



The Voter

SUSAN LOYKO NAMED SUSAN B. ANTHONY WOMAN OF ACHIEVEMENT

Thank you
to
Hospice of San Joaquin

for allowing League Board meetings to be held in your meeting rooms as a community service

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"This is such a humbling experience!" That was Susan Loyko's reaction to being selected for the San Joaquin Commission on the Status of Women's Susan B. Anthony Woman of Achievement recognition.



The League nominated Susan for the recognition in the category of Community Service. As the City of Stockton's Stormwater Outreach Coordinator for their Municipal Utilities Dept., Susan ran programs to educate the community about water pollution prevention and water conservation. This led to her leadership role in the partnership with the Peace & Justice Network to coordinate Stockton's Earth Day Festival since 2001.

Her environmental vocation "spilled over into my personal life as my avocation" in efforts with the Concerned Citizens Coalition of Stockton (CCCoS), the Social Justice Ministry of Presentation Catholic Church, the Environmental Justice Committee of the San Joaquin Catholic Diocese, Restore the Delta—and, of course, the League.

A founding member of the CCCoS, Susan has been an activist for local control of

our water, a mission that has had global ramifications. With the Social Justice Ministry, she coordinated the Giving Tree projects and the Advent Angel Tree Project.

Susan is also involved in educating the community about global warming and energy conservation and advocating for universal health care.

Susan has been on the League Board for the last four years, serving as Secretary and on the Environment/Water Committee.

Susan Loyko is definitely a Woman of Achievement! Congratulations, Susan, from all your League colleagues!

UOP Students Wish to Interview League Members about their "Personal Civic Engagement"

How to contact the League:
LWVSJC
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Stockton, CA 95204
209-465-0293
Email: LWVSJC@gmail.com
www.sjc.lwvnet.org

LWVSJC will once again be working with students at the University of the Pacific. Students will be working on a history of our League and suggested a corollary project: interviews of League members about their 'personal civic engagement.'

Students in League member Marcia Hernandez' Sex and Gender class will be researching "social movements and political engagements and how identity issues, political ideologies and gender play a role in the success or challenges faced by different organizations."

Interviews with League members will ground their research in 'real life.'

If you are willing to participate in these interviews, please contact Cate White: 823-3381; blckbrd98@aol.com.

President's Message — Ann Pentecost

Candidate forums! Pros and Cons!
Smart Voter! Election season is upon us!

We will once again be working with long-time partner Comcast to televise candidate forums. On April 30th, we—along with our co-sponsors the Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce and The Record—will present forums focusing on races that could be won in the June primary: Stockton Mayor and Board of Supervisors in District 1, 3 and 5. We may televise City of Stockton forums if more than two candidates per council race file in districts 2, 4 and 6, but that is not set at this time. Since most races will be run in November, our forum activity will be focused in Stockton for the June election.

As we look forward, I want to take a moment to look back and thank the Immigration Study Committee for the work they did in informing our League members about immigration issues and pull-

ing together the Consensus meeting. The hard work of Committee members Colleen Foster, Bea Lingenfelter, Sally Miller, Barbara Walker and Esther Vasquez paid off in lively and thoughtful discussion of important and complex current policy issues.

Elsewhere in The Voter you will see that we are working with UOP students on several League projects. The one of particular interest is interviews of League members. [See article on the front page] I hope many League members will participate in this interesting project.

Starting in March, the Board will hold its meetings on the **second Tuesday** of each month (moved from the first Thursday). We will meet at Hospice of San Joaquin (3888 Pacific Avenue, Stockton) at 5:30. Members are welcome to attend.

Pros & Cons Get Positive Response

On Thursday, January 10, 2008, our League had its customary joint meeting with the AAUW (American Assoc. of University Women) at the San Joaquin Hospice in Stockton. The evening started off with coffee and refreshments, as members from both organizations mingled and got to know each other.

The main business of the evening was the presentation of the measures (Prop. 91 - 97) that were on the February 5 Primary Election ballot. Dee Matteucci introduced the program by explaining the meaning of a constitutional amendment, initiative, and referendum. She then covered the pros and cons of Prop. 91, as well as a discussion of Props. 94-97, which cover the agreements between Gov. Schwarzenegger and various Native American groups that have casinos in

Southern California. Vickie Markarian gave a more detailed account of Prop. 93 (Funding & Governance of the California Community College system) and Prop. 94 (State Legislature Term Limits), as they needed more explanation.

