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Members Prepare for Education and Advocacy

Faced with the need to meet online instead of in person due to COVID-19, LWVSC took a different approach to program planning this year.

At a meeting on January 30, Cate White introduced members to how the League does advocacy at the national, state, and local levels. Jane Wagner-Tyack followed with an overview of state League Program and a Zoom poll asking members what issues they wanted to recommend to the California League as issues for Education and Advocacy for the 2021-2123 biennium. Recommendations from local Leagues around California will be considered when the state League meets for Convention in June. LWVSC members selected Housing and Homelessness, Climate Change, and Immigration as priority issues to recommend.

On February 20, about 20 LWVSC members met again to choose local issues for education and advocacy for the coming League year. All members had been invited to propose educational meetings that they would be willing to organize. Sixteen proposals were submitted. At the February 20 meeting, facilitated by Juelle-Ann Boyer, members heard from those who had made proposals. Discussions followed.

Based on the proposals submitted, Jeri Bigbee had prepared a Zoom poll of ten topics. The top three topics members selected were Housing and Homelessness, Climate Change and Education. Pending approval by the board of directors, these

are the topics that members will be asked at the annual meeting to adopt as Issues for Education and Advocacy for 2021-2022. In addition to these three topics, members expressed interest in the Public's Right to Know and Criminal Justice.

A feedback survey was sent to all participants, and about half responded. Several responders commented that proposals could have been grouped in advance for more efficient discussion, instead of being presented in the order they were received. It was challenging to develop a poll that lined up with the proposals, and some responders felt that their poll vote didn't necessarily reflect their issue preferences.

What's next? We need to develop a framework for choosing and scheduling educational meetings. LWVSC does not at this point have a member to oversee meeting scheduling and other arrangements and report to the board of directors. Fortunately, because meetings will be virtual for the foreseeable future, we have opportunities and flexibility that we wouldn't have if we had to plan and schedule in-person meetings.

Although no one has volunteered to oversee this process, several members volunteered to collaborate on specific topics, including identifying a presenter or presenters. It was suggested that information of an educational nature be included in *The Voter* if virtual meetings are not possible due to timing.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our recent meeting to discuss program priorities was a wonderful experience of collaboration. It was especially rewarding as it was a new model for us. We discussed, we learned, and we made informed decisions about our focus for emphasis moving forward.

One of the issues on our Zoom poll, although it was not one of the three selected for education and advocacy, was criminal justice reform. Nevertheless, criminal justice reform, including juvenile justice reform, received some interest in our program planning discussion. Recent efforts at criminal justice reform will have an effect on San Joaquin County and the administration of juvenile justice moving forward, affecting children and youth, families and neighborhoods in our community.

We know that violent crime, particularly gun violence, is a national concern. And we know statistically that our violent crime rate locally has gone up in the recent past. We also know that a disproportionate number of youths as young as 13 are perpetrators of gun violence and/or are victims of shootings themselves.

The 1980s and '90s saw a concerted political effort to "get tough on crime," and the mantra included "do an adult crime, do adult time." Fourteen year olds could be tried in adult court and sentenced to adult prisons. It took two years for the system to self-correct, recognizing that putting children in adult prisons, to be influenced and preyed upon by adult offenders, was not only immoral but was also against the California Welfare and Institutions Code, which forbids youthful offenders to be within "sight or sound" of adults incarcerated in adult institutions.

During that two year period, the California Department of Corrections invited me to work with these 14 to 16 year olds in an adult prison. I went in with a team focusing on the use of nonviolent means to resolve disputes...highly successful with adults. I found these young people to be children in so many ways; it was hard even to get them to sit



Gretchen Newby, President

still in a group. This incarceration strategy was damaging and inhumane on so many levels.

We now recognize that while both youthful offenders and adults need treatment in order to change some of their antisocial behaviors, the methodology is very different. We now recognize the concept of "transition age," and we acknowledge that adolescence does not end until the third decade of life, with a gradual movement to adulthood.

SB 823, a pivotal bill for juvenile justice, creates a new state Office of Youth and Community Restoration, replacing the current Division of Juvenile Justice (California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and formerly the California Youth Authority). The new Office of Youth and Community Restoration (OYCR) will be housed within the Health and Human Services Agency. The OYCR will identify policy recommendations for improved outcomes and integrated programs and services to best support delinquent youth, and provide technical assistance as requested to develop and expand local youth diversion opportunities to meet the varied needs of the delinquent youth population.

Growing Our Membership: A Call to Action

by Susan Mora Loyko, LWVSJC Membership Committee Chair

When The League of Women Voters began more than a 100 years ago, it became known as a "mighty political experiment." Millions of women worked hard and suffered insults, physical harm, imprisonment, rejection by their families and friends, all because they wanted the right to vote and take part in their government to have their voices heard and issues addressed. Today, the purpose of the LWV is just as important as it was 100 years ago, maybe even more so.

