



# THE SACRAMENTO VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SACRAMENTO COUNTY

*founded in 1939*

801 12th Street, Suite 210, Sacramento, CA 95814

April - May 2007

## Mark Your Calendar

### “Affordable Housing and the Homeless”

April 18, 2007- 7 pm

University of Southern California- State Capitol Campus

1800 I Street, Rm E

Sacramento, 95814

Panel

Kay Kneprath - LWVSC Moderator

Chris Glauzell, Vice President Mercy Housing

Sotoris Kolokotronis, Owner SKK Developments

Sophia Thompson - New Home Owner

Diane Luther - Director Homelessness Initiative

Audience Q&A



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### LWVSC Annual Meeting

June 2, 2007 9:30 am- 12:30 PM

Casa Garden Meeting Room  
2760 Sutterville Road  
Sacramento 95818

Featured speaker- Illa Collin, former member  
Sacramento County Board of Supervisors

*“From LWVS President to County Supervisor - 28 years of Service”*

Adopt LWVSC Budget 2007-08

Elect new officers, directors & Nominating Committee

Adopt Flood Control Position

Vote on proposed amendment to LWVSC Bylaws

Reservation form will be mailed separately in call to Annual Meeting



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## 2006 - 2007 Board of Directors

### President

Barbara Hopkins  
916-388-0785  
[barbhopkins2@yahoo.com](mailto:barbhopkins2@yahoo.com)

### Treasurer

Vivian Skintauy  
916-991-5409  
[may9045@sbcglobal.net](mailto:may9045@sbcglobal.net)

### Secretary

Virginia Kaser  
916-966-3744 (h)  
916-442-6811X26 (w)  
[kaser@usc.edu](mailto:kaser@usc.edu)

### Directors

#### Natural Resources

Rick Bettis  
916-442-5775

#### Units/Program

Roseanna Torretto  
916-483-6545  
[torretto@pacbell.net](mailto:torretto@pacbell.net) (h)  
[Roseanna.Torretto@dts.CA.GOV](mailto:Roseanna.Torretto@dts.CA.GOV) (w)

#### Action

Roseanne Chamberlain  
916-454-2358  
[roseanne.ch@gmail.com](mailto:roseanne.ch@gmail.com)

#### Nominating Committee Chair

Ruth Range  
[ruthrang@surewest.net](mailto:ruthrang@surewest.net)

#### Webmaster/Budget Committee Chair

Donna Chipps  
916-454-1655  
[dwachipps@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dwachipps@sbcglobal.net)

#### Housing Consultant/Fund Development

Kay Knepprath  
916-457-3793  
[kaygenek@saclink.csus.edu](mailto:kaygenek@saclink.csus.edu)

#### Flood Control Protection Study

Penny Niland, Chair  
[pniland@earthlink.net](mailto:pniland@earthlink.net)

#### Legislative Committee, Chair

Tom Swift  
[tomswift@saclink.csus.edu](mailto:tomswift@saclink.csus.edu)

#### Voter Affidavit Distribution Chair

Eileen Heaser

### League Office

801 12th Street, Suite 210  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
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Email - [lwvs@lwvsacramento.org](mailto:lwvs@lwvsacramento.org)

### President's Message



As I write my last message in this column I feel encouraged about the future of the LWV of Sacramento County. The increased support and attendance at the monthly general and committee meetings reflect member involvement that is making a difference. Many people deserve credit for this momentum that will hopefully continue under the leadership of the new and expanded Board of Directors.

The contributions by everyone are appreciated but I regret that space limits are a reality. First, I want to thank the Board members for accepting the responsibility of overseeing and guiding the chapter. Since so many positions were vacant we did not rely on portfolios and I appreciated everyone taking the initiative and "pitching in" to do whatever job needed to be done. I am grateful to Vivian Skintauy, Virginia Kaser, Rick Bettis, Roseanna Torretto and Roseanne Chamberlain for their patience, perseverance and flexibility as we tried new methods to cover all the tasks needed to keep the League running smoothly. I especially appreciated the daily coverage of the League office by Rick Bettis in addition to his expertise and contribution on committees in League and in the community.