The turnout for the program was excellent, probably attracting more than 50 people representing both organizations. After the presentation, audience members asked questions and discussed some of the issues further, referring to their copies of LWVC's newsletter "Pros & Cons," which covers the statewide ballot measures. All in attendance were quite pleased with the presentations.

- Vickie Markarian

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Nominating Committee

Dee Matteucci, Chair; Tandy Gotschall, Sally Miller and two Board members to be appointed

Helen Pearson Award Committee

Vickie Markarian, Chair; Fran Abbott, Sylvia Kothe

LWVSJC Comes to Consensus on Immigration

Several LSVSJC members gathered on January 12th to conclude our participation in the LWVUS Immigration Study by coming to consensus—or in some cases, not—on the study questions posed by the national League. The discussion was lively and opinions were diverse. In the end, our League came to agreement on the questions posed by the Study. Below is a summary of our League’s response to LWVUS:



Question 1 asked *what criteria federal immigration laws should take into consideration* and what priority should be given to the criteria. Our responses:

- High priority should be given to
 - Economic, business and service employment needs
 - Environmental impact/sustainability
 - Family reunification of authorized immigrants and citizens with spouses and minor children
 - History of criminal activity
 - Humanitarian crises/political persecution in home countries
 - Rights of all workers to safe working conditions and livable wage
 - Rights of families to remain together
 - Rights of all individuals in U.S. to fair treatment under the law (fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal and humane treatment)
- Lower priority should be given to
 - Ethnic and cultural diversity
- The members were not able to reach consensus on
 - Immigrant characteristics (health and age)
 - Education and training

Discussion

- We felt that health could be considered in the case of communicable diseases but that other health issues and age should not be a factor in deciding whether to admit immigrants to the U.S.
- Discussion about education and training centered around whether preference would be given to those with ‘education and training’ and thus discriminate against those without specific skills. While the group agreed that employer needs should be a factor, we did not come to consensus on what role education and training per se should play in admittance of prospective immigrants.
- The group was in strong agreement that we should not let criminals into our country. However, there was considerable concern that people who protested civil rights in their home country, for instance, would be branded as ‘criminals’ by that country and thus ineligible for entry into the US.

The group was asked to rank the top three most important criteria from the above list. The group chose

1. Family reunification and rights of families to remain together (These were two separate criteria in the Study but the group felt they were too similar to separate.)
2. Environmental impact/sustainability
3. Rights of all individuals in US to fair treatment under the law

Discussion

There was considerable discussion about humanitarian crises/political persecution being in the top three. Several members suggested that since the US has a history of accepting political refugees, it was less important to emphasize that criteria.

Question 2 asked **how unauthorized immigrants currently in the U.S. should be treated.**

- Disagreed with options
 - Deport unauthorized immigrants
 - Some deported/some allowed to earn legal adjustment of status based on length of residence in the U.S.
 - Some deported/some allowed to earn legal adjustment of status based on needs of U.S. employers
- Lower priority
 - All allowed to earn legal adjustment of status by doing things such as paying taxes, learning English, studying civics, etc.
- No Consensus
 - If deported, assess fines before possible re-entry
 - Assess fines before allowed to earn legal adjustment of statue

Discussion

League members felt that the treatment of unauthorized immigrants should depend on how they became ‘illegal’ - that is, those who have tried to go through the system and whose legal status changed due basically to the enormous amount of time and unwieldy bureaucratic process should be treated differently from those whose entry was illegal.

The group preferred sanctions that included fines, community service, learning English and pursuit of citizenship.

LWVSJ Immigration Consensus—continued

(Continued from page 3)

Question 3 LWVSJC assigned **high priority** to groups that federal immigration law should provide an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry into the U.S. for immigrants, as follows:

- Immediate family members joining family member already admitted for legal permanent residence in the U.S.
- Those entering the U.S. to meet labor needs
- Those entering the U.S. as students
- Those entering the U.S. because of persecution in home country



Cate White and Nan Ballot at Consensus

- Improved technology to facilitate employer verification of employee visa status
- Improved technology for sharing information among federal agencies
 - A program to allow immigrant workers to go in and out of the US to meet seasonal and sporadic labor needs
 - Significant fines proportional to revenue for employers who fail to take adequate steps to verify work authorization of employees

The membership **disagreed** with physical barriers (such as fences) and surveillance at borders.

Discussion

Members felt that a fence was ineffective and exorbitantly costly. The ongoing cost of maintaining the fence would outstrip the original cost of the fence itself—and it would only divert illegal crossings to an unfenced area.

