



The Voter

Summer 2024

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

Annual Meeting Highlights

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Thirty League members met at Papapavlo's Restaurant on June 8th to conclude the League year at our Annual Meeting. Guest speaker Dr. Teresa Bergman, Professor of Communication at the University of the Pacific, spoke about



women's representation in public civic memorials in the United States. She spoke of the Eleanor Roosevelt statue at the FDR memorial in Washington, D.C.; the Women's Suffrage Memorial (a sculpture of suffragists Susan

B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Lucretia Mott) that stands in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol; and the Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historical Park in Richmond, California. Only 6% of civic monuments in the U.S. feature women and their accomplishments.

President Mary Kenefick began the business meeting by thanking several League members who contributed to the League's success this year. She highlighted the accomplishments of the Voter Service committee, in particular Terri Mercer and Suzy Daveluy for the highly successful Primary Election candidate forums.

Discussion of our League's finances took center stage during the presenta-

tion of the Treasurer's report. As of June 6, 2024, the League's General Fund had a balance of \$7,895.99, two thousand dollars less than was in this account in June 2023. Our Ed Fund had a balance of \$13,535.81, also two thousand fewer dollars than this account had a year ago. A fund development effort will be underway during the upcoming year.

Members received news about the transformation of the League dues structure that will occur in January 2025. At that time, Leagues are asked to initiate a dues structure that will be uniform across all Leagues, national, state, and local. Information on how this change will affect our local League will be shared with our membership as the League year progresses and we learn more.

The budget (printed in the Annual Meeting Kit) and recommended program (impacts of Prop 1 on local mental health services and of warehousing on air quality) were passed.

New officers and directors were elected. This year's Board of Directors is listed on page 7 of this *Voter*.

In looking forward to the coming League year, President Mary Kenefick mentioned the full schedule of candidate forums slated for the fall. She encouraged all League members to actively participate in the upcoming General Election in whatever ways you choose.

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LWVSJC CALENDAR 2024-2025

Suzy Daveluy is Newest Helen Pearson Awardee

Please note these dates on your calendar.

Membership Meetings

Kickoff Meeting	September 14
Pros and Cons Presentation A joint meeting with AAUW	October 5
Warehousing Panel	November 16
Holiday Gathering	December 7
LWVC Program Planning/ LWVUS Transformation Update	January 25
Membership Meeting	February 8
Susan B. Anthony Dinner	February 15
LWVSJC Program Planning	March 15
Local Impacts of Prop 1	April 12
Bylaws revisions presentation	May 17
Annual Meeting	June 21

Board Meetings

August 19	
September 9	(so as not to conflict with Candidate forums)
October 21	Board/ Ed Fund Board Meeting
November 18	
December 16	
January 21	(instead of 1/20 — MLK Day)
February 18	(instead of 2/17 — Presidents' Day)
March 17	
April 21	
May 19	Board/ Ed Fund Board Meeting
June 16	

Board meetings are the 3rd Monday of the month, except as noted above. They are held at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Members are invited to attend Board meetings. If you wish to attend Board meetings, please contact Jane Wagner-Tyack: janetyack@mac.com for the Zoom link to the meetings.



Suzy Daveluy, center, with Helen Pearson Award committee chair Christeen Ferree and President Mary Kenefick at the Annual Meeting

LWVSJC 2nd Vice President Suzy Daveluy received this year's Helen Pearson Award.

LWVSJC created the Helen Pearson Award in 1978 to recognize a member who has made an outstanding contribution to our League and did so with "diligence and good cheer."

Suzy chaired the Voter Service Committee and helped organize our candidate forums, ensuring their success. She has already begun planning for fall forums. She co-chaired the Program Planning Committee and volunteered with the separate committees to plan our kickoff, holiday, and annual meetings. She worked tirelessly to fill League positions as a member of the Nominating Committee.

Suzy is organized, doesn't get rattled, takes ownership of projects, is a visionary, considers all aspects of a situation, addresses issues head-on, is tenacious, and can be trusted to get the job done "with diligence and good cheer."

Congratulations, Suzy!