Becoming Membership Committee Chair in a pandemic has not afforded me many opportunities to reach out into the community to grow our membership this last year. But as we begin to slowly and safely move forward, there are still ways in which we can share the importance of joining the LWVSJC. And that effort begins with us.

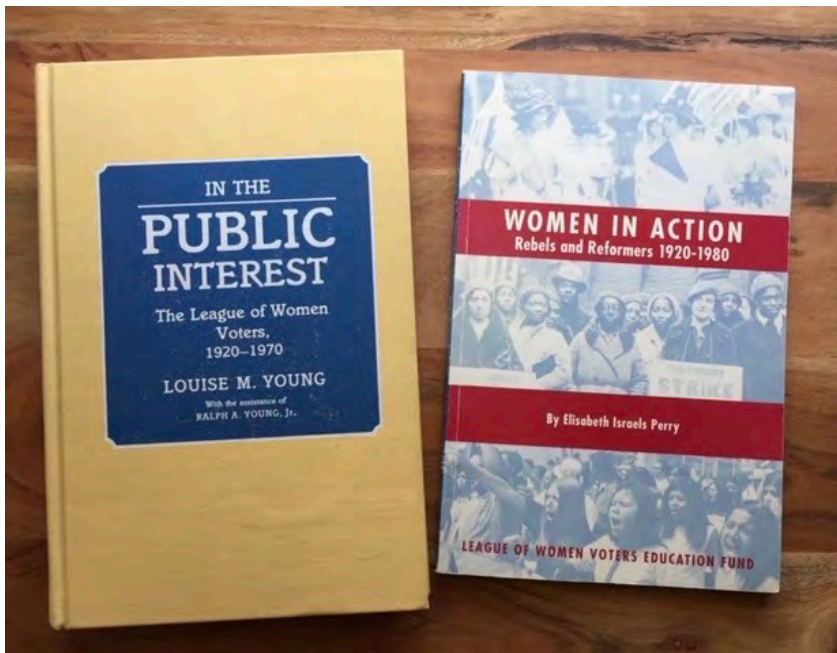
Data shows potential volunteers want to believe their efforts, no matter how big or small, can make a difference. Growing our League membership starts

with each one of us reaching out to our contacts to promote League membership.

Each of us needs to reach out to friends, families, co-workers, church members community contacts to share our individual stories about why we are League members. We need to share our amazing history and accomplishments to make differences (big and small) on vitally important issues and learn about candidates to make our communities better places in which to live.

Being a League member is not all about work, it is also an opportunity to meet and work with other community members while having fun as well. Together we can make our community a better place for all us to live, work and play.

If you would like to know more about how we can work together to grow our membership, please give me a call (209-479-1944) or send me an email (smloyko@gmail.com).



From a League of Women Voters of California history of the League from the 1920s through the 1950s (not pictured here) reprinted in 1996:

“The depression of the early ‘30s left its mark on the League of Women Voters as on almost every institution of American life. [...] One is aware, however, of a remarkable feeling of stability in a chaotic world in the League’s work at this time, as in the next decade when the world was at war—a refusal to panic and a steadfast assertion that the principles of democratic government are still of primary importance.”

MY LEAGUE STORY Daphne Shaw

Daphne Shaw joined LWVSJC in 2006 at the urging of her friend, member Dee Matteucci. Daphne says that she has been interested for many years in the legislative and electoral process. She worked to register voters in the early seventies in south Stockton and did poll watching, inspired to do so by San Joaquin County Supervisor Dario Marengo.

Daphne became a member of the League Board in 2007 and was soon involved in organizing the 2008 Comcast candidate forums. “I remember my panic when a candidate objected to the League panelist just before going on the air,” she recalls. “Fortunately, League member Donna Brown came to the rescue and suggested I replace the panelist with another League member who was in the studio.” Daphne has continued to be a reliable participant in candidate forums, usually as a panelist. LWVSJC has also benefitted from her analytical skills, for example when she wrote an overview of crop insurance as part of a local League study on updating the LWVUS Agriculture Position.



A graduate of San Jose State University with a degree in Bacteriology, Daphne interned at the California Department of Public Health before working for 52 years as a Public Health and Clinical Microbiologist, retiring at 73. She was a member of the San Joaquin Local Health District Board of Trustees representing the City of Stockton, before it became part of County government in 1989.

The interest in civic engagement that attracted Daphne to the League is illustrated by her long-time advocacy for mental health services. She has been an advocate for these services since 1977, after her husband was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. She served on the San Joaquin County Mental/Behavioral Health Board for more than 30 years. She has been a member of a number of state councils over the years, including an appointment by State Assembly Speaker Willie Brown. She currently sits on the California Behavioral Health Planning Council. She is a supporter of services in the community and does not support the expansion of involuntary care. Most recently, she worked on legislation to protect the rights of patients that was authored by then-Assemblymember Susan Eggman in 2018 and 2019.

