



The Voter

Kickoff Meeting Focuses on Climate Change

Thirty-five people gathered to hear about climate change and the impacts it could have on the Central Valley and Delta Regions at the League's Annual Kick-Off Meeting held Saturday morning, September 12th at the Valley Brewing Company in Stockton. League members and guests, with coffee in hand, were welcomed by President Jane Wagner-Tyack, who provided the group with an overview of the League's mission and its nonpartisan nature.

Environmental Committee Chair Esther Vasquez spoke about LWVSJC environmental initiatives. First Vice President and Advocacy Chair Cate White discussed the National League's position on Health Care Reform and the State League's position on redistricting, the Budget and the proposal to hold a Constitutional Convention to reform State Government. Cate also presented the 2009-10 LWVSJC Program Calendar.



Photo by Denny Ah Tye

Kickoff, continued

Second Vice President Bea Lingenfelter introduced the guest speakers. Attendees heard first from Mr. Maurice Roos, part time Chief Hydrologist and Division and Flood Management, California Department of Water Resources Consultant. Mr. Roos spoke on the impact climate change is having on the water supply, sea level and the Delta.

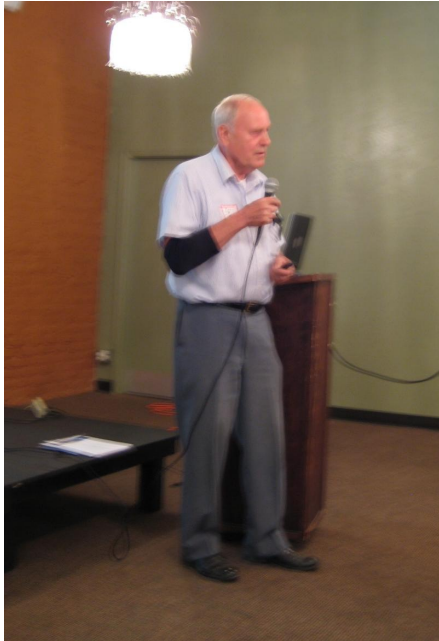


Photo by Denny Ah Tye

Mr. Roos has forty-three years water engineering experience; time enough to see patterns change in weather that affect water storage capability. Longer periods of warmer weather minimize the amount of snow pack and the amount of time snow pack accumulates in the Sierras. This causes snow pack run-off to occur earlier in the year and contain less water: a “double whammy” for a state that chiefly depends on annual snow melt for its source of water. Changes in the amount and way we use water will be necessary as this pattern continues.

**“The main greenhouse gas
on earth is water vapor.”
- Maurice Roos**

Dr. Stewart Wooley, an Assistant Professor of Biology and Plant Physiology at California State University Stanislaus, told the group that his study of the environmental data leads him to be convinced that global warming is indeed occurring. He suggests as we try to understand the science in what we read and hear about global warming, we should “stick with the basic Climate Fundamentals.” There are three large factors that effect climate; the sun, the amount of greenhouse gas, and the amount of light absorption, called “albedo.” Since people cannot change the energy the sun produces, or to a lesser extent how much light is reflected or absorbed by the earth, what is left to people is the amount of greenhouse gases we release into the environment. Climate policy will by necessity be based in lifestyle choices that can reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Following the two speaker’s talks, several League members and guests joined Mr. Roos and Dr. Wooley for lunch and stimulating conversation about climate change and what it means to San Joaquin County.

-Ava Langston-Kenney

Feeling out of touch?

In the future, look for *The Voter* to come quarterly instead of monthly or bi-monthly, a decision made by the board last spring. Also, we are still looking for someone willing to edit *The Voter*. Questions? Call President Jane Wagner-Tyack at (209) 365-1986.



Board Considers Communication Recommendations

This past summer, LWVSJC members Diane Park and Cate White surveyed about a third of LWVSJC members by telephone to find out how they prefer to receive program updates and League information. While most of those contacted would like to receive a newsletter in the mail, they understood the financial and environmental need to move the newsletter online. The survey also revealed that members appreciate getting a phone call to inform them of events.

Our demographics influence how we communicate.

- Most of our members are women of retirement age.
- We don't have email addresses for about a quarter of our members.
- About 80% of our members live in Stockton.

Clearly, we need to continue using a mix of communication strategies. Communications Consultant Caren Weintraub has given the board recommendations that include, in addition to publishing the quarterly *Voter*, updating the current website and considering a blog. A blog would allow for frequent updates and easier posting of content and photos. Social media tools like a blog could be part of a larger marketing strategy to be considered next year.

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Updating Contact Information

If you would like to receive calls about upcoming local league events or regular email updates from LWV San Joaquin County, please be sure that we have current information about you. A street address is the only information we receive about members who join at the national level, and changes in contact information made at the national level do not automatically update our local records. To update your contact information with LWVSJC, call 209-465-0293 or email LWVSJC@aol.com.