Turn Up & Turn Out: LWVUS Convention 2024

LWVUS Convention: Notes and Observations



- Jane Wagner-Tyack,
LWVSJC Convention
Delegate

Editor's Note: In even-numbered years, LWVUS holds its convention. In odd-numbered years, state Leagues hold their conventions. Local Leagues are allotted delegates to convention based on the number of members in a League. LWVSJC is allotted two delegates. Jane Wagner-Tyack was one of our delegates this year to the hybrid convention held in Washington, D.C.

For virtual attendees, like myself, to the 2024 LWVUS Convention held in Washington, D.C., events began on Friday, June 28, with mid-morning breakout sessions that actually began at 6:30 a.m. for anyone on Pacific Daylight Time. A wide range of interesting session topics were offered--37 in all over two days, including morning and evening sessions. One of the breakout sessions was a delegate training that included information on how to vote on convention issues virtually on my phone.

Breakout Sessions

I started with "Proactive Practices & Tactics to Combat Mis/Dis/Mal-information." Due to technical glitches at the Convention end, I wasn't admitted at the beginning of the session. Fortunately, slide

decks will be available for all sessions and we can share them with our members as they are published.

A topic that received a great deal of attention, both in breakout sessions and in other events, was the One Person, One Vote initiative, which includes eliminating the Electoral College and electing the President by popular vote. LWVSJC may want to do some research into what this initiative involves, and what it would require of state and local Leagues.

I attended the Friday evening breakout session on "It's Not a Journalism Problem; It's a Democracy Problem," which was a concurrence effort on media literacy put forward by Washington State LWV. Concurrence involves asking delegates to agree to make a local or state position part of the national position. The argument here is that the decline of democracy is linked to the decline of local news. People become disengaged when there is no credible source of local news. Suggested solutions to this problem include getting rid of taxes for newspapers and for advertisers. Here is a link to the concurrence material: <https://lwwva.org/local-news-concurrence/7/4/24> The delegates voted for concurrence on this position.

I also attended a breakout session called "Funding Basics and Making the Ask to Support your League." I took away a lot of very useful ideas from this session. The main idea for LWVSJC members to consider is this: What is our PLAN? What do we want to raise money to do? What activities require financial support?

Over 1,200 League members, board members, and staff from all 50 states, DC, and the Virgin Islands participated in person and virtually at the LWVUS 2024 Convention.

Plenary Session activities

I missed Friday's discussion on bylaws amendments, but information on this will be available later. Also under discussion was getting rid of the 16-year-old minimum age for membership, proposed by Washington State with backing from Leagues in other states. This was discussed at the last LWVUS convention, and it was again voted down.

Saturday's Plenary Session focused on the Proposed National Program for 2024-2026: debate and vote on concurrence proposals, on studies considered for adoption, and on other program items. The Budget was also discussed at that session.

Delegates voted 51% against adding reproductive rights to the Campaign for Making Democracy Work (the core LWVUS program). (Adding it required two-thirds delegate support.) A study was proposed on the federal judiciary, with some delegates arguing passionately for a focus on the Supreme Court and others arguing that the League needs to be able to advocate at the state and national levels for matters considered by federal courts at every level. Ultimately, delegates voted for a study not focused on the Supreme Court.

LWVUS CONVENTION (continued)

The motion to add environmental and climate change to the national program failed. California Leagues have been major supporters of climate change efforts, and climate change has been part of the national position for about eight years, so this was a major reversal. However, it is still an LWVUS advocacy issue.

Consideration of matters like program concurrence and studies takes a lot of time at convention because there are presentations of pros and cons but also questions for clarification and changes in wording, each of which has to be voted on by all delegates. By the end of Saturday's Plenary Session, the event was behind schedule, and the Sunday starting time was moved an hour earlier: to **5 a.m. PDT**. The credentials report (who was there to vote) found 49% of the total 1754 possible delegates checked in.

State Leagues are passionate about an amazing array of issues. A motion to support statehood for Washington, D.C., passed, as did a motion to reaffirm the 2008 position on immigration reform. A motion regarding electronic voting for blind and disabled people failed, with the argument that it is not possible to secure electronic voting. South Carolina proposed a resolution in support of public libraries, which passed. A resolution in support of reproductive rights was adopted.

