

The Voter

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY



League of Women Voters of San Joaquín County
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Helen Pearson Award

The *Helen Pearson Award* is a specific honor presented by the League of Women Voters of San Joaquin County (LWVSJC). The award is named in honor of **Helen Pearson**, who served as President of the LWVSJC twice during the early 1950s. She was recognized throughout the entire community as a "tireless servant of government, an active participant in voter services, and a dedicated League historian and parliamentarian." Established in 1978, this memorial award is given to a League member in good standing who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to the organization and performed all activities with "diligence and good cheer". Recipients are chosen for making significant contributions through special projects, board positions, or other action-oriented League activities.



Margo Praus, 2026
Helen Pearson
Award Recipient
with League of
Women Voters of
San Joaquin
County President
Suzy Daveluy at
the Annual Meeting
on June 6, 2026, at
Dave Wong's

Helen Pearson Award Recipient 2026

This year, we're delighted to honor Margo Praus.

Some of the most valuable work in any organization is the work for which there are few volunteers. It takes perseverance when faced with reluctance, encouragement to inspire a 'yes,' the ability to build bridges across the membership, and — perhaps most importantly — the resilience to accept the role year after year. Margo has exemplified this with grace and dedication, ensuring our League continues to thrive with strong leadership. But Margo's kindness and commitment extend beyond that. She has served as a bridge between our League and the wider community — always sharing information about Sierra Club programs that align with our mission, and thoughtfully communicating with the president or the Board first. Her caring approach really makes a difference. She actively participates in our Program Planning sessions and candidate forums, and she's one of the few general members who regularly attends our Zoom Board meetings often, contributing a valuable perspective that truly benefited the whole board. Since retiring, Margo has been a warm, steady, and generous presence in our League. She doesn't seek the spotlight — she simply shows up, does the work with kindness and humility and helps us all move forward. Congratulations, Margo.

The Voter Newsletter

July 2026

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

- Suzy Daveluy

Over the past year, our League has continued its mission of empowering voters and defending democracy through education, engagement, and community service. Thanks to the dedication of our members and volunteers, we have made a meaningful impact throughout our community.

Helping citizens exercise their right to vote remains at the heart of our work. In the June Primary Election, just under 140,000 San Joaquin County residents voted. That number is about 34% of our 410,000 registered voters. There are still approximately 100,000 residents of the county who are eligible -- but not registered -- to vote.

The League has a strong tradition of participating in voter registration drives at community events, schools, and public venues, ensuring that new voters have the information and resources needed to register and participate in elections. We also encourage candidates to input their information on the VOTE411 website, host Pros and Cons sessions on ballot propositions, present candidate forums to hear directly from the people running for office, and send postcards to encourage our neighbors to exercise their right to vote!

While every election is important, it feels to me that each election becomes progressively more critical. And that means the work the League does is progressively more critical.

So here is my plea to all of you: if any of the voting-related activities interest you, please consider volunteering your time. Simply send an email to lwvsjc@gmail.com with your interest and someone will get back to you promptly.

Here's to another year of doing good work in the community!

Carrie Chapman
Catt
1959-1947



Carrie Chapman Catt was a leading figure in the women's suffrage movement, known for her instrumental role in securing the passage of the 19th Amendment, granting American women the right to vote.

Carrie Chapman Catt founded the League of Women Voters in 1920 to support newly enfranchised women and promote civic engagement. As the leader of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) and the founder of the League of Women Voters in 1920 to bring women into the political mainstream, she worked tirelessly for White women to have equal voting rights.

She was an advocate for international peace and women's rights, co-founding the International Alliance of Women, which focused on advancing gender equality worldwide.

WE ARE NONPARTISAN, Not Neutral

LWVUS, May 5, 2025

The League of Women Voters states: Remaining nonpartisan does not mean staying silent. When democracy itself is under threat, voter access is restricted or misinformation spreads, the League has a responsibility to speak out clearly and forcefully.

Our nonpartisan commitment means the League acts based on our policies and principles rather than political party affiliation. We advocate for fundamental rights and freedoms regardless of which political party or policy maker is in power. Focusing on our issues, not affiliations, strengthens our voice and credibility. We hold true to our mission without being beholden to any political agenda.



Making Democracy Work

The Center for American Progress (CAP) and the League of Women Voters (LWV) have a long history of alignment and shared advocacy on policies, particularly regarding the expansion of voting rights, fair elections, and the defense of democratic institutions. CAP's action plan is outlined below.

Making democracy work requires active, everyday participation by citizens, along with structural reforms that ensure government transparency, protect voting rights, and reduce the influence of money in politics. It thrives on informed debate, civic engagement, and a commitment to shared democratic traditions.

Civic Action and Everyday Participation

- **Vote consistently:** Participate in local, state, and national elections to keep representatives accountable.
- **Engage locally:** Attend city council meetings, join a local advocacy group, or volunteer as a poll worker to make a direct difference.
- **Stay informed:** Consume a diverse range of reliable news sources, and learn to separate hard facts from political opinions.

Civil Discourse and Norms

- **Practice civil dialogue:** Discuss varying viewpoints respectfully, especially with those you disagree with, and avoid hostility.
- **Defend the truth:** Do not stay silent when witnessing hate speech or the spread of obvious misinformation.
- **Respect democratic traditions:** Support and insist on the peaceful transfer of power, the acceptance of election results, and the protection of fundamental rights for all.

