



# The Voter

## Report on Annual Meeting and the 2013-2014 LWVSJC Year

The Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of San Joaquin County was held at the Stockton Hilton on May 28, 2014.

Prior to the business meeting, City of Stockton Chief of Police Eric Jones gave a keynote address. He spoke of the Police Department's long term strategies that will be funded in part by Measures A and B, passed in November 2013:

- **Prevention:** use an increased police presence as an effective deterrent to both the fear of crime and to crime itself
- **Prediction:** use technology to improve efficiency and effectiveness
- **Pursuit:** enforce the law against offenders
- **Partnerships:** engage the community in anticrime efforts



*Stockton Police Chief Eric Jones*

His remarks were enthusiastically received by an audience of fifty.

No Annual Report was issued for 2013-14, but President Dee Matteucci reviewed LWVSJC activities and accomplishments during the past year:

- Dee thanked all the members who made the year successful: Diane Park, President for the first half of the year; Jane Wagner-Tyack, Ag Study Chair, and the Ag Study Committee; Bea Lingenfelter and everyone involved in the Candidate Forums held for the Primary

Election; Vickie Markarian for taking care of Easy Voter Guide distribution and Smart Voter information as she has for years; all those involved in creating and sending a printed *Voter* to our members; Bea and all the volunteers at the Asparagus Festival; and Barbara Walker for updating our membership directory.

- The Kick-Off meeting in September was held at Delicato Winery and featured Pamm Larry speaking about GMOs.
- In October, we held forums on Stockton's Measures A and B, which would designate  $\frac{3}{4}$  cent sales tax for improved law enforcement resources and to help the City of Stockton exit bankruptcy. Following the forums, LWVSJC Board voted to endorse the measures, which were passed by voters.
- We participated in the LWVUS Agriculture Update study, holding three informational programs followed by a consensus meeting.
- We contributed 68 volunteer hours to the Asparagus Festival.
- We distributed Easy Voter Guides and Smart Voter information for the June 2014 Primary election.
- Our membership directory was updated and will be distributed for the first time in a while.
- We held six candidate forums for races in the June 2014 Primary Election.

Donna Brown was the recipient of this year's Helen Pearson Award, given annually since 1978 to recognize outstanding contributions and ongoing commitment of a League member.



*Helen Pearson Award recipient Donna Brown*

## 2014 Sylvia Kothe Memorial Scholarship

Hearty Congratulations to Michelle Alyse Winkler, who is the 2014 recipient of the League's Annual San Joaquin Delta Scholarship, awarded to continuing students in memoriam for Sylvia Kothe.

Michelle is an outstanding student. She was on the President's Honor Roll and served as Editor of Delta College's Political Science Academic Journal, "A Political Perspective." She will be transferring to UC Davis and plans on attending graduate school to study public policy.



## President's Message

Let me introduce myself. I've resided in Stockton since 1972 and began teaching as an adjunct for San Joaquin Delta College in 1973. Currently, I teach microbiology at the south (Mountain House) campus half time and I work as a specialist in the Essig Museum of Entomology at U. C. Berkeley one day each week. My hobbies and passions range from wildlife watching and hiking to reading fiction and creating needlework. And closest to my heart are suffrage and human rights.

Thanks to all of you who helped elect me president at our annual meeting May 28; I became your local League president in July. All of our board members have been

very busy and productive since the annual meeting and we even added a new director, Julie Schardt, to fill a board vacancy.

Many thanks to all of you who have paid your 2014-15 dues. I give a special thanks to those who made a donation in addition to your dues.

We have a recipient for this year's Sylvia Kothe scholarship (see article on page 2), and we hope soon to come out with the new membership directory, a preview of which was available at our annual meeting.

We have organized our Kick-Off Meeting for September 14 (see article below), and have begun organizing both candidate forums and the Pros and Cons associated with the upcoming election. This fall promises to be exciting for all of us.

Please feel free to contact me at my email address ([kschick2@gmail.com](mailto:kschick2@gmail.com)) if you have any questions or concerns.