Question 5 asked us to agree or disagree with the following statement:

Federal immigration law should address and balance the long-term federal financial benefit from immigrants with the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.

The group **agreed** with the statement.

Question 6 also asked for us to either agree or disagree:

Federal immigration law and US foreign policy should pro-actively help improve economies, education and job opportunities, and living conditions of nations with large emigrating populations.

The group **agreed** with the statement.

Discussion

Many participants thought that the US foreign policy and economic policy often worked against policies set regarding immigration. It was felt that we should have a concerted effort to improve the economy of home countries as a way to curtail illegal immigration.

Another view was expressed: that US foreign economic policy is often exploitive of local economies and we should not be encouraging that kind of behavior.

Comments

Each League was afforded the opportunity to add a 250 word comment. LWVSJC added the following notes (that were not already mentioned in Discussion notes):

- Are labor *conditions* in U.S. an immigration issue?
- Path to legality should be clear and capable of expeditious navigation.
- Employer needs, while important, should not **drive** immigration law.

- To secure U.S. borders, neither a national identity card nor a fence will solve the existing problem. Only enhanced opportunities in sender countries will effectively minimize numbers of illegals here.
- Employer fines are supported **IF** supporting technology is available.
- Federal immigration law and U.S. foreign policy should be coordinated with the goal of encouraging developing countries' economies and thereby encouraging people to remain in their home countries.

Question 4a asked if, in order to deal more effectively with unauthorized immigrants, federal immigration law should include a Social Security card or other national identification card with secure identifiers for all persons residing in the U.S.. LWVSJC **disagreed**.

Discussion

While there was a suggestion that a national ID card would make it easier to travel abroad and eliminate the time and inaccuracies of the current screening system, the preponderance of League members thought that an ID card was too 'Big Brother-ish' and did not favor such a system. The group ultimately disagreed with this proposal.

Question 4b concerned federal immigration law dealing with unauthorized immigrants, asking what enforcement practices should be followed. Our League assigned **high priority** to the following:

- Increased personnel at land, air and sea entry points
- More effective tracking of persons with non-immigrant visas until they leave the county
- Verification documents, such as green cards and work permits with secure identifiers



Moderator Barbara Walker with Sally Miller, Professor Emeritus from the University of the Pacific and an expert in US immigration

LWVSJC Responds to RECORD Editorial on ABX1

LWVSJC's Advocacy Director Cate White wrote the following reply to an editorial in The Record extolling the Legislature's refusal to pass AB1X:

In reply to your editorial of 1/31 "Wrong Time for a Cure": the time for Healthcare reform is now, but we must have the right reform.

S.B. 840, the Single Payer bill, is still before the Legislature. Unlike the recently failed plan, it contains cost controls. In addition, since the state becomes the insurer, administrative costs will be drastically reduced. (Current estimates are that insurers spend up to 30% on administrative costs. In contrast, Medicare spends 3%.)

Coverage for all is assured and patients maintain the right to choose their own doctor.

The savings accrued through these cost containment measures allow the plan to include dental, mental health and long term nursing care.

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California Nurses Association Analyzes AB1X Flaws

LWVC opposed AB1x, a proposed alternative to SB840, Senator Sheila Kuehl's universal health care legislation. The California Nurses Association also opposed AB1x. Their analysis is cited below.

The Lessons of Failed CA Healthcare Reform AB1X: Bad for Organized Labor and Working People

AB1x was marketed as a model for national healthcare reform. But the plan had serious failings on access, quality, and cost that were especially dangerous for working people — and an important reminder of what to avoid in future healthcare reform proposals. Here's a Top 10 list of AB1x's problems:

1. ***Employers would have had strong incentives to drop or sharply reduce union-negotiated benefits.*** Large employers like Wal-Mart would have received corporate welfare for dumping employees into the public pool.
2. ***Forced individuals to purchase insurance policies without knowing the real cost or what coverage they would have received*** and let employers off the hook from providing benefits.
3. ***No restrictions on increases in premiums, co-pays, or deductibles.*** No meaningful cost controls on rising costs, mak-

ing the supposed affordability protections meaningless.

4. Workers would not have known what benefits they were getting — the insurance industry would have been in charge. Failed to identify covered benefits for the minimum plans which were likely to be bare-bones HMO plans ***without dental, vision, mental health, long-term care, and other essentials — all of which would have cost extra.***

5. ***Managers could have gotten better benefits than workers.*** As long as employers paid a minimum amount to a state pool for bargain-basement healthcare, employers could have gotten rid of all benefits for unionized employees.

