



# Kern Voter

A PUBLICATION OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF KERN COUNTY MARCH/APRIL, 2017

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## AN EVENING WITH THE KERN LITERACY COUNCIL

Kern Literacy Council (formerly Kern Adult Literacy Council) has been serving the community since 1966. The mission is to empower individuals to improve the quality of their lives through literacy education. Volunteers provide free, one-to-one and small group tutoring in Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language, GED Preparation, and Family Literacy. Its aspiration for the community is to improve the literacy and high school graduation rates of residents and to promote a dual generation approach to learning. Dual generation has KLC tutors teaching parents to improve their skills, with the secondary goal of the parents becoming an active part of their children's educational process, and subsequently improving the children's likelihood of success. In short, the vision is to transform lives through literacy.

### Laura Wolfe, presenter

With a passion for empowering individuals to improve the quality of their lives through education, Laura serves as the Executive Director of Kern Literacy Council, where their vision is to transform lives through literacy. A Wasco native, she earned her Bachelor of Arts in communications from UC Santa Barbara and worked in higher education fundraising for 25 years, including 15 years at CSUB. She joined the Kern Literacy Council in 2015 after three years at United Way of Kern County.

Laura also serves the community as chair of the Vision Committee for the Women's and Girls' Fund of Kern County, and an active member PEO Chapter JT and Temple Beth El. Nationally, she has served on the North American Board of the Union of Reform Judaism and the UCSB Alumni Association Board of Directors.

She and her husband Bill have two grown sons and are waiting semi-patiently for grandchildren.

The March 15<sup>th</sup> general dinner meeting begins at 5:45 p.m. at Hodels, 5917 Knudsen Drive. Reservations are necessary by noon Monday, March 13. Dinner is \$24. Call the League Line, 634-3773, or e-mail Jill Eglund at [jegland@gmail.com](mailto:jegland@gmail.com). Those who wish to attend only the program may do so at no cost and should plan to arrive at 6:15. As always, guests are welcome. -Jill Eglund

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## President's Message

All across America, Leagues on the National, State and local levels have been steadfast, diligent and active in ensuring that the voice of the people and their rights are protected. Through advocacy and education, fellow members are working hard to protect democracy. Although many victories have been won, there is still much work to be done and we need you to join us and participate in the cause. Are you ready to roll up your sleeves and do the education and organizing work to safeguard democracy? Or maybe you're looking for a way to stay up to date on the issues and possibly take online action? If you answered yes to either of the above questions, we WELCOME YOU! Membership with the League of Women Voters is open to men and women, citizens and noncitizens of all ages. By becoming a member at the local, state or national level you will:

- \* have a community to rely on
- \* have the opportunity to influence law makers
- \* foster dialogue on issues you care about
- \* defend civil rights and human rights
- \* ensure ALL votes are counted and ALL voices are heard
- \* preserve our constitution

JOIN US TODAY AND LET'S MAKE DEMOCRACY WORK!

- Monique Hawkins, President

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## WHAT ARE THE ARGUMENTS FOR & AGAINST A COMMUNITY DECLARING ITSELF A SANCTUARY CITY?

Wednesday, 19 April, 2017

**Dr. Nyakundi Michieka, Economics professor, CSUB, presenter**

The April 19<sup>th</sup> general dinner meeting begins at 5:45 p.m. at Hodels, 5917 Knudsen Drive. Reservations are necessary by noon Monday, April 17. Dinner is \$24. Call the League Line, 634-3773, or e-mail Jill Eglund at [jegland@gmail.com](mailto:jegland@gmail.com). Those who wish to attend only the program may do so at no cost and should plan to arrive at 6:15. As always, guests are welcome. -Jill Eglund

## NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

March is set aside as National Women's History Month. Its roots can be traced back to March 8, 1857, when women from New York City factories staged a protest over working conditions. International Women's Day was first observed in 1909; in 1981 Congress established National Women's History Week. Congress expanded the week to a month in 1987. In recognition of National Women's History Month, I think it is only fitting to provide some information about the Women's Suffrage Movement and its leaders.