Kathy Schick

## Kick-Off Meeting topic: Democracy and the Wealth Divide

This year's Kick-Off meeting on September 14 will feature Dr. Gene Bigler addressing the question *Can Democracy Survive the Wealth Divide?*

A University of the Pacific graduate and Fulbright scholar, Dr. Bigler received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Johns Hopkins University. Recently a visiting Professor at Pacific and now a lecturer in UOP's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), Dr. Bigler is also a community activist. He contributes to *Joaquin Magazine* and serves as Vice President of PUENTES, a non-profit organization whose project is the 3-acre Boggs Tract Community Farm in Stockton, where community members are empowered to learn about nutritious food and create food security by developing an urban farm.

## Advocacy Issues - National

Our National League sends monthly "Updates" to members, advising of issues where members can write or email support or opposition. Below is the letter our San Joaquin County League sent to *The Record*, encouraging protection of the Voting Rights Act.

**Protect the Right to Vote** -- This August, our nation honors the 49<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965, the historic civil rights legislation crafted to protect against discrimination in voting.

Just over a year ago, key components of the VRA were removed by the U.S. Supreme Court's decision, leaving room for discrimination to gain a better foothold at the ballot box. While many were hopeful when a bipartisan group of lawmakers introduced the Voting Rights Amendment Act (VRAA) at the beginning of the year, months later, we are still waiting for Congress to finish what it started. The VRAA is a workable, commonsense solution that would modernize the elections process and protect voting rights against discrimination.

Without a strong VRA, our ability to fight off anti-voter legislation and keep our elections free, fair and accessible is significantly weakened. During the Congressional recess in August, voters must be loud and clear that the right to vote is fundamental to our democracy. Let's call on our Members of Congress to stand up now for the right to vote for all.

## Advocacy Issues - California

LWVC has taken action on Campaign Disclosure laws and continues to support the Single Payer movement.

The state League endorsed a package of Campaign Finance reform measures and has been following their progress through the Legislature. Unfortunately, two bills, AB 800 and SB 2, have gotten stalled in the legislature, the first chaptered and the second moved to the inactive file. SB 3, which addressed reporting requirements for campaign treasurers was vetoed by the Governor, who felt some of its provisions were unworkable and asked the Legislature to rewrite the bill. SB 27, which eliminates a "dark money" loophole used to avoid disclosure of ballot measure campaign contributors, was passed by the Legislature and signed by the Governor and took effect July 1, 2014, so will apply to the Fall campaign season. Still active is the Disclose Act, SB 52, which requires that the top three contributors to ballot measure campaigns be disclosed in campaign ads. It is currently progressing through the Legislature and will be up for a hearing by the Assembly Appropriations Committee on Aug. 6. LWVC has been submitting letters of support and will be monitoring the progress of the bill.



An ongoing issue for the state League is the promotion of a Single Payer health care system. To further this work, the League has recently signed with the AllCare Alliance, a coalition of California organizations which support and work toward Single payer healthcare. Local Leagues are urged to continue their efforts to educate the public on this issue, and to work with other local

groups. In our area, the Single Payer San Joaquin organization is tirelessly pursuing this effort. Our League has occasionally worked with them, and will continue to do so as our energies allow.

LWVC is also monitoring developments on a water bond scheduled to appear on the November ballot. This bond proposal, Proposition 43, is the \$11.14 billion bond that was part of a five-bill package of water legislation passed in an Extraordinary Session in the Fall of 2009. Lawmakers removed it from the ballot in 2010 and again in 2012, in both cases because they felt that the overall economic climate in California made it unlikely that voters would approve it. There is some expectation that given this year's drought, voters will be more inclined to support the bond.

Nevertheless, this water bond has been roundly criticized, not least for being too large and pork-laden. Legislators would like to replace it with a smaller bond but have been unable to agree on what a smaller bond should include; they recessed at the beginning of July without making a decision, have already missed the regular deadlines for getting a measure on the ballot, and are expected to produce some kind of compromise from behind closed doors and at the last possible minute. Major areas of disagreement include whether or not the bond should include money for surface storage (dams), and if so, how much. All sides agree that any bond will have to be "BDCP-neutral," providing not funding for work in the Delta that could be perceived as advancing the Bay Delta Conservation Plan or funding environmental mitigation. However, the financing plan for BDCP assumes that taxpayers will pay for environmental restoration through this and other general obligation bonds.