A motion failed for concurrence with the Vermont position on privatization, which impacts healthcare but also prisons, trash, water, libraries, and other public services. It appeared that everyone wanted more information, and a delegate from Texas noted that they wouldn't be able to use a position that would require healthcare to be publicly-funded. A proposal for concurrence with the Pittsburgh position on gun control also failed to win the required 2/3 of delegate votes. Delegates also voted not to do a study of the monetary system.

Other Matters

The External Affairs Team, which works on partnerships, announced that the national League is now in partnership with Girl Scouts of the USA. Clearly, this provides new League membership potential and what was described as a leadership pipeline.

Included in Advice to the Board were several members noting that the elephant in the room was the complete absence of any discussion of the Transformation Project at Convention. Someone asked to re-evaluate Climate Change, noting that it is a major issue for young people. There were a lot of youthful speakers.

I came away from Convention with a lot of very useful information.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Put on Your Election Shoes

Many years ago in the '80s, I sat one very hot day in West Berlin, the guest of an academic colleague. Another friend had said I should try weizenbier, so I did, though I'm not much of a beer drinker. On that hot day, cold weizenbier was very good, I recall. But the day was memorable mainly because nearby (I do not remember the sector of West Berlin) was a small lake, upon which there was an island. Joseph Goebbels was said to be alive and incarcerated there. I saw the building in which he was imprisoned. The memory still chills me. Like once passing by Dachau station while on a train. We must not risk ever going back to an autocratic, fascist world in which a Goebbels, enabled by a Hitler, can wield power. Or even anything close. Democracy must win in our upcoming election.

This from Yale historian Timothy Snyder, @TimothyDSnyder July 1, 2024:

We can act. Each of us doing what we can, trusting one another, making contact. We can do this. If we each do what we can, this republic will go on, and this republic will get better.

- Mary Kenefick

It's Not a Journalism Problem. It's a Democracy Problem.

The League of Women Voters of Washington state did a study on the impact of the loss of newspapers on the availability of information in a democracy. Here is a summary of some of the issues:

- The business model for newspapers is broken. Google and Facebook have taken most of their advertising business. Subscriptions don't generate enough revenue to cover costs.
- From 2005-2020, a quarter of U.S. newspapers disappeared and half of all newsroom jobs were eliminated. A third of newspapers are expected to close by the end of this year.
- Nationwide, 200 counties are now "news deserts" with no reliable local news source, and more than half the nation's counties have limited local news sources.
- Democracy suffers when communities have no source of credible local news.
- Fewer people vote and run for office.
- People are less engaged in their communities and political polarization grows.
- Accurate public health information is harder to obtain. Government costs more and corruption grows when reporters aren't looking over officials' shoulders.

When people know less about what their local government officials are doing, voter participation declines, corruption in both government and business increases, and residents end up paying more in taxes and for goods they purchase, according

to the report "The State of Local News, 2023" from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University.

Research shows that when local news is diminished, these results follow:

- Lower voter turnout
- Fewer contested races for political office
- Less civic engagement in communities
- Higher taxes, lower bond ratings, higher financing costs
- More political polarization

Local news is truly the glue that holds communities together.

At Convention, a vote of concurrence to adopt the LWVWA position as the LWVUS position was adopted. Here is that position, in part:

- The League of Women Voters of the United States believes it is the responsibility of the government to provide support for conditions under which credible local journalism can survive and thrive.
- The LWVUS supports credible and ethical local journalism, in whatever format it is published, as essential to our democracy.
- The LWVUS also believes media literacy and news education, including support for journalism students, are essential.

To see the entire position, go to <https://lwwva.org/local-news-concurrence/7/4/24>.

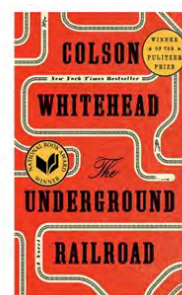
JUNTEENTH
FREEDOM DAY
EMANCIPATION DAY
LIBERATION DAY
JUBILEE DAY
JUNE 19, 1865*



On Juneteenth by Pulitzer Prize winner Annette Gordon-Reed provides a historian's view of the country's long road to Juneteenth, recounting both its origins in Texas and

the enormous hardships that African Americans have endured in the century since, from Reconstruction through Jim Crow and beyond. The author, a Texas native herself and the descendant of enslaved people brought to Texas in the 1820s, forges a new and profoundly truthful narrative of her home state, with implications for us all.*

**From the Smithsonian web site*



What if the Underground Railroad was an actual physical train, a dilapidated boxcar pulled along subterranean tracks by a steam locomotive, taking fugitives north to

freedom, with necessary but harrowing stops along the way that pose dangers to its passengers while showing them that even polite Southern hospitality can mask perils that could snare the unsuspecting and return them to slavery—or worse. Author Colson Whitehead received the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for this haunting look at the hazards facing those who risked everything to be free.