Off board members were especially valuable this year in doing specialty jobs that kept the League operating. Thank you to Kay Knepprath for wearing several League hats. Her fundraising expertise has helped the League receive much needed income since we only keep \$5.74 from each annual dues payment. The community appeal letters and the committee follow-up calls provide a much needed cash flow. Her leadership of the Anne Rudin Scholarship Fund keep the annual student award on track. Kay and the Housing Committee have organized the stellar panel meeting for April 18th that I hope all members attend. Thank you to Donna Chipps, who chairs the Budget Committee and masters other off-board jobs, from Webmaster, to producer of League publications, and membership committee, while also coordinating the LWVC Convention in Bakersfield as LWVC Executive VP.

The local study on Flood Control and the national study on Immigration interest many League members. A special thank you to Penny Niland, Virginia Moose, Rick Bettis, Nancy Fox for their work on the Flood Control Study. The Immigration Study is gearing up for a busy two years. Lola Acosta deserves special recognition for her leadership in organizing the very successful "kick-off" general meeting with dynamic speakers Judge Cruz Reynoso and Steve Ybarra. Thanks to the ten committee members who have signed up for the Immigration study meeting on April 11.

The Voter Service Committee began gearing up for the historic three elections in 2008. I look forward to working with the committee as we plan how to best help voters understand and master the issues that will appear the elections. New members are invited to get involved and become a part of the voter service. Voter Service adds a special perspective to the election season and can be fun. So I encourage new members to attend the committee meetings when announced and get involved!

I look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting on June 2nd.

*Barbara*

**LWVSC Board Briefs...January 16, 2007**

*by Virginia Kaser*

*Thank you to our  
Generous  
Contributors  
Rina Humphers  
Lois Angeloni  
Goldie Hall  
Vi Long*

- Approval of charging \$20 for Annual Meeting (\$10 to attend and have coffee, \$10 for brunch)
- Approval to send 6 delegates to LWVC Convention May 18 ( but LWV payment needs to be decided)
- Approval of being a sponsor at Women's Equality Day Coalition Parade on August 25 that celebrates the passage of 19th Amendment at the \$250 level.
- Approval of LWVSC table at the Earth Day Celebration on April 22, CSUS at \$50 non-profit rate.
- Legislative Interviews underway and Tom Swift will compose the VOTER article
- Endorsed SAFCA Flood assessment district election proposal based on LWVC land use and water positions

**UNIT Meetings**

April 9 & 10, 2007  
Immigration Study

May 7 & 8, 2007  
Affordable Housing

**Mid-City**

Monday: 6:15 PM  
Doris White  
383-0189  
863 Fallbrook Way  
Sacramento

**Morning Suburban**

Tuesday: 9:30 AM  
Mary McCullough  
967-7382  
2426 Garfield Ave.  
Carmichael

**Greenhaven/Land Park**

Tuesday: 9:30 AM  
Mary Hopkins  
422-6958  
45 Sunlit Circle  
Sacramento

**Elk Grove**

Tuesday: noon  
Nancy Myers  
689-6943  
La Fuente Mexican Restaurant  
9631 E. Stockton Blvd.  
Elk Grove

Vivian and Barbara observed the Lincoln Hills HOA election as training for conducting future service in Sacramento. Interested LWVSC members are encouraged to attend training at convention.

**Nominating Committee Revitalizes the League  
Invites you to Join the Board**

The elusive goal of revitalizing the LWVSC Board of Directors was not possible until this year when the Nominating Committee met regularly and made many phone calls - and just persevered until a majority of the positions were filled.