LWVC opposes Proposition 43 and will be carefully scrutinizing any bond put forward in its place. See this link for an LWVC statement on the subject.

<http://lwvc.org/statement/2014/jun/concern-about-water-bond-negotiations>

## The ERA is Back!

Carolyn A. Cook, founder of United 4 Equality, started a movement in 2009 to remove Congress's arbitrary deadline for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL) have jointly introduced SJR 15, Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, which now has 33 cosponsors, including Senator Barbara Boxer. The House companion bill is HJR 113 with 122 cosponsors. These bills would allow states that have not yet ratified the ERA to do so without the whole ratification process having to begin again.

LWVUS has a clear position supporting passage of the ERA. However, local Leagues cannot take action on federal issues without LWVUS authorization. Also, LWVUS would prefer to have requests for action come from State Leagues.

At its July meeting, the LWVSJC board voted to send a letter asking LWVC to urge the national League to sign on as supporters of the ERA 2015 campaign.

Meanwhile, individual League members are encouraged to contact California's senators and congressional representatives urging support for ERA 2015.

## Stockton and the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment

Who knew? Stockton is famous for a suffrage victory!

In 1968, Dennis Warren, a student at University of the Pacific, was selected as national chairman of a campaign among college students to lower the voting age to 18 years. They won.

The L.U.V. – Let Us Vote – movement, with full support of the UOP administration, was born of frustration, and is as important as any suffrage efforts in our nation's history.

Said Warren in 1968: "Why should the franchise be extended to 18 year olds? All across this county of ours young persons are charged with the responsibilities of adult citizenship, yet are denied adult rights. Upon reaching the age of 18, one may be conscripted into the military. Each year we pay millions of dollars of taxation, and the fact cannot be ignored that nearly forty-five percent of all those who marry in this country before they are twenty-one are granted the responsibilities of parenthood and family living yet are treated politically as children."

On March 23, 1971 the decision to extend the right to vote to citizens eighteen years of age was adopted by both houses of Congress and sent to states for ratification. The 26th Amendment became part of the Constitution on July 1, 1971.

Many Stockton community leaders and organizations supported Mr. Warren's efforts. Look to future LWVSJC *Voters* to expand on the background of this amazing effort.

### Still an issue

In the news the week of July 6, 2014: **College Students Claim Voter ID Laws Discriminate Based on Age**

New York Times — Civil rights groups have spent a decade fighting requirements that voters show photo identification, arguing that this discriminates against African-Americans, Hispanics and the poor. This week in a North Carolina courtroom, another group will make its case that such laws are discriminatory: college students.

Joining a challenge to a state law alongside the N.A.A.C.P., the American Civil Liberties Union and the Justice Department, lawyers for seven college students and three voter-registration advocates are making the novel constitutional argument that the law violates the 26th Amendment, which lowered the voting age to 18 from 21. The amendment also declares that the right to vote "shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of age."



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

## General Fund Income and Expenses – FY2013-2014

7/1/2013 through 6/30/2014

**INCOME**

Kick-off Meeting	1,800
Annual Meeting	1,785
Donations	320
Dues	4,885
Ed Fund Grant	<u>1,000</u>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>9,790</b>

**EXPENSES**

Administrative	
Rent	600
P. O. Box Fee	163
Website Fee	160
Insurance Premium	143
S1-100 Filing Fee (Secretary of State)	20
Awards	43
Postage and fundraising expenses	<u>46</u>
TOTAL Administrative	1,175
Events and Conferences	
Kick-off	272
Annual Meeting	1,615
2013 State League Leadership Council	<u>427</u>
TOTAL Events and Conferences	2,314
Memberships	
SJCCSW	<u>50</u>
TOTAL Memberships	50
Voter Newsletter, Annual Meeting Kit, and Directory	
Professional services	200
Printing	473
Postage	<u>179</u>
TOTAL Publications	852
Per Member Payments	
National PMPs	1,612
State PMPs	<u>1,196</u>
TOTAL PMPs	2,808
Voter Service	
Publications	148
Printing and postage	69
Facilities rental	<u>575</u>
TOTAL Voter Service	792
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>7,991</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>1,799</b>

