

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TULARE COUNTY

“... To promote informed citizen participation ...”

THE VOTER

DECEMBER 2017

<http://tularecounty.ca.lwvnet.org>

LWVTC Calendar

December 7 9:30 am

(Note this date change)

Board meeting at the home of
Joy Marshall

December 11 7:00 pm

210 Connect; Terry Ommen
explores the role of women in
local history; at 210 Cafe, 210
W. Center Ave., Visalia (LWVTC
is on the 210 Connect
planning committee); free

DECEMBER 12 11:30am

(Note this date change)

Unit Meeting; Holiday Fest;
Program: Cynthia Norvall
from the C.O.S. Giant
Pantry on “Food
Insecurity on Campuses of
Higher Education”; at Sue
Sa’s, 699 W. Center Ave.,
Visalia; \$15.00 for lunch

JOIN OUR HOLIDAY CELEBRATION!

BY DALE SIMMONS

Our December 12 Unit meeting promises to be special. Music will be provided by a student string quartet from Redwood High School. We will have a wonderful tamale lunch with the fixings, followed by holiday cookies baked for our event by café staff. Once again, holiday spirits—in the form of a selection of wines—will be provided, compliments of your Board.

Continuing a fun “new tradition” of recent years, we will make our best predictions for the coming year. Our 2017 forecasts ran the gamut from world politics to local environmental issues. Bring your anonymous prediction for 2018 on a slip of paper, to be read aloud randomly during this meeting. This is also a great opportunity to visit and catch up with League friends.

Cynthia Norvall, RN—College of the Sequoias’ campus nurse, who also heads the C.O.S. Giant Student Pantry (SEE P. 2)—has a video presentation for us. In the holiday spirit, it is requested that everyone bring something (two cans of food, etc.) to be given to needy students through the Pantry. The holidays can be a difficult time when campus (and the Pantry) is closed for break. If you prefer to make a monetary donation to this non-profit charity via the C.O.S. Foundation, please call Dale Simmons (732-2009) for details. Nonperishable food items are needed: peanut butter, jelly, canned chicken and tuna especially. As they are infrequently donated, personal hygiene products—including lotion, shampoo/conditioner, feminine products, socks, etc.—are greatly appreciated.

For lunch, pay at the door (\$15.00 cash, or by check made out to “Sue Sa” (not LWVTC), or by credit card at the café counter—please show Phoebe your receipt when you sign in). Reservations for lunch are needed by Friday, December 8. Call Phoebe Taylor (732-5061) or e-mail her at phoebet8@att.net.



Lunch Reservations

Make these on or before Fri.

December 8

Contact: **Phoebe Taylor**
phoebet8@att.net
or 732-5061

If paying by check, payee is “Sue Sa’s.”

REMINDER: Payment must be made for any no-shows. Please be sure to attend if you reserve.

January 11 9:30 am

Board meeting at Dale’s

JANUARY 16 11:30am

Unit Meeting; Program: TBA

January 20 details TBA

Women’s March; starting at
C.O.S.; see the January issue

February 8 9:30 am

Board meeting at Dale’s

FEBRUARY 20 11:30am

Unit Meeting; Program: TBA

Reminder:

**DUES ARE DUE
BY DECEMBER 31.**

Pay Donna Mekeel at the
December Unit meeting,
or print the membership
form off our website:
tularecounty.ca.lwvnet.org

and mail it to:
P.O. Box 3011
Visalia, CA 93278

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November Program Recap

LESLIE CAVIGLIA:

“IT’S YOUR CITY — OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE ON CITIZENS’ COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS”

BY MAILE MELKONIAN

Perhaps the most direct way to get involved in “Making Democracy Work—Locally” is to become a member of a citizens advisory body. Visalia’s Assistant City Manager Leslie Caviglia talked about what’s available for residents wanting to impact local policy-making directly.

First, she clarified the difference between a commission (two, mandated by the City Charter) and a committee (established by City Council as needs arise). A third type of advisory body—the task force—is also set up by the Council, but for a very specific purpose, and for a limited time frame. The most recent was convened to make a recommendation regarding a possible sales tax increase that eventually became Measure N.

The function of all of these is to make policy proposals, offer guidance, and provide direction to City Council, in a variety of areas reflecting the interests of the community. Currently, the list includes:

- ★ Planning Commission
- ★ Parks & Recreation Commission
- ★ Citizens Advisory Committee
- ★ Disability Advocacy Committee
- ★ Environmental Committee
- ★ Historic Preservation Committee
- ★ North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee
- ★ Transit Advisory Committee
- ★ Waterways and Trails Committee

Most meet once a month, but the Planning Commission meets twice each month. Caviglia indicated that this latter and the Citizens Advisory Committee are the busiest.