A widow with two sons and three grandchildren, Daphne has had interesting opportunities to travel. She visited the Azores Islands to see the birthplace of her father and her maternal grandfather, and she attended her son’s wedding in Turkey and her grandson’s wedding in Italy. But some of her travel is more adventurous. “I like to travel to places such as the Arctic, the Great Bear Rain Forest, Churchill, and Manitoba,” she says, “to see the flora and fauna before it is gone.” Daphne is pictured here in Churchill with a *living* Great Grey Owl—“She acts as an ambassador.”

Superior Court Seeking Grand Jury Applicants

The San Joaquin County Superior Court is seeking applicants to serve on the fiscal year 2021-2022 San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury. The Civil Grand Jury inquires into and investigates the functions and operations of governmental bodies, agencies and public officials within San Joaquin County, as well as investigates complaints received from the public.

Past reports have focused on juvenile group homes, community college and school districts, jail operations, special districts and housing authorities. Reports can be viewed at <https://www.sjcourts.org/divisions/civil-grand-jury/#/2018/reports>.

The Grand Jury consists of nineteen individuals whose names are randomly selected from applicants nominated by the Judges of the Superior Court. Members of the 2021-2022 Civil Grand Jury will begin serving August 1, 2021.

Due to COVID-19 social distancing requirements, applicants must be able to work via telephonic or video appearance (a smart

phone and internet access are required). A Grand Juror must be at least 18 years of age, a United States citizen who has resided in San Joaquin County for at least one year, possess sufficient knowledge of the English language, and is not now serving as a trial juror or elected public official. Applications can be found on the court's website at <http://www.sjcourts.org/general-info/civil-grand-jury> or by calling (209) 992-5290. **The deadline for application submission is April 2, 2021.**

Several League members have served on the Civil Grand Jury, including Jeri Bigbee, who is currently serving. Jeri reports that it has been an invaluable learning experience. The time commitment is about 1-2 days per week. Most folks that serve on the Jury are retired, due to the time commitment. It's a great opportunity to meet and work closely with a diverse group of community members from throughout the County who care about local government and civic engagement. If you're interested, you can contact Jeri at jeribigbee@gmail.com.



Photo by [Andrew Neel](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Redistricting



The 2020 California Citizens Redistricting Commission and the California Statewide Databases have launched the Communities of Interest (COI) input tool, which is designed to make it easier for Californians to participate in the redistricting process.

Every 10 years, after the federal government publishes updated census information, California must redraw the boundaries of its Congressional, State Senate, State Assembly, and State Board of Equalization districts so that the state's population is evenly allocated among the new districts. When the Commission creates new districts, it must follow certain guidelines, one of which is to learn about communities across California and to keep communities together in the new districts when possible.

Through the COI tool, Californians can tell the Commission about their community, draw their community on a map, and submit it directly to the Commission as public input. They can do it from home by visiting <https://drawmycacomunity.org/>. The tool will be available in multiple languages. The Commission is preparing a paper-based form to gather similar input from people without internet access. Participants may submit input anonymously.

In addition to the map drawing feature, the COI tool will capture anecdotal information that will be used to help shape the boundaries of a community. Visitors to the site will be asked to describe their community by answering the following questions:

1. Give your community a name.
2. Tell us about your community. What are your shared interests? What brings you together? What is important to your community?
3. Are there nearby areas you want to be in a district with? Nearby areas you don't want to be in a district with? Why or why not?
4. Is there anything else you can tell us about your community?

San Joaquin County Water Quality

For over half a century, the League of Women Voters of the U.S. has worked to protect air, land, and water resources. The LWVUS policy position on Water Resources notes that “Passage of an expanded Safe Drinking Water Act in 1986 and the Clean Water Act of 1987 marked important milestones in the League’s effort to ensure safe drinking water for all Americans and safeguards against nonpoint pollution.”

The Clean Water Act requires California to develop a plan to protect water quality and to update this plan every three years. A major part of this effort is development of a Bay-Delta Water Quality Control plan by the State Water Resources Control Board. The most recent plan was adopted in 1995—over 25 years ago.

In 2009, the Water Board initiated a process to update the Bay-Delta Plan. Phase 1 of the process deals with San Joaquin River flows, which involve tributaries to the San Joaquin, including the Stanislaus, the Tuolumne, and the Merced rivers. Phase 1 also deals with southern Delta salinity issues, which are important for water quality in southern San Joaquin County.