6. Instead of providing real benefits, ***employers could have met their coverage obligation by spending money on "wellness programs," gym memberships, or health savings accounts.*** Employees who declined that "offer" of coverage would then have been ineligible for the public subsidized pool and have had to buy private insurance policies on their own.

7. ***Part-time employees did not have to be offered benefits, and employers could have misclassified workers as "independent contractors"*** and not offered them even the minimal coverage offered full-time employees.

Union trust funds would have been un-

dercut by the low employer mandate because the cheap plan becomes the new ceiling — no employer would want to pay for better benefits.

8. Workers who did not get benefits faced harsh penalties if they did not buy insurance, including garnishment of wages or mortgage liens, but there were ***no penalties for employers who did not comply.***

9. Once employers eliminated their union benefits and workers were forced into a poorly financed state HMO, ***the funding source for that HMO was not sustainable.*** The funding in part was tied to a tobacco tax, so if fewer people smoked, there was less money for the plan. Other sources were equally shaky — like a fee on hospitals that ended in five years. The state legislative analyst projected a \$3.9 billion dollar shortfall.

10. ***The levels of care that people received would have been different.*** Hospitals where wealthier people get care would have received more money while public hospitals would have been undercut because they would have lost patients, while counties would have paid up to \$1 billion in new unfunded costs for the uninsured.

Focus on LWVUS and LWVC

LWVC

ON WATER

"We fear that the Monterey Agreement may be an important contributor to the current problems in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta in that it has resulted in over-pumping and has added to the crisis in the Delta." - Janis Hirohama, President LWVC

Background From Food & Water Watch:

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) is considering privatizing a major water facility built and paid for by the public. The Kern Water Bank is an enormous underground reservoir that is part of the State Water Project, which brings water to southern California from the north.

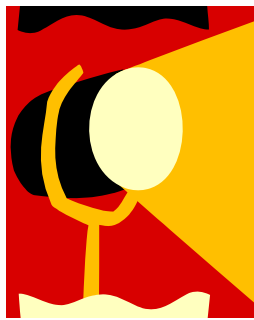
In November, a draft document of proposed modifications to the State Water Project recommended privatization of the Kern Water Bank. Rather than manage the Kern Water Bank as a public trust, the DWR would formally transfer control of the facility to the Kern Water Bank Authority, an agency dominated by private interests. The largest of these is the Paramount Farming Company, a subsidiary of Roll International, which is one of the largest privately-owned corporations in the country.

The proposed change would sanction the sale of water to the highest bidder—often new real estate developments north of Los Angeles—promoting sprawl and unsustainable development. The privatization is also a violation of California's public trust doctrine, which mandates that the state's water be managed for the benefit of all Californians.

LWVC President Janis Hirohama wrote to the DWR on this situation. Her letter is excerpted below:

January 14, 2008

The League of Women Voters of California supports measures that promote the management and development of water resources in ways that are beneficial to the environment with emphasis on conservation. We are opposed to making the Monterey Amendments to State Water Project (SWP) con-



tracts permanent. We believe that the Department of Water Resources (DWR) should operate the State Water Project as it did prior to the development of these amendments.

We oppose the Monterey Amendments for several reasons.

These amendments were developed in secret meetings between the DWR and selected SWP contractors. The League of Women Voters believes that governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know and has long worked to insure that citizens have an opportunity to provide input into policy making.

Now that the contents of the amendments have seen the light of day, we find many of their provisions to be objectionable.

The amendments eliminate provisions of the original SWP contracts that provide safeguards for urban areas in drought conditions. DWR itself estimates that in dry years, water supplies for urban homes and businesses could be reduced by over 400,000 acre-feet.

The Monterey Agreement, implemented by the Monterey Amendments, also proposes to give the state-owned Kern Water Bank to a joint powers authority including the Kern

County Water Agency. As we anticipate the effects of climate change, we feel it imperative that the state should maintain control of this important state water resource.

We are very concerned about the use of intermittently available or unreliable "paper water" sources, as allowed under the Monterey Amendments, to support uses such as housing development or permanent crops. DWR should continue to attempt to determine the realistic yield of the SWP and should not promise to provide water that cannot be reliably delivered.

We fear that the Monterey Agreement may be an important contributor to the current problems in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta in that it has resulted in over-pumping and has added to the crisis in the Delta.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report does not adequately address these concerns. We must register our opposition to making the Monterey Amendments permanent.