All are subject to the Brown Act and the Maddy Act—sunshine regulations requiring transparency in government. They are run per Roberts Rules of Order, strict quorum rules apply, and minutes are taken and made publicly available. Caviglia also emphasized that all meetings are open, and anyone is welcome to sit in on them. Opportunity for public comment is always on the agenda.

She added that citizens can get involved in other ways, as well, highlighting the Police Department’s V.I.P.S. (Volunteers in Police Services) program.

DECEMBER PROGRAM

Cynthia Norvall, RN

“Food Insecurity on Campuses of Higher Education”

In the midst of the holidays, we will take time to consider those in our community who may be struggling even during this season of generosity.

As important as C.O.S. is to our community, many of us are unaware of how prevalent hunger is among students—and equally unaware of what the College is doing to ameliorate this situation. Central to their effort is the [Giant Pantry](#). College Nurse Cynthia Norvall has been central to this project since its roll-out a couple of years ago.

She was a founding member of C.O.S.’s Food Insecurity Task Force in January 2014, which led to her role as the coordinator for the Giant Pantry, as well as food distribution programs on all three C.O.S. campuses. Under her leadership, the Giant Pantry was the 2017 recipient of Visalia Soroptimist’s “Making a Difference in the Community” award. Norvall is also involved in relevant regional endeavors, including the inaugural Central Valley Basic Needs Collaborative held at Fresno State this past October.

Her connections to C.O.S. are strong. A graduate of their nursing program, Norvall worked at Tulare District Hospital, and then Adventist Health in Hanford, in intensive care and emergency medicine, before taking on the position of College Nurse in 2013.

In addition to the Pantry, her primary responsibilities include nursing assessments, administration of vaccines and other required immunizations, and providing health information to promote student wellness.



THE VOTER

Monthly newsletter of the
League of Women Voters of Tulare County

P.O. Box 3011
Visalia, CA 93278

<http://tularecounty.ca.lwvnet.org>

President:	Dale Simmons	732-2009
Membership Chair:	Donna Mekeel	733-4832
Editor:	Maile Melkonian	802-3315

STRUGGLING TO SURVIVE — STRIVING TO SUCCEED

FOOD AND HOUSING INSECURITIES IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

This study can be seen in full at https://kpbs.media.clients.ellingtoncms.com/news/documents/2016/12/05/STRUGGLING_TO_SURVIVE_-_STRIVING_TO_SUCCEED.pdf.

By the Community College Equity Assessment Laboratory (CCEAL), San Diego State University

2017

In recent years, there has been an increasing awareness among educators about the prevalence of food and housing insecurities in college and university settings... Common discussions of the college experience involve anecdotes about “couch surfing” as well as the myriad of ways to cook “top ramen” and “instant rice.”

But, these anecdotes illuminate a far darker experience that many college students face with food and housing insecurities. Being unsure about where your next meal will come from and... where you will live and sleep are all too frequent experiences in the lives of college students, particularly students who have been historically underserved in education. And, these experiences can negatively influence college students’ learning, development, and success...

[T]erms are defined as follows: “Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, or the ability to acquire such foods in socially acceptable ways. Housing insecurity

also exists along a spectrum where homelessness... represents the extreme case. Unaffordable housing, poor housing quality, crowding, and frequent moves are other dimensions of housing insecurity”...

[C]hallenges with poverty are particularly prevalent at community colleges. [Some] 56% of community college students in the sample have annual household incomes of \$20,000 or less.

... As a result, these institutions are more likely than 4-year colleges and universities to serve students who are working, have dependents, attend college part-time, and who are low-income ... [F]ood insecurity may be on the rise given the higher cost of education...

Colleges have begun responding to these concerns by creating **food pantries**, free and reduced lunch programs, and partnering with community organizations to create affordable housing options. These programs exist due to the influence that insecurity challenges have on student experiences and outcomes. ...

In a study of Maryland community college students, ... students with food insecurity [were found to have] significantly lower GPAs than students who

“When health is absent, wisdom cannot reveal itself, art cannot manifest, strength cannot fight, wealth becomes useless, and intelligence cannot be applied.”

— Herophilus
300 B.C.

did not experience this insecurity....