The Water Board adopted flow standards for Phase 1. But before the standards could be implemented, and before the board could finish its work on Phase 2—standards for the Sacramento River and its tributaries—water users throughout the Bay-Delta watershed (including the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, which relies on Tuolumne River flows from Hetch-Hetchy) proposed to substitute Voluntary Agreements for the Water Board’s standards.

In his 2020 Water Resilience Portfolio, Governor Newsom set a state goal not to update the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan but rather to focus on developing the voluntary agreements that water users prefer to the Water Board’s stricter flow guidelines.

Why should we in San Joaquin County care about this process? The most obvious reason is harmful algal blooms—HABs—that make local water toxic for fish and people. As Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla notes in a recent Restore the Delta update:

The years of extended drought during the last decade and the lack of freshwater flows moving through the estuary set the stage for degraded water quality conditions that manifested in the growth of harmful algal blooms (HABs). Over the last seven years, warmer weather, lack of pollution enforcement by state agencies, and ramped up water exports by federal law and presidential executive orders, have further degraded our water quality baseline and HABs have proliferated. Governor Newsom will have to decide whether to allow the State and Federal water projects to violate water quality standards in the Delta, leading to more harmful algal blooms that will devastate our communities, and its native fish and wildlife, or to follow a new path. Because baseline conditions in the Delta are worse than seven years ago, the situation is more dire.

If you would like to discuss how our local League might address this situation, please contact Jane Wagner-Tyack at JaneTyack@mac.com.

**MEMBER RENEWAL
SEASON**
Open now to June 30.
Please renew NOW.

Mark your calendars for the 2021 LWVSJC Annual Meeting, June 5, 2021. Details to follow; the meeting will be virtual.

Moving forward into the upcoming League year

The Nominating Committee is now welcoming volunteers and suggestions for members to serve on the Board of Directors for the upcoming term (2021-2023). Please contact Susan Mora Loyko at smloyko@gmail.com or (209) 479-1944 with recommendations or if you would like to volunteer to serve on the Board.

Other committees that could use a few hours of your time:

- ❖ Membership: Susan Mora Loyko, smloyko@gmail.com, (209) 479-1944
- ❖ Advocacy: Jeri Bigbee, jeribigbee@gmail.com, (209) 931-6871

Proposals for Education and Advocacy for the coming year have not yet been submitted to the membership, but members have expressed an interest in several issues areas. If you are interested in working on any of these issues, please contact the members listed below:

- ❖ Housing and Homelessness: Jeri Bigbee, jeribigbee@gmail.com, (209) 931-6871
- ❖ Climate Change: Margo Praus, margopraus@msn.com, (209) 670-4442
- ❖ Education and Civic Engagement: Donna Brown, dmbrown737@comcast.net, (209) 951-2311
- ❖ Criminal Justice: Gretchen Newby, gnewby@aol.com, (209) 466-1731
- ❖ Redistricting: Cate White, blckbrd98@aol.com, (209) 823-3381
- ❖ Water: Jane Wagner-Tyack, JaneTyack@mac.com, (209) 642-5105

Board and other meetings will be mostly virtual for the foreseeable future, so driving distance need not be an impediment to participation!

2020-2021 LWVSJC Board of Directors and Portfolios

Officers

Gretchen Newby, President
Kathy Casenave, 1st Vice President
Jeri Bigbee, 2nd Vice President
Judith Buethe, Secretary
Bev Blum, Treasurer

Directors

Juelle-Ann Boyer
Mary Kenefick
Angelica Lizarraga
Elsie Lucchesi
Ronda Sanders
Jane Wagner-Tyack

Nominating Committee

Susan Mora Loyko
Lauren Ah-Tye
Bea Lingenfelter

Portfolios

Webmaster – Walt White
Voter Services/Speakers Bureau –
Kathy Casenave, Bea Lingenfelter
Advocacy – Jeri Bigbee
Voter Editors – Jane Wagner-Tyack,
Mary Kenefick

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

Membership Renewal

(Dues are payable by June 30 for the year beginning July 1.)

Mail this form with your check, or renew online at www.sjc.ca.lwvnet.org

Basic membership - Includes local, state and national League membership, helping the organization at all levels to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Covers basic local League expenses.

___ \$90 Basic individual membership

___ \$140 Household membership - two or more members residing at the same address

Individuals and households able to support LWVSJC's mission at a level beyond covering our basic expenses are encouraged to become members at the Mission Support level.

___ \$150 Mission Support membership

You may also participate with LWVSJC as a non-voting Friend of the League and receive regular updates and invitations to participate in our activities.

___ \$30 Friend of the League

There is no charge for student memberships. To renew your full membership at a lower rate than the rates shown above, please send an email request to LWVSJC@gmail.com.

Name (s) _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Telephone: (home) _____ (work) _____ (cell) _____

Email _____

Special interests _____

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.

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___ 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 insure the Ed Fund's status as a charitable and tax deductible organization.