

League of Women Voters of San Joaquin County

2014-2015 Annual Report

Reports on our League Year

MEMBERSHIP REPORT FY 2014-2015

Information as of 4/10/2015

62 - Individual members

22 - Household members

84 - Total members

Bea Lingenfelter and Susan Loyko have developed a packet called *LWVSJC Membership Recruitment & Community Outreach*. The packet includes talking points, membership brochures, voter registration forms, and Smart Voter bookmarks. It is designed to help members give brief presentations at any organization or other public venue, letting community members know our League mission and encouraging people to become members. An additional objective is to encourage partnerships between LWVSJC and other organizations.

FINANCES AND FUNDRAISING

In the August 2014 *Voter*, members received 2013-2014 year-end financial reports for LWVSJC and the San Joaquin County League Fund (Ed Fund), as required by the bylaws. The fiscal year for both entities ends June 30. LWVSJC net worth as of 6/30/2014 was \$1,799. The General Fund bank account balance was \$7,610. Ed Fund net worth as of 6/30/2014 was \$11,773.

National per member payments (PMPs) are now \$30. State PMPs are \$23 for individual members. Our individual dues of \$60 thus generate only \$7 for our local league. At the state League convention in May, the LWVC board will recommend a total increase in PMP of \$5 over the next two years, bringing the total State PMP to \$28 for 2016-17. If this increase is approved by Convention delegates, the San Joaquin County League will need to consider its own dues increase, a necessity that the LWVSJC board very much regrets.

Individual membership renewals at a higher, "sustaining" level are very much appreciated.

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For a number of years, the Asparagus Festival has been LWVSJC's main fundraising activity. Now that the Festival has been discontinued, we are especially appreciative of the fundraising efforts of Diane Park, who raised \$2,440 this fiscal year for our Circle of Support: \$580 for the General Fund and \$1860 for the Ed Fund.

Donations to the Sylvia Kothe Memorial Fund bring the total in that scholarship-dedicated portion of the Ed Fund to \$1940. LWVSJC will make a \$500 scholarship available to a Delta College student this year.

Our Kick-off Meeting Fundraiser in September 2014 generated \$664 in revenue.

- Jane Wagner-Tyack, Treasurer

CIRCLE OF SUPPORT DONORS

In addition to members who donate throughout the year to both our General Fund and our Education Fund, we wish to thank those who made special donations this past year to our Circle of Support. Your generosity has allowed us to grow and expand the work of the San Joaquin County League of Women Voters.

Lauren and Denny Ah Tye

Bev Blum

Janet Bonner

Judith Buethe

Donna Brown

Dr. Edward Caul

Tola Eley

Colleen Foster

Christeen Ferree

Craig and Denise Holmes

Gladys Ikeda

Michael and JoAnn Lamm

Lee Hemminger

Cynthia Milford

Catherine New and E.G. White

Leslie Oliver

Bette Outlaw

Diane Park

Van Ha To-Cowell

Alice L. Welch

Anne Ramacher

Dr. Kathy Schick

Mary Lois and Syd Thompson

Jane and Steve Tyack

Barbara Walker

Walt and Cate White

VOTER SERVICES AND SMART VOTER

The most visible feature of the League's civic outreach is its Voter Services activities. LWVSJC Voter Services was very active this past year for both the June Primary and the November General Election.

Pros & Cons Presentations on the Ballot Measures

We decided to forgo doing any presentations for the June Primary, as there were only two measures on the ballot and both appeared to be slated for passage. Instead, we focused our attention on the November election, which included several controversial issues. Altogether, we did seven presentations for the following groups:

- AAUW at O'Connor Woods
- OLLI group from UOP at O'Connor Woods
- First Methodist Church of Lodi
- St. Paul's Methodist Church in Manteca
- Manteca Senior Center
- Annunciation Catholic Church in Stockton
- San Joaquin Delta College ICL

We were able to reach and inform close to 250 citizens in this way. Our presenters included Dee Matteucci, Bea Lingenfelter, Jane Wagner-Tyack, and me. In addition, Gladys Ikeda and Ellen Powell attended an event put on by the Asian Chamber of Commerce on October 16, where they did voter registration, put out copies of both the League's "Pros & Cons" and the "Easy Voter Guide", as well as Smart Voter bookmarks, for the public to take home.

