



March 2024

# The Voter

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

## March Membership Meeting

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League of Women Voters  
of San Joaquin County

### CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HISTORY THROUGH A WOMEN-INSPIRED BOOK DISCUSSION

Saturday, March 16, 2024  
10:00 am to 11:30 am

Cesar Chavez Central Library  
(Stewart-Hazelton Room)  
605 N. El Dorado Street, Stockton

*Bring a book by a woman or about a woman to share and give away.  
Let's get inspired by women-centered books and leave with a new book to read!*

Morning refreshments will be served.  
Friends of League members are welcomed.

League of Women Voters of  
San Joaquin County  
P.O. Box 4548  
Stockton, CA 95204

Email: [LWVSJC@gmail.com](mailto:LWVSJC@gmail.com)  
<http://www.sjc.ca.lwvnet.org>






## call for NOMINATIONS

**W**e are just starting the LWVSJC annual nominations cycle for 2024. The Nominating Committee will be reaching out to members asking if you would be willing to serve on the Board. If you already know you'd like to take a more active role, please contact Margo Praus at 209-670-4442 or [margopraus@msn.com](mailto:margopraus@msn.com).

The League Board of Directors consists of the officers of the League (president, first vice president, second vice president, secretary and treasurer), and up to six elected directors. The duties of each office are written in the by-laws, which you can access via our web site: <http://www.sjc.ca.lwvnet.org>.

The President is elected each year while the first vice president and secretary are elected one year and the second vice president and treasurer are elected the following year, with each officer serving a two-year term. One-half of the directors are elected at each annual meeting. All directors and officers except the president serve a two-year term, from July 1-June 30.

This year, we will elect a President, First Vice President, Secretary, and three directors.

There's also the option of serving on the Nominating Committee for 2025! We are seeking three League members for this committee; the Board will select two board-members to complete the committee for the year. Think about serving on this committee. (It's a short commitment!)

Sometimes, it's hard for some of us to take that first step. It may sound overwhelming, but the Board works collaboratively together. If you'd like to get a better sense of what being on the Board might entail before making a commitment, think about sitting in on a Board meeting. Contact Jane Wagner-Tyack at [janetyack@mac.com](mailto:janetyack@mac.com) for the Zoom link to join the March or April Board meeting.

**Our members make our League strong. You can help us thrive into the future.**

- Margo Praus, Chair  
LWVSJC Nominating Committee

## Seeking Nominations for the Helen Pearson Award

- Christeen Ferree

**H**elen Pearson held the office of President of the LWVSJC twice during the early 1950's. She was known to be a "tireless observer" of local government activities, was active in Voter Service, and served as our local League historian and parliamentarian. Our League created the Helen Pearson Award in 1978 in her memory.

This award is presented to a League member in good standing who has made an outstanding contribution through work on a special project or action-related activity, has performed exceptionally well in a Board position, or has worked hard for the League in some capacity, showing a real sense of commitment and having performed their endeavors with "diligence and good cheer."

If you know someone who fits this description, let us know.

Submit your nomination, with a brief summary of the reasons for your nomination, to any member of the Helen Pearson Award Committee by **May 1, 2024**. The Award will be presented at this year's Annual Meeting on June 1st.

### Committee Members

Christeen Ferree  
[bcferree@gmail.com](mailto:bcferree@gmail.com)

Colleen Foster  
[malialani@comcast.net](mailto:malialani@comcast.net)

Daphne Shaw  
[dshaw1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dshaw1@sbcglobal.net)

# San Joaquin County Water update

- Jane Wagner-Tyack, Program Director  
and Legislative Consultant for Water for LWC



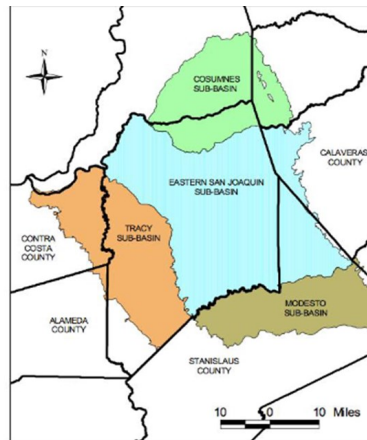
**I**n defiance of political boundaries, groundwater in San Joaquin County has arranged itself in two separate groundwater basins, one on the northeast side and the other on the southwest.

Under the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), they are treated differently.