We are indebted to Ruth Range, Chair of the Nominating Committee, and the determined committee of Nancy Lapp, Roseanna Torretto and Vivian Skintauy that so many of the board positions are filled and the workload shared more evenly. The new board will be elected at the Annual Meeting on June 2, 2007. There are still some vacancies and Ruth would like to hear from interested members. Her number is 485-9773, or email at [ruthrang@surewest.net](mailto:ruthrang@surewest.net). To date the confirmed board member nominations for 2007-08 include:

- |                                    |                                 |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Roseanna Torretto, President       | Virginia Kaser, Secretary       |
| Vivian Skintauy, Treasurer         | Rick Bettis, Natural Resources  |
| Roseanne Chamberlain, Advocacy     | Cheryl Moore, Voter Service     |
| Penny Niland, Government           | Mary Ruth Bell, Social Policy   |
| Catherine Troka, Director at Large | Nancy Lapp, Voter Editor        |
| Vacant, Program Director           | Vacant, Administrative Director |
| Vacant, Unit Chair                 |                                 |

**Off Board**

- Kay Kneprath, Fund Development
- Donna Chipps, Webmaster

Call Ruth or contact any current board members if you could consider being a leader for the Sacramento League.



## 2nd Women's Equality Day Parade and Rally in Sacramento

Help Us Commemorate and Reaffirm the Women's Right to Vote

Join Us In the Parade and at the Capitol  
August 25, 2007

9:30 AM-Parade starts at Southside Park-5th & T St  
11:00 AM- Rally at West Steps of Capital,  
Sacramento, CA

"The vote is the emblem of equality, women of America, the guarantee of your liberty. That vote of yours has cost millions of dollars and the lives of thousands of women"

*Carrie Chapman Catt, founder of the League of Women Voters*

Remember the women and men who struggled for the right to vote. Listen to advocates, activists and public officials compare those times with ours while perusing displays of women's history in books, paintings, and photos. You can find descriptive photos now on the web site of the National Women's History Project:

[www.nwhp.org](http://www.nwhp.org). For continuing details of this year's parade, visit that of the California Suffrage Parade Coalition:

[www.womenequalityparade.com](http://www.womenequalityparade.com) later this month.

Bring your family, especially your daughters and granddaughters to help them appreciate women's history.

Join with many women and organizations in celebrating the victory of 1919 in California and 1920 in Washington, D.C. Call the League office at 447-8683 if you have any questions.

Donations will be appreciated. Make checks payable to: NWHP/Parade, and mail to California Suffrage Parade Coalition at National Women's History Project, 3343 Industrial Drive, Ste 4, Santa Rosa, California 95403.

**LWV of California  
Convention  
May 18-20, 2007**  
Register online at  
[www.lwvc.org](http://www.lwvc.org)



"Rally in the Valley", the theme of the LWVC Convention 2007, May 18-20 in Bakersfield, will offer delegates and members not only a voice in the League's future but a glimpse into the Central Valley of California riches". As Renee Nelson, LWV Bakersfield Committee Chair outlined the array of weekend activities for all who attend in her invitation to the rally the weekend promises to be busy. Sacramento League members look forward to the train ride to Bakersfield as well as visiting with former Voter Service Director Hazel Bertholdt who recently moved there. Kudos to our Donna Chipps, the LWVC Executive Vice President who has been at the helm of Convention that promises to be a terrific weekend.

The LWV of Sacramento County will send six delegates who will be responsible for voting for the future direction of the LWV of California for the next two years including the election of officers, adoption of budget and program for 2007-08. The convention also offers workshops and caucuses on a variety of issues that are listed in detail on the LWVC website. On Thursday, April 17 a workshop training and certification for Neighborhood Association Election Management is a pre-convention event that members of LWV Sacramento are encouraged to attend for training in these special elections.

DOLORES HUERTA, a prominent woman labor activist and Bakersfield resident will be the featured speaker at the Convention Banquet on May 19. Ms. Huerta received a honorary degree from Princeton University that recognized her for devoting her life to "creative, compassionate and committed citizenship". She is not only a role model for all of us, but her comments may also be relevant to the national immigration issue and study.

More information is available with online registration and details of Convention 2007 at [www.lwvc.org](http://www.lwvc.org). If you have any questions please contact the lwv offices at 447-8683 for the state league and 442-8683 for the Sacramento league.