Smart Voter

For the June Primary, I was able to contact approximately 35 candidates running for various U.S. and state legislative offices, as well as some local primary candidates. More than half responded and set up their pages on the Smart Voter website.

For the November General Election, all of the local supervisors, city councils, school districts, fire districts, etc., added their races to the total number of candidates running. Throughout San Joaquin County, there were 59 Congressional, State, and local contests, with 144 candidates filing. Out of those, I was charged with contacting 114, as well as following up on those who did not respond right away. It was an interesting challenge to see how many candidates the Smart Voter team could convince to put up their pages on our website. About a third responded positively.

- Vickie Markarian, Voter Services Chair

Candidate Forums

Our League took on a variety of voter service activities during the Fall of 2014. We held candidate forums for the following elected positions:

- Stockton City Council Areas 1, 3, and 5
- San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors
- San Joaquin County Superintendent of Schools
- Assembly District 13
- Stockton Board of Education

Each forum was held on a separate day and in various venues to maximize our efforts for voter attendance and to have a broad community representation. Each panel, which asked prepared questions of the candidates, included one League representative along with representatives of other community groups such as San Joaquin Taxpayers Association, AAUW, NAACP, Stockton Chamber of Commerce, Delta College and others. Most forums were videotaped and posted on our website and Facebook page.

Putting on a candidate forum involves making candidate contacts; establishing venues; contacting and confirming panelists; sending letter confirmations to all participants; greeting attendees and participants at each forum; timing responses; "crowd control" at each forum; and videotaping or assisting with video taping. The multitude of tasks were made so much easier with all the LWVSJC member assistance that came forward.

The Voter Service Committee also proposed candidate forums for Congressional District 9 (McNerney/ Amador) race and Congressional District 10 race (Denham/Eggman). Due to candidate conflicts or the lack of response, these forums were not completed. We hope to include these offices in future voter service efforts.

- Bea Lingenfelter, Voter Services

ACTION AND ADVOCACY

This year our League has been fairly quiet on the advocacy front. Recently, we submitted a letter to the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors objecting to proposals in the County General Plan for 2035 that would change the zoning of some parcels of land from agricultural to industrial/commercial. Our primary objection is that most of the land is also in a 100 year floodplain. Hearings are still being held on the plan, and it is not yet finalized.

Money in politics remains a primary focus of both the state and national Leagues. In California, the state League is focusing on re-building the Cal-Access web site, which provides online disclosure of state campaign and lobbying

activities. The League is participating in a working group to share information and make recommendations in this effort. Other issues the state League is following include state and local finances, election administration and voting rights, education finance and early childhood education, and environmental protection and sustainable management of resources.

On the National level, delegates at the last convention directed the League to update the Campaign Finance position, and a committee has been named to follow through on this task. Voting rights and election administration are also a priority. In addition, the National League continues to work on climate and environmental protection issues, as well as immigration and health care, including reproductive choice.

- Cate White, Advocacy Chair

2014-2015 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

Kick-off Meeting

At the Kick-off Fundraiser at Delicato Winery on September 14, Dr. Gene Bigler addressed attendees on the topic “Can Democracy Survive the Wealth Divide?” Dr. Bigler is a writer and consultant on global affairs, a retired diplomat, a former professor, and a community activist. Among his recommendations was the importance of reversing Citizen United, the U.S. Supreme County decision holding that political spending is a form of protected free speech under the First Amendment. This is a matter of great interest to the League of Women Voters at both the state and the national level.

Holiday Party

This past December, we enjoyed a holiday potluck hosted by Colleen Foster and Donna Brown. For entertainment, it’s hard to beat our annual White Elephant gift exchange.

Program Planning Meeting

This year’s Program Planning Meeting was held January 24. Attendees identified four areas of focus for education and advocacy to be approved by members at this year’s Annual Meeting. These areas are 1) the impact of climate change on health and income inequality; 2) early childhood education, including universal preschool, mandatory kindergarten, and improved access to daycare; 3) the San Joaquin County library system, including grant support; and 4) local government issues, including campaigns, the influence of money, district configurations, term lengths, and overall stability.