On the northeast side, the Eastern San Joaquin Subbasin has a deeply over-drafted area that puts it in the “critical” category for managing the situation. The Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority (ESJGA), made up of 16 cities and irrigation districts, submitted a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) in January 2020, and the Department of Water Resources (DWR) approved the plan which allowed the area to retain local control of its groundwater resources. The plan has to be updated every five years.

A group of environmental and social justice organizations has filed a suit arguing that DWR should not have approved this or some other GSPs because the plans’ water table goals are not high enough; they don’t provide enough protection for domestic wells (the heaviest use is from agriculture); and the plans cause adverse impacts on interconnected surface waters. ESJGA is working right now on a domestic well mitigation plan.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture has a State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program (SWEET) that provides grants to implement irrigation systems that reduce greenhouse gases and save water on California agricultural operations. Stockton East Water District, South San Joaquin Irrigation District, and North San Joaquin Water Conservation District have received a grant for this subbasin that will allow some local farmers to pay for water-saving projects on their land.



*Map of San Joaquin County and adjoining counties, with groundwater subbasins outlined.*

The Tracy Subbasin, which DWR has designated a “medium” priority groundwater basin, consists of the roughly one-third of San Joaquin County that is southwest of the San Joaquin River. It includes the cities of Lathrop and Tracy, along with several irrigation districts and a reclamation district. Because this basin is medium priority, the agencies in the area had until January 2022 to submit a

GSP. DWR has now approved that plan.

San Joaquin County Public Works Director Fritz Buchman reports that while there are minor groundwater quality issues to be addressed, the Tracy Subbasin has not experienced the kinds of problems that are affecting groundwater basins further down the Central Valley: chronic lowering of groundwater levels, significant reduction in groundwater storage, surface water depletion, and land subsidence due to groundwater extraction. Those are the kinds of problems that led to passage of SGMA to begin with.

Sustainable management of California’s groundwater is extremely important as we confront the water-related challenges of climate change, with periods of drought alternating with periods of flooding. California’s surface water has been over-allocated by over five times, which means that the state’s complicated system of dams and conveyance facilities has almost never delivered what agricultural users thought they could count on. To compensate, growers have used groundwater to sustain their operations, frequently causing groundwater overdraft, land subsidence, and damage to domestic wells. Even with green lawns and swimming pools, urban Southern California along with other urban areas use only a third as much water as agriculture uses. Ag interests continue to push costly infrastructure investments over conservation strategies and have the political influence to impact decisions.



# Candidate Forums Make an Impact

- Suzy Daveluy

Our League, in conjunction with community partners, presented eight candidate forums which provided voters with opportunities to hear directly from candidates before casting their ballots.

## Judgeship Highlighted

A Zoom discussion featuring candidates for Judge of the Superior Court, Office 3, was attended by over 30 people on February 4th while more than 170 people have viewed the forum which was taped. The forum was planned by Jane Wagner-Tyack with assistance from Alane Dashner and Suzy Daveluy. David Diskin provided major technical assistance for the live streamed event. Mark Bowman moderated the forum for the only contested judgeship on the ballot.

## Delta College Forums

Seven forums were held at San Joaquin Delta College with major support from Delta's Politics and Law Club. Forums featured candidates for mayor of the City of Stockton, as well as for Stockton councilmembers who will represent Districts 2, 4, and 6.

Candidates were asked questions posed by League members, Delta Politics and Law Club students, and reporters from the Stockton *Record*. Questions focused on many issues facing Stockton. Dr. Cirian Villavicenzio, political science professor at SJ Delta College, moderated one of forums. Several of the forums were very well attended by the public who were demonstrably interested in what candidates had to say.

League members provided indispensable support for these forums, led by the indefatigable efforts of LWVSJC 1st Vice President Terri Mercer. From moderators (Pam Eibeck, Bea Lingenfelter, Ann Johnston, Jane Wagner-Tyack, Ronda Sanders) to panelists (Cindy Milford, Van Ha To-Cowell) to time-keepers (Denny Shaw, and Patricia Voss), League members played an essential role in the forums which could not have taken place without them.

Suzy Daveluy set the stage for each forum with background information on the League, forum rules, and voting deadlines, while other League members served as candidate greeters and hospitality hosts (Mary Ann Cox-Martin, Mary Kenefick, Bette Outlaw, Margo Praus, and Patti Williams).

Delta college recorded the forums which can be viewed on the League's You Tube channel.

## District 4 City Council

The League was invited by the First Unitarian Universalist Church to present a forum to its congregation focused on Stockton's City Council, District 4. An audience of over 50 interested voters attended the February 24th event. A recording of the forum can be accessed on the League's YouTube channel.