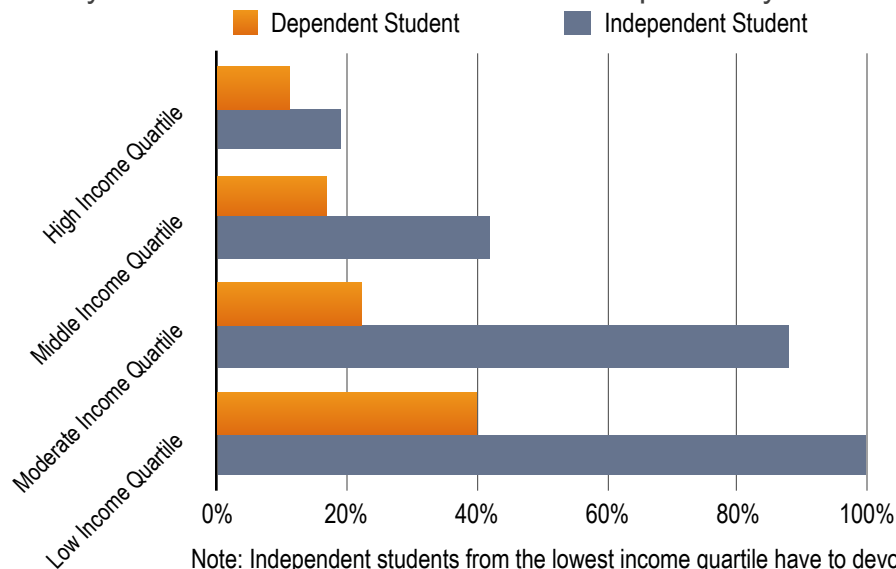
Research indicates that underserved students of color may be at a higher risk of experiencing food and housing insecurity.... Moreover, they found that food-insecure students were overwhelmingly more likely to have been food insecure as children (45% [compared] to 9% [of the food-secure])....

However, there may be even more disparate exposure to insecurities among men of color. [Research] revealed that ... many Black and Latino college men ... often placed their families first, prioritizing feeding and sheltering their children and dependents over themselves. In some cases, their roles as providers for their families exacerbated their exposure to insecurities....

Overall, 31.8% of men and 33.9% of women reported experiences with housing insecurity. A smaller percentage, 15.4% and 8.7% of men and women, respectively, indicated challenges with food insecurity....

In general, students experiencing food and housing insecurities are overwhelming concentrated in developmental math.... Among students with food insecurity, 7.6% indicated their plans to drop out of college. In comparison, only 2.7% of students without food insecurity did so.... ★

Percentage of Annual Family Income Required to Cover the Net Price of Community College, by Income Quartile and Financial Aid Dependency Status



Note: Independent students from the lowest income quartile have to devote more than 100% of their total annual income to cover the Net Price (Cost of Attendance minus all grants and scholarships) of a year of community college. Incomes associated with quartiles are: dependent students (\$21,000, \$52,000, \$81,000, and \$142,000) and independent students (\$2,039, \$13,586, \$29,311, and \$73,120). Reproduced from Goldrick-Rab & Kendall, 2014.

Source: Wisconsin Hope Lab, “Hungry to Learn: Addressing Food & Housing Insecurity Among Undergraduates.” See full study at http://wihopelab.com/publications/Wisconsin_HOPE_Lab_Hungry_To_Learn.pdf.

Consistent with our Program Planning theme of “Making Democracy Work—Locally,” our Unit has revived the Observer Corps, a project by which our volunteers sit in on the public meetings of selected government bodies, and report back to the Unit, in the interest of transparency in government. (Anyone who would like to participate may contact Vice President Faye Zeeb: rzeeb@comcast.net.) This month’s report is on:

VISALIA CITY COUNCIL

BY DONNA MEKEEL
OCTOBER 16, 2017

The meeting started on time at 7:00, with all Council members present. Because a larger-than-usual number of people were expected to attend, the venue was changed from Council Chambers to the Convention Center.

After some standard business, the main focus of the meeting began. About 200 citizens attended who were

there to voice their opposition to an apartment complex on the corner of Shirk Rd. and Doe Ave. The complex was up for final approval by the Council at this meeting. The complex backs up to a housing development, and the homeowners in the development are opposed to it.