### DID YOU KNOW:

1. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was the mother of seven children? Susan B. Anthony would baby-sit Stanton's children while Stanton wrote suffrage speeches and petitions that Anthony would deliver?
2. Elizabeth Cady Stanton's daughter Harriot Stanton Blatch, also became an important leader in the suffrage movement?
3. Actress, Katherine Hepburn's mother was a prominent suffrage supporter from Connecticut?
4. That women were the first protest group in US History to picket the White House? Since then the tactic has been used by many groups to protest for rights.
5. That there is a difference between the terms "suffragist" and "suffragette?" In the United States, supporters of woman suffrage preferred and used the term suffragist. In Britain, militant supporters of woman suffrage called themselves suffragettes. When the American press, or those who opposed woman suffrage, called an American woman a suffragette, it was intended to be derogatory.
6. The Nineteenth amendment to the Constitution granting women the vote was passed by only one vote? Tennessee was the 36th state to ratify the Amendment, and it passed the legislature when Henry Burn, a young legislator, changed his vote to "yes" after receiving a letter from his mother telling him "to do the right thing."
7. Suffragist Inez Milholland was the first woman to have a memorial service for her held in the United States Capitol? .- Monique Hawkins

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## LOCAL LEAGUE INTERVIEW WITH SENATOR JEAN FULLER

Below is the report on the meeting with Jean Fuller.

1. Elections are really important, and the senator realizes the value of them. California pays a share of elections through a reimbursement program to the counties. Differences in county wealth cause problems to arise. The League could help by support AB1120, which amends the budget to provide more money for county elections. The senator feels that we need more election security. She is concerned about huge numbers at polling places, and the local election volunteers handling those. Mail in ballots are definitely an option, but the concern is how to ensure that the person mailing in the ballot is the one to whom it was sent. The vetting of mail in ballots is not good. We need to improve the ease of voting, but the senator does not think Motor/Voter is a good idea. We need consistency in voter validation. Right now, there is nothing in the budget regarding voting. (Continued on p. 4)

## LOCAL LEAGUE INTERVIEW WITH SENATOR JEAN FULLER (cont.)

2. The senator fought hard for the CSU and the UC. Thirty-three per cent of the students at these institutions are either foreign or out-of-state students. Those losing places at the major UC sites are guaranteed entrance to UC Merced, which was designed for valley students. This is wrong. If California taxpayers foot the bill for the universities, California students should have priority, and gaining money should not be the issue. Fifty-five per cent of students are being assisted as they are part of underrepresented groups. The senator has worked on a smooth transition between the three levels of higher education in the state. Because of the funding formula and the autonomy of the UC system, the CSU always loses out in the funding fight. By law, Prop. 98, K-12 education gets the biggest part of the state budget, and everyone else has to fight for their share from the remaining funds. Goals and priorities are important to balance the budget.

3. Senator Fuller was the lead author on water storage bills. Storage is progressing but too slowly. She feels that environment issues hold up the progress and create problems. The process needs to be streamlined to have more storage in place for the wet years, which come in a cycle of about seven years. Right now, there is too much water coming all at once. Pat Brown realized that the state needed one big system, which he began but was never finished. Gov. Jerry Brown understands this, and he champions storage. The tunnel system seems to be the only way to equitably distribute the water although it is not the senator's favorite plan. She supports the King River Water Agency canal, which allows water to run in two directions, helping transfer water to places that it is needed. She thinks dams are the best way of saving water although ground water recharge is also important. She supports ground water banking. While subsidence is a problem, we have the technology to deal with it. Water is about the survival and prosperity of California.

5. The senator's priorities are as discussed above and are water issues and education.

4. Kern County Local question regarding the Affordable Care Act and the loss of significant funds to California and, particularly, to Kern County.