LWVUS

VOTER PROTECTION

The League of Women Voters Education Fund's (LWVEF) Public Advocacy for Voter Protection Project has been created to help bolster the League's capacity for continuing and expanding its critical state-based advocacy in order to prevent the disenfranchisement of eligible citizens, particularly underserved populations.

(Continued on page 7)

Of Interest to Members

(Continued from page 5)

Premiums can be significantly reduced, saving millions of tax dollars currently paid to insurance companies for teachers, police officers, firemen, and other government workers. In our current budget crisis, this money is desperately needed for essential services, not to subsidize insurance companies.

S.B. 840 is endorsed by the League of Women Voters of California, the California Nurses Association, the California School Employees Association, and other concerned groups. A Single Payer plan would not only help to alleviate our budget crisis, it would allow us to join the rest of the industrialized nations in the world who understand the necessity of providing health care for their citizens.

LWVUS: PUBLIC ADVOCACY FOR VOTER PROTECTION

(Continued from page 6)

The League is working to:

1. Oppose ID and Documentary Proof of Citizenship

As many as 21 million Americans do not have government issued picture identification cards. New laws that require a picture ID at the polls or proof of citizenship are barriers that block citizen voter participation. The League therefore opposes ID and documentary proof-of-citizenship requirements.

2. Improve Administration of Statewide Voter Database Systems

The policies and procedures that govern statewide voter registration systems directly impact whether or not eligible voters are rightfully added and wrongfully removed from the system. Proper management of the systems is essential to ensuring that all eligible voters can cast their ballots. There-

fore, the League is working to ensure the proper management of these systems.

3. Guard Against Undue Restrictions on Voter Registration

A number of states require voter registration programs of any size to register with the state; some mandate state-run training. While training and registration requirements may seem reasonable, the details of compliance can unreasonably restrict programs. Increases in fines against individuals and organizations also make it cost prohibitive for some organizations to conduct registration drives.

4. Improve Polling Place Management

The design and operation of polling places is critical to ensuring that all eligible voters can cast their vote and have their vote counted. The League believes we need to examine current practices with an emphasis on how minorities move through the polling process and on those practices that improve both efficiency and the voter's perception of voting.



5. Improve Poll Worker Training and Strengthening Poll Workers

Poll workers, more than any other individual, have direct contact with voters by helping them understand ballots and voting machines, checking registration and determining the use of provisional ballots. Because poll workers are essential to the voting process, the League is dedicated to working with elections officials to ensure there are adequate numbers of well trained poll workers.

UOP Students Volunteer to Draft History, Interview League Members, Help with Earth Day and Candidate Forums

The League will once again to be work with University of the Pacific students, both as interns and volunteers. We are particularly fortunate to have students interested in drafting a history of the San Joaquin County League, a project we have had in the wings since our first UOP intern, Allie Fidler, organized our files and prepared an outline as a working document for future work. League member Sally Miller, Professor Emeritus in History at the University, has graciously volunteered to work with the students who will be drafting a history from the 'raw data' of our files.

Other students have volunteered to help with projects from Earth Day to candidate forums. Student volunteers are engaged in community service work for their class in Sex and Gender, a class taught by League member Marcia Hernandez who is keenly interested in having students get 'real life' experience to inform their sociology/political science studies.

One project proposed by the class was to interview League members on their 'personal civic engagement.' [See front page article] This will give both students and League members an opportunity to discuss why League members chose to join the League as one way to become civically and politically engaged. This should be enlightening to both groups. The LWVUS Board is hoping to have these interviews supplement the history of our League. The Board encourages League members to participate in this interesting project that should help to engage students in the political process as seen through "League eyes."



League of Women Voters
of San Joaquin County
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www.sjc.lwvnet.org

CALENDAR

Earth Day: April 20, 2008—Victory Park, 11:00-5:00

Asparagus Festival: April 25, 26, 27, 2008—Weber Point

Candidate Forums telecast by Comcast: April 30, 2008, 7:00-10:00 p.m.

ANNUAL MEETING: June 19, 2008—6:00 p.m. **SAVE THE DATE!** Details in future Voters.

LWVC Leadership Council is scheduled for May 16-18, 2008 in Sacramento.

LWVUS Convention: June 13-17, 2008, Portland, Oregon

Board Meetings

All League members are welcome to attend Board meetings. Board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month. Meetings will be held at Hospice of San Joaquin.

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.