Their spokeswoman highlighted two objections. First, she felt the homeowners had not been properly notified of the Planning Commission meetings leading up to the approval of the complex. Second, the traffic on Shirk is a problem. Shirk is a two-lane road with heavy traffic because of developments along it, and there are no plans in the near future to widen it.

Many people spoke against the approval of the complex. The final vote was 4 in favor, 1 against. Warren Gubler was the no vote; the complex is in his district.

V.U.S.D.

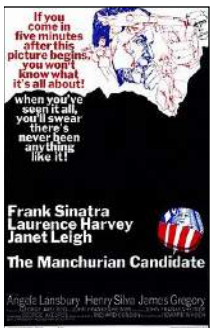
Follow-up from last month’s report

- Donna Kindschuh and Kathy Falconer, our Observer Corps volunteers for the Visalia Unified School District Board meetings, report that the Confederate flag issue—originally scheduled by Superintendent Oto to be addressed at the November 14 meeting—has been tabled till the December 12 meeting, or later.

FILM REVIEW

THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE

BY DALE SIMMONS



Spoiler Alert! *The Manchurian Candidate* is an exciting movie of political intrigue with a surprising twist at the end. Eleanor Iselin (played by Angela Lansbury) lived up to her ranking as the 21st worst villain in American cinematic history.

The plot unfolds with Bennett Marco (played by Frank Sinatra) having shocking nightmares where he sees Raymond Shaw (Laurence Harvey) killing two fellow Korean War soldiers, while their entire captured platoon was being brainwashed by the Chinese in Manchuria. Shaw was conditioned to do any act after seeing a queen of hearts playing card, and not remembering the act after-wards. Iselin is Shaw’s manipulative mother, married to crackpot Senator Iselin. Their plan is to have Shaw—running for V.P.—kill the presidential candidate at their party convention, and install Sen. Iselin as his default replacement.

Meanwhile,, Marco and the U.S. Army have been investigating Shaw’s actions, feeling certain something is still wrong. Marco identifies the trigger for Shaw’s actions (seeing the playing card), and uses a forced deck (all queen of diamonds) to undo the brainwashing. Shaw was to contact Marco after another attempt to have him act on command, but did not. Shaw goes to

the Convention in disguise, and sets himself up in an unused spotlight room where he can use a sniper’s rifle given to him by his mother.

In a twist, during the acceptance speech by the candidate, Shaw shoots his mother and Sen. Iselin instead, and then turns the gun on himself just as Marco reaches him.

This film was nominated for two Academy Awards and, in 1994, preserved in the National Film Registry by the Library of Congress as being “culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant.”

TIME TO PAY DUES

League membership is based on the calendar year, so dues are payable now, and must be received by Dec. 31 to get in the Directory. **Donna Mekeel** will be collecting at the December Unit meeting.

For 2018, dues are:

Individual	\$65
Household	\$90
Student	\$30

Note: LWVTC has 501(c)(3) status, and your dues are tax deductible.

A SUPER-SHORT HISTORY OF INCOME TAX IN THE U.S.

It's hard to imagine that during our country's first 130 years, the federal government's only significant source of revenue was tariffs. There was no income tax—with one important exception. The decade from 1861-1872 ushered in income tax, the I.R.S. and our current idea of property tax—all Republican inventions motivated by the necessity of financing the Civil War.

The income tax expired in 1872, largely because of questions about its constitutionality. Article 1, Section 9, of the Constitution required direct tax burdens to be apportioned among states based on population, rather than economic activity, property values, stocks or any other sort of wealth, resulting in a distastefully regressive system.

But the advantages of a progressive income tax stuck in legislators' imaginations. In 1909—interestingly with the GOP firmly in control of both houses of Congress and the White House—the 16th Amendment was passed, to make apportionment by wealth legal. Ratified in 1913, this began an unbroken and continuing reliance on the income tax, which remains our main source of the lubricant that oils the mechanics of our country. (Tariffs have shrunk to 4% of the total.)

When the income tax was first conceived, only the wealthy paid. As time marches on, however, more of the burden is shifting to the middle class.

I find it oddly interesting that when, in the 1950s and 60s, the United States had the world's highest standard of living (long life span, high education level, low crime rate, high GDP per capita, good infrastructure, etc.), our marginal tax rates were highest, reaching a shocking 91% during the Eisenhower administration. Our current top marginal rate is 39.6%, and that may drop by the time you read this.