The League looks forward to hosting candidate forums in the Fall in advance of the November General Election.



## *President's Message*

- Mary Kenefick



As I write this, we are anxiously awaiting the March 5th primaries to definitively establish the nature of the General Election to

come. The good news is that it is widely opined by the pundits that our democracy may just survive, but (we are cautioned) only if we are vigilant, and work fiercely hard for the next few months to correct misinformation, defend truth and perhaps above all, get out the vote.

We also just learned that the Supreme Court has taken the pending immunity case so critical to the question of the durability of our American democracy's rule of law. The Court's decision in this case could have far-reaching effects. That it does not acutely deepen political divisions and ignite violence is to be hoped. For better or worse, we shall see.

In the midst of all this, I want to profusely thank those who are working so hard to achieve League objectives, and in particular the crews of many League forums lately held in Stockton. I don't dare list names, because I cannot give you a complete list, and I would not want to slight any contribution, because all are important. I will say that without pretty heroic contributions from Terri Mercer and Suzy Daveluy, little would have been accomplished. Our deep and sincere thanks to you all.

## In Memoriam

**Past League President  
Eleanor Shimeall, 100 hundred  
years old, passed away on  
February 28, 2024**

Eleanor was a vibrant, curious, committed advocate for the League and any endeavor she undertook. She was the LWVSJC president from 1989-1990, having served on the LWV California Board. While serving on the LWVC Board, she was the principal author of the Water Study that is the basis of the LWVC water position on which the League still relies.

Among Eleanor's many activities was the development of solar box cookers. In 1980, her husband was



president of the board of Solar Cookers International, headquartered in Sacramento. Eleanor embraced SCI's goal to enable undeveloped countries to cook without long walks to find wood and to sanitize water. Eleanor published three solar cookbooks and soon had a large Stockton following of enthusiasts, including Bev Blum who subsequently became the Director of SCI.

Clark Shimeall was a geologist for a large oil company and they traveled throughout the world, settling in Stockton in 1968, where Clark

taught at UOP. In each state, Eleanor joined the local League. They had five children who often visited after they moved to Borrego Springs. Always innovating, they built the first strawbale house in the county.

Through Eleanor's generosity, our LWVSJC Ed Fund was endowed with a large donation, enabling our outreach for many years. She continued as a member of our League throughout her time in Borrego Springs.

Eleanor was an inspiration and dear friend.

- Diane Park

**Past League President  
Linda Fawcett: 1945-2021**

Linda K Fawcett, an active member of our community for many years, died peacefully on January 21, 2021 in the company of her dear husband of 46 years, Joe Griffin, her 2 daughters, and 2 granddaughters. Her son and three grandsons were with them in spirit. She had 6 great-grandchildren who enchanted her and an extended family she cherished.

Born in San Antonio, Texas, where her father was stationed with the Air Force. the family soon moved to the Panama Canal Zone, where she was surrounded by a doting extended family and had a happy and interesting childhood.

Linda came to Stockton to attend the University of the Pacific and earned her degree in education



with an emphasis in special education. While attending UOP she took part-time jobs with the County Dependent Children's Home and the Children's Home of Stockton. Her experiences in these settings led to her lifelong passion for helping those in need.

Linda was very generous with her time and talent; she was a leader in the Community Council of Stockton and the Women's Center of San Joaquin County (where she served on the Board of Directors and as Board President before becoming its first Executive Director). She served on various boards in Santa Cruz County where she lived after Stockton.

Linda served as LWVSJC President from 1985 to 1987, and received the Helen B. Pearson Award in 1989 for her many contributions to our League.

Linda loved to travel and did so extensively with Joe and with friends. She had a lifelong interest in sports gained from her father's involvement in coaching. She loved to write and was an avid storyteller. She was intense and easy-going at the same time, a lover of fun and a hard worker, a dear friend to so many.

- Mary Bava

# Don't Overlook the Primary Audience Told

**W**ell over 100 people, most of them community members, attended the February 3rd program focusing on the importance of the Primary Election.

## Electing Good Candidates

Stockton council candidates and candidates for the Board of Supervisors can be elected in a Primary Election if they receive 50%+1 votes. Only 28% of registered voters cast a ballot in the March 2022 election, which means that approximately 14% of county voters decided who would represent us.