LWVC : League News

LWVC Among Most Effective Advocacy Organizations in California

A June [CalMatters analysis](#) identified the League of Women Voters of California as the third most effective advocacy organization in the state, achieving 85% of our desired policy outcomes during this legislative session so far.

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Desired outcome achieved</u>	<u># of bills taken position on</u>
LA County DA	89%	35
Public Advocates	88%	26
LWVC	85%	34
Faculty: Community Colleges	78%	27
California housing Partnership	77%	48
LA School District	76%	45
LA County Office of Ed	74%	34
AAUW	73%	26
County of Los Angeles	72%	29
California Teamsters	71%	51

The League rises to the top in effectiveness because we are grassroots and we stand firmly in advancing equity for all people. Each day, we fight for equity across voting rights, government transparency, affordable housing, racial justice, climate, environmental justice, and criminal justice reform (and much more!).

Informed citizens are democracy's best defense.

- Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law



June = Pride Month

Memoirs: LGBT Stories across cultures

Everything I Learned, I Learned in a Chinese Restaurant

— Curtis Chin

Growing up gay and Chinese in 1980s Detroit

Hijab Butch Blues — Lamya H

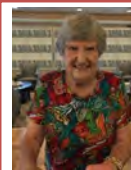
A Muslim immigrant survives her coming-of-age by drawing strength from the stories in the Quran

¡Hola Papi! — John Paul Brammer

LGBT advice columnist writes a hilarious and heartwarming memoir-in-essays about growing up queer and mixed race in America's heartland

MA AND ME — Putsata Reang

Cambodian refugee caught between her identity as a gay woman and the life debt she owes her mother



Pat Moore Thomas,

1986 LWVSC

Helen Pearson

Award recipient,

passed away on

April 22, 2024 at the age of 93.

As a League member, she offered her home for discussions and gatherings. Health setbacks limited her volunteer participation but when she was active in the League, she gave it her all.

Pros and Cons Inform Voters about Statewide Ballot Measures

When you vote on ballot measures, you are voting directly on laws that you might want or not want. To help voters learn about issues they will be voting on, the League offers a summary of ballot measures through the Voter Service activity called Pros and Cons. *Pros & Cons* is a nonpartisan explanation of state propositions, giving supporting and opposing arguments for each measure. Arguments come from many sources including analyses from the League of Women Voters of California's Education Fund which compiles information and does not judge the merits of the arguments. *Pros and Cons* supplements information in the *Official Voter Information Guide*.

How to evaluate propositions

The League also presents guidelines which voters can use to evaluate ballot propositions.

- Examine what the measure seeks to accomplish. Do you agree with those goals?
- Is the measure consistent with your ideas about government? Do you think the proposed changes will make things better?
- Who are the real sponsors and opponents of the measure? Check where the money is coming from on Cal-Access.sos.ca.gov.
- Does the measure mandate a government program or service without addressing how it will be funded?
- If the measure amends the Constitution, does it really belong in the Constitution? Would a statute accomplish the same purpose?
- Will the measure create conflicts in law that may require court resolution or interpretation?

YOU CAN HELP INFORM VOTERS

Many groups and organizations, such as the residents of O'Connor Woods or AAUW, ask our League to present *Pros and Cons* to their group, so that they can be informed voters. League members who do the presentations learn about measures in depth and present information in understandable language. It is a critical Voter Service offering each election cycle.

This November, there will be nine propositions on the ballots. **There will be a training session for those interested in doing *Pros and Cons* presentations this fall at 10:00 a.m. on September 17th.** For more information, or to volunteer as a presenter, contact Voter Service Chair Suzy Daveluy (sdaveluy@sbcglobal.net) or *Pros and Cons* trainer Bea Lingenfelter (beaal@comcast.net). We would love to have several League members participate in these community information sessions.

LWVSJC Board of Directors 2024-2025

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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.