**Anne Rudin Scholarship, 2007***By Kay Knepprath*

The Scholarship Committee is looking forward to reviewing applications for the Anne Rudin Scholarship for 2007. This is a scholarship created by the League of Women Voters of Sacramento County when Anne finished her term as Mayor of Sacramento. A fund was created and is managed by the Regional Foundation. Annually the proceeds, along with a check from the League, assist a woman student with a \$1,000 scholarship. The scholarship will be awarded at the League Annual Meeting on June 2.

The deadline for applications to be sent to the League office is fast approaching but if you know of a likely candidate, please have her apply. The woman must have completed at least her sophomore year of college or be a graduate student in a university or college in this area. Her area of study must be public policy or public administration. Past recipients have been students at Sac State, UC Davis and the USC Sacramento Public Policy School.

The Scholarship Committee will meet on April 30 to choose the recipient. Members of the committee are Betty Masuoka, Anne, Rudin, Charity Kenyon, Cathy Geppert and Kay Knepprath.

Contributions to the Rudin Scholarship fund are always welcome and tax deductible. We would like to build the fund so the League general fund would be relieved of making up the difference between the proceeds at the Foundation and the \$1,000 scholarship. Checks can be made payable to the League (LWVSC) and noted Rudin Scholarship.

**Voter Affidavit Volunteers**

Voter Affidavits may be picked up at the new office,  
801 12th Street, Suite 210, (corner of H St)  
Monday to Friday from 9 am to 5 pm

Jennifer Joesph of the LWV of California will let you into the office. Parking on H Street is convenient, but meters require twenty-five cents for fifteen minutes. If this scenario is too difficult please contact Elizabeth Byerly at 971-9662, or me, as we have extra forms at our homes. Eileen Heaser  
278-6797 ( home); 456-2154 ( work)

**Fund Raising**

Although the League has not had a fund raising event in the past two years, we have sent solicitation letters to companies that have supported us over the years. Last year \$6,250 was contributed as a result of responses to the letters. In March 38 solicitations letters were sent and responses are beginning to be received.

For two years in a row the following League members have been making follow-up phone calls to our prospective contributors: Virginia Kaser, Kay Knepprath, Catherine Troka, Virginia Moose, Lois Acosta and Fifi Zeff.

A committee has been formed to plan an event for 2008 and is still considering a variety of exciting ideas. We're looking for a way to involve the community while adding to the League's income. If you would like to work with us, we would welcome your thoughts.

**ED Source Conference  
Crowne Hotel, Palo Alto  
Friday, April 20, 2007- 9 am - 3 pm**

"The Money Talks- New Research and Candid Conversations" about School Finances" will be held at Crowne Hotel in Palo Alto on April 20th and members are invited to join more than 500 and register online -[http://www.edsource.org/pubinfo\\_forum07info.cfm](http://www.edsource.org/pubinfo_forum07info.cfm)

Register and hear the knowledgeable and irreverent John Mockler describe "How We Got Where we Are" and how the education landscape has changed over 30 years in California--students, staff, performance--and, of course, funding!

Hear Susanna Loeb, director of the "Getting Down to Facts" school finance research project, summarize the key findings and themes, which are now under review by state policymakers.

Finally, listen as a knowledgeable, witty, and passionate panel of individuals with very diverse perspectives on school finance explore the politics and possibilities for finance reform in California.

There may be a limited number of spaces available. Check by calling the EdSource office at 650-917-9481.

## Legislative Interview Report

*By Tom Swift*

At the beginning of each legislative year groups of three or four LWVSC members meet with each of our county's state legislators to apprise them of the state League's priorities, to hear their positions, and report these to Trudy Shafer, the League's state lobbyist. Participants included Margaret Herman, Judy Hoefling, Catherine Troka, Roseanne Chambers, Fifi Zeff, and Tom Swift. We met with Assembly member Dave Jones, and with representatives of Senator Steinberg and of Assembly members Nakanishi and Niello.

Regarding Health Care Reforms both Nakanishi and Niello stress individual choice and a market approach to health care reforms. Niello favors savings accounts and tax credits to achieve this. Neither favor mandating employers and individuals to participate-one of the governor's proposals-and both oppose a single payer insurance plan.