The senator suggested that we look at the US Senate bill being proposed by Senators Collins and Cassidy. Basically, it gives states three options: 1) Maintain the status quo, with funding being phased out by 2020, 2) States come up with a plan which removes some of the restrictions of the ACA but keeps the popular benefits and allows for more choice and a health saving plan, and 3) Waiver for states for those not in the system, and everyone gets less money. While, she thinks that there will be many changes in the bill before it is voted on, she thinks that it is more transparent than the previous ACA bill. She thinks that some form of Option 2 is the best solution. – Terri Stanton

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## WHY THIS NEARLY 100-YEAR-OLD ORGANIZATION IS SEEING A RESURGENCE THANKS TO TRUMP'S ELECTION

A friend suggested to Marie Gauthier that she check out the League of Women Voters as a way to channel her sudden urge to be more civically engaged after November's election. But Gauthier had to call her friend back with bad news.

It looks wonderful, she recalled telling her friend, but there's not a chapter here in Franklin County in central Massachusetts. To which her friend replied: "So, maybe you should start one then." (Continued on p. 5)

## WHY THIS NEARLY 100-YEAR-OLD ORGANIZATION IS SEEING A RESURGENCE THANKS TO TRUMP'S ELECTION (cont.)

Gauthier, a 45-year-old mother of three children, ages 11, 8, and 4, had always modeled herself as being a good citizen through community service, but she'd never been particularly interested in political activity. But, like so many of the voters who were disappointed by the election outcome, Gauthier felt like it was time to “reprioritize” where she invested her energy.

So, on Nov. 14, less than a week removed from the election, Gauthier called the league's Massachusetts state branch and said she wanted to start a chapter where she lived.

“I never thought I'd take it this direction,” she said, “but I guess I look at my kids and I want them to see that when there are challenges you have to rise up to them and meet them.”



(Courtesy: Marie Gauthier)

The nearly 100-year-old organization — which began during women's suffrage to give new female voters a way to organize around their new civic right — has seen a massive resurgence since the election, and even more so since the women's marches last month. Across the country, the league added thousands to its membership and inspired individuals like Gauthier to start new chapters in towns from Utah to Georgia to Pennsylvania.

It's a level of interest that national president Chris Carson has never seen in her 33 years with the league. She thinks people are drawn to it because it is nonpartisan — it doesn't weigh in on party politics, but it does take a stand on issues, usually progressive ones. Its main purpose, though, is to engender the kind of active citizenship that is in sudden demand since the election. It encourages voting and champions civil discourse, putting out voting guides in communities and sponsoring political debates at all levels of government.

“It's very encouraging, it makes me feel wonderful to know there are that many people who care about this country who want to perhaps change the direction they see now, but want to do it in a positive and constructive way,” Carson said. “So many were horrified by the toxicity of the campaign and are tired of the negativity.”

That's how Cuffy Sullivan felt when she decided to take it upon herself to reboot a defunct chapter in Savannah, Ga. Sullivan said she watched friends unfriend each other on Facebook over political disagreements and retreat deeper into their echo chambers. It saddened her that even in a town known for its Southern hospitality, people seemed to be losing their civility. (Continued on p. 6)

## WHY THIS NEARLY 100-YEAR-OLD ORGANIZATION IS SEEING A RESURGENCE THANKS TO TRUMP'S ELECTION (cont.)

Sullivan, 51, said she'd never been overtly political, but she'd always felt a deep patriotism. Since her daughters were old enough to talk she's taken them with her on Election Day and had them read aloud the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote, outside the polling place before she voted. She's also a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, and her three girls are members of the Children of the American Revolution.

Because of its apolitical approach to advocacy, restarting the League of Women Voters, which folded in Savannah in the late 1990s, was a natural fit.

"The ability to have discourse over issues seems to have been eradicated," Sullivan said. "I saw the futility of political action through Facebook posts and thought it was time to get off my ass and make something happen."

She held a meeting to gauge interest at a coffee shop and eight people came. So, for her second meeting on Jan. 5, Sullivan reserved a table for 10 at a local restaurant. More than 50 showed up.