Panelists—former Stockton City Councilmember Elbert Holman, former San Joaquin County Supervisor Chuck Winn, and Senator Susan Talamantes Eggman—said that makes it really important to pay attention to the Primary Election. Columnist Joe Mathews echoed this call in his February 5th column: *“Voters usually focus on November, when the whole country goes to the polls. But California voters have more choices in the March election, when their ballots have the widest variety of candidates. March is thus the election voters should prioritize.”*

“Learn about the candidates” urged all three presenters. This is the best way to make well-considered choices. Senator Eggman also said she believes “representation matters”—we need a cross section of officials with different lived experiences that reflect the community at large.

The panelists also agreed on traits that make a good elected official: listen to your community, prepare to make good decisions by studying the issues that come before you, ask questions, and base your decisions on the community’s best interests.

## Proposition 1: Pros and Cons

League member Bea Lingenfelter delivered an excellent presentation on the Pros and Cons of the complex Proposition 1, the only measure on the March ballot. She outlined the elements of the proposition which is actually two pieces of legislation in one: a realignment of the Mental Health Services Act and a bond measure that would fund housing and treatment facilities for chronically homeless people with alcohol or substance abuse issues, with some funds targeted to veterans.

In addition to giving clear, factual information about a multifaceted measure, Bea’s presentation introduced the audience to how the League approaches legislative measures that come before the voters.



Bea also informed the audience about the League’s web site VOTE 411, where voters can get information on candidates. For more information, check the LWVC web site: [www.lwvc.org](http://www.lwvc.org)

## Proposition 1: Three Different Views

Most of the audience wanted to hear about Proposition 1. Speakers gave three different perspectives on the intent and impact of the measure. Senator Susan Eggman spoke to the need for revamping the Mental Health Services Act to better serve “the sickest of the sick” in our communities, especially in the homeless population. “Change is hard,” acknowledged the senator, “but I hope nobody is arguing that we maintain the status quo because the status quo is not acceptable.”

Taking an informational stance, San Joaquin County Behavioral Health Director Genevieve Valentine said there will be financial and service impacts on the county and the people her department serves if Prop 1 passes. She said the county would have to restructure existing services if the proposition passes. Changing to a new service model would incur \$1.7M in administrative costs, \$900,000 of which would be ongoing. She said the focus would shift from treatment intervention to housing intervention.

LaTanya Ri’Chard, a peer support specialist with Californians Against Prop. 1, stated she feels that Proposition 1 would make the homeless situation in California worse, not better. She feared that early intervention, recovery, and peer support services which help people deal with a wide array of difficulties could be cut, resulting in fewer services for those in need.

## **LWVSJC CALENDAR: 2023-2024**

### **Membership Events**

March 5	Primary Election
March 16	Women's History Month Book Sharing
April 13	New Member Welcome/ Program Planing
May 18	Warehousing Impacts
June 1	Annual Meeting
June 27-30	LWVUS Convention/ Washington, D.C.

### **Lunch and Learn**

March 12	Tama Brisbane, Stockton Poet Laureate Emerita
April 9	Petra Linden, St. Mary's Community Services (formerly St. Mary's Dining Room)
May 14	Jane Wagner-Tyack on California Water Issues

*Lunch and Learns are held on Tuesdays at Papapavlos in Lincoln Center in Stockton. Attendees gather at 11:30.*

*Reservations are needed to secure appropriate meeting room.*

## **Board Meeting Schedule**

March 18	Board Meeting
April 15	Board Meeting
May 20	Board/ Ed Fund
	Board Meeting
June 17	Board Meeting

**Board meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.**

**Members are welcome** to attend Board meetings. If you wish to attend a Board meeting, please contact Jane Wagner-Tyack: [janetyack@mac.com](mailto:janetyack@mac.com) for the Zoom link..

**Minutes of the Board meetings** are posted on our web site: <http://www.sjc.ca.lwvnet.org>.

## **2023-2024 LWVSJC Board of Directors**

### **Officers**

Mary Kenefick, President  
Terri Mercer, 1st Vice President  
Suzy Daveluy, 2nd Vice President  
Colleen Foster, Secretary  
Bill Loyko, Treasurer

### **Directors**

Mary Ann Cox-Martin  
Ronda Sanders  
Daphne Shaw  
Patricia Voss  
Jane Wagner-Tyack  
Cate White

## **Standing Committees**

**Advocacy:** Daphne Shaw, Chair  
Communication

**Finance:** Bill Loyko, Chair

**Membership:** Susan Loyko, Chair

**Nominating:** Margo Praus, Chair

**Helen Pearson Award:**  
Christeen Ferree, Chair

**Voter Service:** Suzy Daveluy, Chair

**Webmaster:** Walt White

**Voter Editor:** Colleen Foster

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.