

## LACK OF RESIDENTS LIMITS VOTING POOL -- EVERY VOTE NEEDED IN NOVEMBER!

In St. Helena we are experiencing an influx of second home purchasers and VacationRentalByOwner (VRBO) and AirBNB use. That means that on any given block there may be a new record number of "empty" homes. These are homes that are not occupied by anyone qualified to vote as a resident within the City Limits. So voting -wise, these addresses have truly vanished. Scott St. with two blocks has 17 empty residences at the moment.

This means that all local elections will depend on the voters in remaining residences. If few of those voters vote in a low turn out, then there is a greater chance that a small minority will play a disproportionate role in the future of our community -- like the tail wagging the dog. This results in a pattern in which a few people who do not represent the majority will be able to make changes which affect everyone. This is compounded when decisions are designed to protect some neighborhoods and/or special interests and not everyone's. For example, right now, all St. Helena City Department Directors are gone including City Manager and we have no planning or code enforcement or traffic mitigation or a General Plan or even safe sidewalks.

In addition, since this voting problem has become an issue in the last 3 years, caps on all restaurants and hotels have been removed and we have a record number of wine tasting rooms and real estate offices on Main St., limiting the space available for residential needs. And we have no affordable housing for our teachers, or city workers or our children or the elderly which cause most middle and lower income workers to unfairly bare the time and expense of commuting, creating more traffic.

The voters that live inside the City limits are not rich. The median income is in the \$70,000's. We have many people living outside the City limits or with second homes here that are rich but they cannot vote. Prices for everything are very high, making the the City ideal for tourism market and the wealthy. There is no longer a rental market or other markets for residents.

Numerically, this imbalance politically and socially will continue and get worse if only a few of the remaining residents do not go to the polls in November.

If you value your home here and you want your family to stay here, everyone needs to vote -- regardless of whom you favor. **A high percentage of voting residents is KEY to having good government and having the majority represented. Please let every person in your family know how important this is. Speak them now and be sure they register and prepare to vote. Here is how to register: <http://registertovote.ca.gov/>.**

And here's some more motivation!

[http://napavalleyregister.com/news/opinion/editorial/the-value-of-the-vote/article\\_ba00f34b-5381-5112-9555-5b16b1b802d4.html](http://napavalleyregister.com/news/opinion/editorial/the-value-of-the-vote/article_ba00f34b-5381-5112-9555-5b16b1b802d4.html)