What amazed Sullivan is that the women and even a few men who wanted to be involved were not all Democrats or anti-Donald Trump. They just wanted to find a meaningful way to engage with the public about the importance of active citizenship. In that spirit, Sullivan wrote something of a mission statement for the group, which now has nearly 200 people signed up:

*There are enough other organizations in place for individuals to find like-minded people who share similar views and concerns. I want to do something unusual in this day and time: To create a forum that allows us to leave aside our self-defined silos, bubbles, algorithms and parties to come together to factually evaluate and reasonably consider issues that affect us as citizens living together in a community, no matter what our personal political leanings.*

*We are, after all, first and foremost, neighbors.*

A similar thing happened in Franklin County. In her role as the state's membership chair, Marilyn Peterson has helped Gauthier set up the new chapter. At 81 years old, Peterson has been a member of the league in Massachusetts since 1969, at a time when it was a place for women to come together to study and discuss important issues, she said.

When she pulled up to the temple where Gauthier was hosting her second meeting on Jan. 29, Peterson said she saw women streaming in from all directions. They'd been expecting around 80 and more than 150 showed up. They kept bringing out more chairs and when they ran out, people had to sit on the floor, she said.

The organization's membership skews older, and Peterson was heartened to see how many young people were there. (Continued on p. 7)

## WHY THIS NEARLY 100-YEAR-OLD ORGANIZATION IS SEEING A RESURGENCE THANKS TO TRUMP'S ELECTION (cont.)

“I certainly have not seen a surge in interest as we’re seeing in the last three months. It’s exciting,” she said. “I think it’s a revolution for the league. Older members are invested, but these are the people who will be living in the world we’re working to make even better. We’re not going to look like the league of their mothers and grandmothers.”

For Gauthier, who works part time for a nonprofit, her almost accidental leadership has given her what so many are seeking after the election: A sense of place and purpose.

“It’s invigorating to be in a room with engaged and passionate women and it’s a great comfort to know we’re all working together,” she said. “There’s something really rewarding about that.” By [Colby Itkowitz](#)  
Source: [Inspired Life](#), February 9, 2017

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## MESSAGE FROM CALIFORNIA LEAGUE PRESIDENT



### Happy Birthday to Us!

Happy 97th birthday to the League of Women Voters!  
Grassroots advocates and educators for almost 100 years!  
Help us celebrate!

- We **oppose** deportation of undocumented immigrants.
- We **reject** discrimination based on religion, including orders or actions that target Muslims or immigrants from majority-Muslim nations.
- We **fight** discrimination and any threats to civil and human rights.

Helen Hutchison, *President*  
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The LWVKC in both its values and practices affirms its belief in the commitment to diversity and pluralism. Voting membership is open to all citizens of voting age (18 years); associate membership is open to non-citizens and citizens under the age of 18. Our activities in the community are open to everyone.

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## Thanks, we're counting on you!

## **Kern Voter**

**League of Women Voters of Kern County**

**PO Box 132**

**Bakersfield, CA 93302**

## **MARCH 15 MEETING AN EVENING WITH THE KERN LITERACY COUNCIL HODEL'S, 5:45 pm**

### [Calendar](#)

**March 6** - Monday, 5:30 pm. LWVKC Board meeting, Beale Library.

**March 15** - Wednesday, 5:45 pm, General meeting. An Evening with Kern Literacy Council, Hodel's. 5917 Knudsen. Reservations due by noon, Monday, March 13.

**April 3**---. Monday, 5:30 pm. LWVKC Board meeting, Beale Library.

**April 19**—\_Wednesday, 5:45 pm., General meeting. Pros and Cons for Being a Sanctuary City, Hodel's. 5917 Knudsen. Reservations due by noon, Monday, April 17.

**Reminder:** General meetings are usually on the third Wednesday of the month. If you need transportation to a meeting, please leave that message on the League Line.