6/30/13 General Fund balance: \$7,610

**SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY LEAGUE FUND (ED FUND)**

**Income and Expenses – FY2013-2014**

7/1/2013 through 6/30/2014

<b>INCOME</b>	
Donations	200
Interest	<u>8</u>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>208</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Grant to General Fund	1,000
Smart Voter donation	<u>100</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>1,100</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>(892)</b>

**Net Worth – 6/30/2014**

<b>ASSETS</b>	
Bank of Stockton Bank Account	<u>11,773</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>11,773</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>OVERALL NET WORTH</b>	<b>11,773</b>

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## **Civic Literacy Project**

A Civic Literacy Handbook has been sent to the printer and will be ready for use by local schools in September.

The League of Women Voters will be listed as one of the sponsors, and our logo will be included inside the front cover. Other sponsors are Stockton Unified; Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce; BIA (Building Industry Association) Greater Valley; Campaign for Common Ground; Jose Hernandez, Reaching for the Stars Foundation; Parks Printing; and BEA (Business Education Alliance). The BIA and the Business Council have paid for the first printing.

Stockton Unified School District has plans to use the Handbook early in the school year for its Civics classes, and it may in the future be distributed to other school districts in the county. Other agencies that have agreed to set up classes for their constituents are El Concilio, Community Partnership for Families, PACT, and United Way. Copies will be available to the League speakers' bureau to use when doing the Pros and Cons, if needed.

The text was prepared by *Stockton Record* columnist Mike Fitzgerald with input from the sponsor representatives. This first printing focuses on the City of Stockton. It can be updated/revised in future printings for other communities, if there is a need.



## Report on the Agricultural Update Study

Nine LWVSJC members gathered March 29<sup>th</sup> at Stockton's Cabral Agricultural Center for the consensus discussion for the LWVUS Agriculture Update.

This discussion was preceded by three study meetings at which members and the general public heard from a wide array of speakers focusing on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs); Government Agricultural Programs and Regulations and Animal Management; and Financing and the Economic Health of Agriculture. Passage by Congress of the 2014 Farm Bill during the study influenced the discussion, as did severe drought conditions early in the year.

In consensus discussion of the Economic Health of the Agricultural Sector, members agreed that care should be taken to ensure that disaster assistance and crop insurance are not abused by farmers growing crops that could reasonably be expected to fail, either because of the crop type or because of the region in which they were planted. They wanted to see crop insurance linked to water conservation practices. The consensus view was that government financial support should encourage smaller farms and non-traditional production methods such as organic farming.



*Assemblymember Susan Talamantes Eggman, farmer Bruce Fry, and banker Bill Reynolds spoke to the Ag Study group on the subject of agricultural regulations and farm finance issues.*

Having heard from farmers and ranchers, the study group found that although it is important to collect data about regulated animal feeding operations (AFOs), the reporting requirements can be cumbersome and costly for farmers and ranchers when different levels of government (federal, state, county, special districts) require different information. Uniform reporting to different levels of government would lessen the burden of monitoring and reporting.

Concerns about GMOs prompted LWVSJC to participate in the study in the first place, but the term “GMO” or “genetically modified organism” never appeared in the consensus questions. The issue was addressed by questions about research and development, food safety, and labeling of foods developed with “new technologies” that included both genetic engineering and nanotechnology. (Nanotechnology is the manipulation of material on an atomic or molecular scale.)

Because the results of genetic engineering have been classified as “foods,” the FDA doesn't require that they be tested for product safety as, for example, children's toys are. The study group favored government requiring developers to monitor food products after their release and

providing regulators to ensure that that is done. Products determined to be unsafe should be removed from the market.