Now, Scandinavian countries—Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden—have the world's top spots. Australia, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Singapore and Switzerland also outpace us, with most indexes putting us behind Austria, Belgium, France, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain and the U.K. What strikes me as a paradox is that, in all but four (Canada, New Zealand, Singapore, Switzerland) of these 19 countries, the top income tax rate is (usually much) higher than ours.

On an individual level, paying taxes is odious—no doubt about that. But collectively—and perhaps counter-intuitively—there seems to be a strong correlation between high taxes and a high standard of living.

This Associated Press excerpt is from The (San Jose) Mercury News, and can be found in full at <http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/09/22/california-among-21-states-dhs-says-target-of-election-hacking/>.

CALIFORNIA AMONG 21 STATES TARGETED BY HACKING

By Geoff Mulvihill and Jake Pearson, AP September 22, 2017

The federal government on [Sept. 22] told election officials in 21 states that hackers targeted their systems before last year's presidential election.

The notification came roughly a year after U.S. Department of Homeland Security officials first said states were targeted by hacking efforts possibly connected to Russia. The states that told [AP] they had been targeted included some key political battlegrounds, such as **Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin.**

The AP contacted every state election office to determine which ones had been informed that their election systems had been targeted. The others confirming were **Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Minnesota, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas and Washington.**

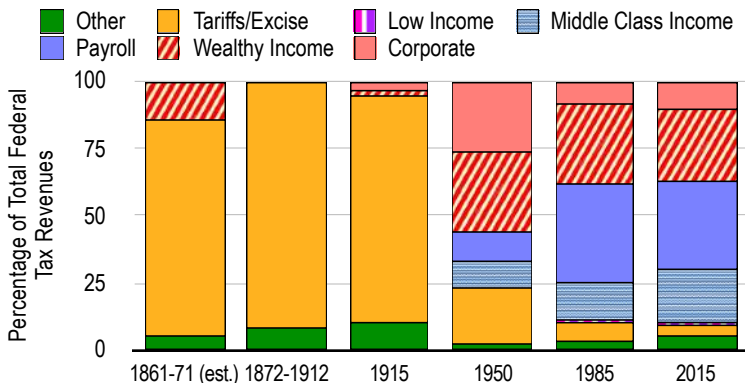
Being targeted does not mean that sensitive voter data was manipulated or results were changed. A hacker targeting a system without getting inside is similar to a burglar circling a house checking for unlocked doors and windows. Even so, the widespread nature of the attempts and the yearlong lag time in notification from Homeland Security raised concerns among some election officials and lawmakers.

For many states, the [Sept. 22, 2017] calls were the first official confirmation of whether their states were on the list — even though state election officials across the country have been calling for months for the federal government to share information about any hacks, as have members of Congress.

"It is completely unacceptable that it has taken DHS over a year to inform our office of Russian scanning of our systems, despite our repeated requests for information," California Secretary of State Alex Padilla, a Democrat, said in a statement....

The government did not say who was behind the hacking attempts or provide details about what had been sought. But election officials in several states said the attempts were linked to Russia.

The Wisconsin Election Commission, for example, said the state's systems were targeted by "Russian government cyber actors." Alaska Elections Division Director Josie Bahnke said computers in Russia were scanning election systems looking for vulnerabilities.... Only Illinois reported that hackers had succeeded in breaching its voter systems.... Colorado said the hacking wasn't quite a breach...★



Sources: Internal Revenue Service, White House, Federal Reserve Bank, Business Insider, Tax Analysts, Tax Policy Center, Wikipedia

League of Women Voters of Tulare County
P.O. Box 3011
Visalia, CA 93278



Be an engaged citizen! *Join . . .*

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TULARE COUNTY

The League is a non-partisan organization that encourages informed and active participation in government through education and advocacy. Members include women and men of every age, race, background and political belief. The more than 1,200 local Leagues work to promote citizen action on local, state and national issues.

Why the League ?

Because you care about the future of America. You recognize that your rights as a citizen come with a responsibility to participate fully in the democratic process. As a member you can:

- Stay informed about the issues that concern you the most,
- Make your views heard by adding your voice to ours
- Sharpen your skills for effective leadership, networking and public outreach.

LWV of Tulare County is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charity. Dues and donations to this unit are tax deductible. Annual membership dues are \$65.00 for individuals, \$30 for students and \$90.00 for households.

Visitors are welcome to our regular meetings, generally at 11:30 am on the third Tuesday of the month—September through June—at Sue Sa's Left of Center, 699 W. Center Ave. in Visalia. Check our website for current details:

<http://tularecounty.ca.lwvnet.org>