Institutional Reform and Advocacy

- **Support fair elections:** Advocate for policies that expand voting access, secure election infrastructure, and ensure equitable representation. You can get involved or track advocacy campaigns.
- **Reduce special interest influence:** Advocate for campaign finance reform and stronger ethics laws for public officials to ensure leaders serve their constituents rather than wealthy donors.

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Bridging Political Communication

The League of Women Voters (LWV) bridges communication divides through its Civil Discourse and Bridging the Divide programs. These initiatives train community members and League leaders to hold respectful, productive conversations with people who hold differing political beliefs.

Bridging political communication gaps requires shifting the goal from persuasion to mutual understanding. Focus on building human connection over shared values rather than debating. Practice active listening by reflecting back what you hear, and approach discussions with intellectual humility.

Key strategies for effective cross-partisan dialogue

Prioritize People First

Look for common bonds or shared goals first (e.g., family, hobbies, local community issues) rather than jumping directly into hot-button political debates.

Shift to Concerns, Not Positions

Ask open-ended questions like "Can you tell me more

about why you feel that way?" to discover the values and fears driving a belief, rather than attacking the belief itself.

Remove Loaded Language

Avoid politically charged buzzwords, "us vs. them" framing, or emotionally loaded labels that tend to put the other person on the defensive.

- **Practice "Reflective Listening"**

- Listen with the intent to understand, not to reply. Before adding your own perspective, repeat back their main point to ensure you've grasped their perspective correctly.

Supreme Court Protects Mail Voting and Preserves States' Authority Over Ballot Receipt Rules LWVUS Press Release / 06/29/2026

WASHINGTON, DC — Today, the Supreme Court issued a decision upholding voters' rights and permitting Mississippi voters' ballots that are cast on time to be counted after

Election Day according to state law. The decision reverses the Fifth Circuit's incorrect interpretation of federal Election Day statutes, which would have invalidated decades-old absentee ballot receipt laws and disenfranchised voters who followed all election rules but faced postal delays beyond their control.

The American Civil Liberties Union and ACLU of Mississippi, on behalf of the League of Women Voters, Rural Coalition/Coalition Rural, Center for Rural Strategies, American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), and Disability Rights Mississippi (DRMS), filed an amicus brief arguing that the Fifth Circuit's decision would have disrupted states' ability to determine mail-ballot receipt rules in their own state and, depending on the needs of their voters, disproportionately harmed voters with disabilities, rural voters, older voters, military and overseas voters, and working people who rely on absentee voting.

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The League of Women Voters takes an active role in fighting voter suppression. We protect every American's right to vote, challenging those who seek to restrict Black, brown, female, disabled, and other Americans from making their voices heard in our democracy. Organizations like the League of Women Voters empower women and fight to protect our freedoms so that we can become more fully represented in our democracy. The North Carolina Equal Suffrage Association, whose defense of women voters is cited below, was formed in 1894 but became really active in 1913. Their list of why women should vote remains relevant today.

Twelve Reasons Why Women Should Vote

As we prepare for the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, we look to our revolutionary roots and seek answers to questions like "When Are We US?." Stories that engage with the topics of freedom, civic responsibility, and the ideals of democracy help us commemorate our more than 250 years of history. The history of women's suffrage in NC helps us understand how the war for a more just and equitable society continued even after the American Revolution.

1. Because those who obey the laws should help to choose those who make the laws.
2. Because laws affect women as much as men.
3. Because laws which affect WOMEN are now passed without consulting them.
4. Because laws affecting CHILDREN should include the woman's point of view as well as the man's.
5. Because laws affecting the HOME are voted on in every session of the Legislature.
6. Because women have experience which would be helpful to legislation.
7. Because to deprive women of the vote is to lower their position in common estimation.
8. Because having the vote would increase the sense of responsibility among women toward questions of public importance.
9. Because public spirited mothers make public spirited sons.
10. Because about 8,000,000 women in the United States are wage workers, and the conditions under which they work are controlled by law.
11. Because the objections against their having the vote are based on prejudice, not on reason.
12. Because to sum up all reasons in one — IT IS FOR THE COMMON GOOD OF ALL.

Equal Suffrage Association N.C.

California Election Update: SB 73 signed into law to protect California Elections

On June 16, 2026, the League of Women Voters urged Americans nationwide to recognize and reject an escalating pattern of voter silencing, intimidation, and suppression as the country moves closer to the November midterm elections. From continued efforts to relitigate the 2020 election to raids on voting rights organizations and renewed efforts to force unnecessary voting restrictions into federal legislation, these attacks share the same goal: shrinking the electorate undermining public trust, and making it harder for people to participate in our democracy.

California Senate Bill 73 is a law that protects the integrity of the state's elections by strictly limiting law enforcement interference. Signed into law as an urgency stature, it took immediate effect on May 27, 2026. The law

- Prohibits any person from providing unauthorized access, disruption, modification, or seizure of voter rolls, voter lists, or certified voting technology to law enforcement agents – including federal agents – absent a court order or investigation into specific violations of California election law;
- Restricts peace officers from interfering with election administration or disrupting election workers carrying out their duties, except in urgent public safety emergencies;
- Enacts criminal penalties for knowingly taking ballots from election officials;
- Increases protections for ballots that are cast, processed, or handled.

The legislation also makes it a crime – punishable by a \$1,000 fine, imprisonment for up to three years, or both – for a person to knowingly take a package containing voted ballots from the custody of election officials.

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