LWVUS informs us that any member can update his/her own contact information with the national League by selecting any webpage from the "For Members" menu on the national website and then selecting the "Update Your Information" menu item. After you login with your personal email address and password, you will be taken to your "My League" (Your Profile) webpage where you can change any of your personal contact information. Select the "Submit Changes" button when you are finished. Using the menu on the left-hand side of the page, you can also subscribe or unsubscribe to any League-sponsored list and/or indicate the issue areas that are of interest to you.

Environmental Committee Focuses on Water Issues

The Environmental Committee monitors and addresses San Joaquin County environmental issues while keeping in mind national and state League adopted policies and positions. The committee is interested in the nexus between natural resources, social policy, representative government, and most specifically, openness in government and advocating for public policy to promote transparency.

Because of the serious ramifications of insufficiency of water, poor water quality, and increased diversions of water through the Delta to other parts of California, against the backdrop of drastic climatic changes, drought conditions, unemployment, land use requirements, and population growth, the Environmental Committee has focused on water issues, which are fundamental to the preservation of the San Joaquin County region.

As a result of the League's participation and advocacy with San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG) in the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint, water issues are now addressed within the Blueprint Planning process. The committee continues to work with other public agencies, commissions and advisory groups to monitor water policy, and we attend related workshops and forums.

The magnitude of water-related decisions requires our concerted and decisive action. Some individuals signed on to be on the Environmental committee at the League's Kickoff meeting; however, more help is needed. Individuals can choose any level of involvement, such as monitoring and analyzing legislation or attending appropriate public or private meetings on behalf of the committee. If mobility is a problem, much of the work can be done from home by those who have a computer. Carpools can be arranged. If you would like to join the Environmental Committee please contact me at esther.ari@sbcglobal.net or (209) 477-1589.

-Esther Vasquez

A Few Words About the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP)

When it comes to a peripheral canal, the planning process to watch is the BDCP. This is a habitat conservation plan/natural communities conservation plan undertaken by water exporters to allow them to get take permits under endangered species laws. (A take permit is a permit to kill endangered species such as fish incidentally in the course of other activities.) The BDCP has focused almost exclusively on alternative conveyance of Sacramento River flows around the Delta as the best strategy for getting export water reliably to the pumps near Tracy while providing some level of protection for Delta habitat.

Planning under the BDCP is going forward with little meaningful involvement by Delta counties, communities, or water districts. San Joaquin and other Delta counties are concerned that the BDCP will have serious negative effects on agriculture and other economic activities in the region, as well as on legacy communities in the Delta and on local habitat conservation plans already in place, such as the San Joaquin County Multi-Species Habitat Conservation and Open Space Plan.

-Jane Wagner-Tyack

League of Women Voters of SJ County Program Schedule for
2009-10

All Board meetings will be 2nd Thursday @ 5:30 @ Hospice of San Joaquin's large meeting room. Members are invited. General meetings will be on Saturday mornings, also at Hospice unless otherwise announced.

September

- 10 Board Meeting
- 12 Kickoff –Topic: Climate Change, 9:30 am to noon, Valley Brew
- 19 Family Day in the Park, Stockton

October

- 8 Board Meeting

November

- 12 Board Meeting

December

- 10 Board Meeting
- 15 (Tuesday) Holiday party 6 to 8pm

January

- 12 Board Meeting
- 30 General Meeting—Topic: Urban Planning Issues, 9:30 am to noon

February

- 11 Board Meeting

March

- 11 Board Meeting
- 13 General Meeting—Topic: Flood Control and the Levee System, 9:30 am to noon

April

- 8 Board Meeting
- 18 Earth Day, Stockton
- 23-25 Asparagus Festival, Stockton

May

- 12 Board Meeting
- 15-16 (Saturday and Sunday) LWVC Leadership Council, Sacramento
- 22 General Meeting---Topic: Improving California's Budget Process, 9:30 am to noon

June

- 10 Board Meeting
- 17 Annual Meeting 5:30-8pm

Ideas for Constitutional Change in California

LWV of Sacramento County has shared an announcement of a series of panel discussions on the topic “Getting to Reform: Avenues to Constitutional Change in California.”

WHAT: A major impartial discussion of constitutional conventions, revisions, and reforms sponsored by UC Berkeley, CSU Sacramento, and Stanford University

WHEN: Wednesday, October 14, 2009, 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

WHERE: Sacramento Convention Center

REGISTRATION: Free at <http://igs.berkeley.edu/events/reform2010.html>

Panels will include “What do Californians Think about Reform?” “Lessons Learned from California’s Record of Reform,” “Comparing Avenues to Reform: Initiatives, Revision Commission, or Convention?” and “Next Steps to Reform.”

After redistricting, constitutional change may be the next big step to be taken in getting California government to function efficiently.

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LWVSJC Board of Directors for 2009-2010

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Jane Wagner-Tyack, President
Cate White, 1st Vice President
Bea Lingenfelter, 2nd Vice President
Ava Langston-Kenney, Secretary
Ann Pentecost, Treasurer

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Find us on the web at www.sjc.lwvnet.org

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.