LOTS C & D IN PALOS VERDES ESTATES On May 8, the PVPUSD Board of Education and the city of Palos Verdes Estates approved a four-party agreement that ends the litigation over the enforceability of the deed restrictions on District-owned property in PVE and reaches agreement on the use of school property in the future. The Homes Association Board of Directors had previously approved the agreement.

This four-party agreement made possible a separate & extraordinarily generous donation to PVPUSD of \$1.5 million from a PVE resident. Although the donation was made independently of the memorandum of understanding, it was contingent upon resolution of the lawsuit. In addition, the Homes' Association received \$400,000 and the City of PVE received \$100,000 from the private donation.

Diana Halderman, PVPUSD Observer



* **LWV/PVP/SP** *

has an excellent, informative website:
www.lwvpvp.org

**thanks to BETTY RIEDMAN
& PALOS VERDES ON THE NET**

for providing & hosting this web site as
a public service to our community

Please visit our website for more information