Regarding food labeling, the group found that nutrition facts on food labels are insufficient to the extent that they do not indicate that a product contains ingredients having DNA that has been modified in a laboratory to create something that could never occur in nature. The group asked for mandatory labeling of products that contain genetically engineered ingredients. (One of our speakers noted that because we have a national food production, marketing, and distribution system, food labeling must be required at the federal level to be effective.)

In General Comments, the consensus group noted that farming should not be made harder than it already is for the small and shrinking percentage of Americans who produce our food. The group favored some degree of government support, including support for smaller scale production in preference to large-scale methods that may be more efficient. It may be necessary to pay more for regulatory oversight, but only if oversight makes regulatory compliance easier and more effective.

Another area of policy that could encourage smaller farmers and multi-generational farming is estate tax reform.

The consensus group commented that the prices Americans pay for food do not reflect the true costs to produce it. To the extent that California “feeds the nation and the world,” those costs are externalized here as

- below-living-wages and seasonal unemployment for farmworkers;
- compromised water quality for disadvantaged communities in agricultural regions;
- reductions in water quantity and quality for fisheries and the environment;
- groundwater overdraft and aquifer depletion in food-producing regions;
- compromised air quality associated with food production and long-distance transport;
- profit margins that favor large-scale food production over small to mid-sized family farming and ranching.

In California’s San Joaquin Valley, oil extraction is now competing with agriculture for water because oil companies can pay more for water than farmers can pay to produce the food we eat. We need a national agricultural policy that captures the *value* of food apart from its contribution to the GDP.

The Agricultural Update study had an extremely wide scope and involved repeated delays in LWVUS making necessary materials available. The study group was disappointed that the topic of aquifer depletion was removed from the study late in the study process and hopes to see it addressed in the future. In the arid West, cropping decisions are based on surface and ground water availability. With climate change and the likelihood of dryer “normal” conditions in the



*Congressman Jerry McNerney spoke about the federal role in agricultural programs.*

future than we saw in the 20th century, the government will have to scrutinize the sustainability of federal water management policies in arid states like California, and LWVUS needs to be prepared to monitor those discussions.

Members of the Agricultural Update study were Donna Brown, Colleen Foster, Bea Lingenfelter, Susan Loyko, Margo Praus, Daphne Shaw, Linda Soliven, Stina Va, Jane Wagner-Tyack (chair), and Cate White. Bill Loyko and Analiese Richard provided support at various stages of the process.

Nationally, 243 state and local Leagues participated in the study on federal agricultural policies. Visit <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/lwvus-position-federal-agriculture-policies> to see the new position adopted by the LWVUS Board on May 15, 2014.

## Candidate Forums Scheduled

Continuing its recent successes in educating community members about candidates for political office, the LWVUS Voter Service Committee has scheduled the following forums for the coming election season, pending confirmation from candidates:

Wednesday, October 1, 6-9 p.m. at the Stockton City Council Chambers  
Stockton City Council Candidates  
Area 1: Rick Grewal and Elbert Holman  
Area 3: Gene Acevedo and Susan Loftus  
Area 5: Dyane Burgos Medina and Christiana Fugazi

Thursday, October 2, 6-8 p.m. at the Stockton City Council Chambers  
San Joaquin County Superintendent of Schools Candidates  
James Mousalimas and Jeff Tilton  
San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors, District 4 Candidates  
Russ Munson and Chuck Winn

Saturday, October 4, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., George Wilson Room, University of the Pacific  
Assembly District 13  
Susan Talamantes Eggman and Sol Jobrack  
Congressional District 9  
Jerry McNerney and Tony Amador  
Congressional District 10  
Jeff Denham and Michael Eggman

As in the past, the League will be taping these forums and posting them on Youtube for the benefit of community members who cannot attend in person.

Candidate forums involve a wide variety of tasks, and the Voter Service Committee welcomes offers of assistance from League members. If you can help, contact Bea Lingenfelter, [beaal@comcast.net](mailto:beaal@comcast.net), 209-765-0576.