Groundwater Forum

At a March 21st forum, “Groundwater in San Joaquin County: Challenges to Managing a Vital and Threatened Resources,” panelists from local water agencies shared their stories about meeting the needs of water users in different parts of the county. Attendees heard presentations from Brandon Nakagawa, Water Resources Manager for San Joaquin County Public Works; former San Joaquin County Supervisor Ken Vogel; Tom Flynn, retired San Joaquin County Public Work Director and current Board Member of the North San Joaquin Water Conservation District; Scot Moody, General Manager of the Stockton East Water District; Jeff Shields, General Manager of the South San Joaquin Irrigation District; and Bob Granberg, Assistant Director of the City of Stockton Municipal Utilities District.

Grand Jury Presentation

At the Mexican Heritage Center in Stockton on April 11, members heard about “Agents of Change in Our Community: the Civil Grand Jury” in presentations by Kenneth Buck and Caitlin Casey of the San Joaquin County Chapter of the California Grand Jurors Association. In particular, attendees got insight into the important but little know efforts of the civil grand jury to advance the cause of good government.

✧ SUSAN B. ANTHONY AWARD RECIPIENT

LWVSJC member Jane Wagner-Tyack was honored by the San Joaquin County Commission on the Status of Women as a Susan B. Anthony Woman of Achievement for her work in education, including civic education. Following is an excerpt of the remarks she delivered at the February 15 awards banquet.



“This weekend marks the 95th anniversary of the founding of the League of Women Voters. The League was founded by Carrie Chapman Catt in 1920 during the convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, whose dominant figure in its early years had been Susan B. Anthony. The convention was held just six months before ratification of the 19th amendment, which gave women the right to vote.

“When Carrie Chapman Catt called for the League to “Finish the Fight,” she was talking about more than just the finishing the fight for women’s suffrage. The League was founded in another gilded age when progressive activists were working

to prevail over political machines and the influence of money in politics. One constant refrain throughout League history has been the danger posed by big-moneyed special interests to our democracy.

“From the beginning, the League has been nonpartisan, and the focus has been on encouraging members to educate citizens about, and to lobby for, government and social reform legislation. In recent decades that has come to include environmental reform legislation.

“We often hear that people are apathetic. In my experience, they are not so much apathetic as overwhelmed. Sometimes they’re overwhelmed by the difficult conditions of their own lives, sometimes by the volume, complexity, and contradictions of information coming at them. The easiest way to deal with all this information is to find an ideology and adhere to it. We all tend to seek news and information from an outlet with a perspective that mirrors and reinforces our own. But civic education depends on access to unbiased information. The League has a reputation in California for being liberal, but it is nonpartisan with respect to candidates and political parties. This gives it tremendous educational credibility.

“I want to thank the San Joaquin County League of Women Voters for honoring me with this nomination, and also for giving me my first opportunities to pursue my interest in water issues. I’m fortunate that I’m now able to be involved in water policy at the State League level. It’s an ongoing privilege to be able to work with such a collegial group of women and men. I wish I had time to thank them here individually.”



2015-2016 Membership Renewal

(Dues year is July 1 – June 30. Dues are delinquent after June 30.)

- _____ \$60 (individual)
- _____ \$75 (sustaining – individuals who want to continue supporting the activities of LWVSJC but cannot participate regularly)
- _____ \$100 (household – two or more members residing at the same address)
- _____ \$30 (individuals 18 or older who are enrolled either full-time or part-time in an accredited institution)

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone:

(home) _____ (work) _____ (cell) _____

Email _____

Please provide contact information even if you are already a member so that we can check our records and make certain they are up to date. As we rely increasingly on electronic communication with members, it is especially important that we have a current email address for you if you have one.

**Please make membership renewal checks payable to LWVSJC and mail to
LWVSJC
P.O. Box 4548
Stockton, CA 95204**

Dues and general fund donations are not tax deductible.

_____ I would also like to make a tax-deductible donation to the San Joaquin County League Fund (Education Fund). Following LWVC guidelines, if you wish to make a contribution to the Ed Fund, please submit a separate check to LWVSJC Ed Fund and send it to the above address. The separate check will help to ensure the Ed Fund's status as a charitable and tax deductible organization.