Steinberg and Jones support Senator Kuehl's single payer health insurance bill, but know this is currently a "no go" because the governor is committed to vetoing it. They believe employer and individual mandates must be accompanied by insurance rate controls, not just by the governor's proposal for control over insurance companies' margins for profit and administration. Jones' AB 1554 addresses the rate control issue.

Global Warming and Resources are important concerns of Steinberg. He chairs the Senate Natural Resources Committee and the Senate Environmental Quality Committee and is author of a bill on water quality and supply. Jones is the author of bills which would require stricter emission standards for trucks and older cars, and a bill to incentivize cities and counties to limit sprawl so that residents would spend less time in their cars for shopping and commuting.

Niello believes citizens should be able to choose to live in suburbs and be provided with good roads and highways. He opposed AB 32 last year because he believes it would have a negative impact on California's economy. He favors cap and trade to limit carbon dioxide emissions and an increase in alternative energy sources including nuclear power plants. Nakanishi is the author of bills for tax credits for energy efficient cars, homes and buildings.

Regarding the Budget, Niello and Nakanishi oppose raising taxes. Niello believes the state should reduce spending by setting priorities and not develop any new programs. Nakanishi suggests that moneys could be saved by streamlining paperwork and application procedures. Senator Steinberg favors eliminating certain tax breaks, such as that for a second home. Jones would balance the budget by a combination of raising taxes and making cuts in expenses. He opposes cuts in the safety net for poor Californians or in funds for public transportation, and opposes the two-thirds vote requirement for raising taxes.

On Redistricting, Nakanishi and Niello favor taking power to shape legislative districts away from the legislature and giving it to an independent commission. Steinberg currently has no position on this issue. Jones questioned whether it is a good idea, but said that regulations regarding district composition are more important than who does it.

Members of the LWV of El Dorado County interviewed Senator Dave Cox and Assembly member Ted Gaines. Please contact Nancy Campbell, Paula Lee or Kathy McCoy for a report on those interviews.

**LWVSC JOINS COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS  
TO PROTECT SACRAMENTO COUNTY OPEN SPACE AND PARKWAY LANDS**

*By Rick Bettis*

During March the LWVSC joined numerous community and environmental organizations, and individuals in successfully advocacy effort to protect open space lands in the County.

Most significant was the March 14 Board of Supervisors General Plan Workshop when more than 100 individuals and groups signed up to speak in opposition to a proposal by a prominent land owner and developer to add 3400 acres of land located outside the adopted Urban Services Boundary (USB) to land to be included as one of the potential development areas to be considered in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the General Plan.

The USB was established during the last General Plan Update in 1993. It is a line, outside of which, there will be no extension of urban services during the planning period up to the year 2030

The public hearing lasted over 5 hours with all in attendance speaking against the proposal, with the exception of the attorney representing the landowner/developer. The County Planning staff had recommended against approval of this proposal, however three of the Supervisors had, at previous meetings, indicate interest in including the project in the EIR. This raised public concerns, which resulted in the major advocacy effort. The final vote was 5 to 0 denying the request The Supervisors who had apparently originally favored the change their position sighting the receipt of additional information.

Another advocacy effort was successful when the LWVSC joined numerous supporters of American River Parkway supporters to convince the Supervisors to approve the Staff recommended update of the American River Parkway Plan for purposes of the preparation of an EIR. The City of Rancho Cordova had unsuccessfully advocated for changes that would have allowed more land to be used for “developed recreation”, instead of passive use natural areas, in the area adjacent to the City.

**Earth Day: Act Locally- Live Sustainably  
April 22, 2007- 11 a.m.- 5:00 pm  
League Table: CSUS- Quad**

League members are encouraged to enjoy the Annual Sacramento Earth Day Celebration to be held on Sunday, April 22nd from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Main Quad of the Sacramento State University, J Street entrance. And the League table offers a great opportunity to not only register voters but to share information about the League programs.

The theme, “Act Locally- Live Sustainably” also is an opportunity to discuss the challenge to reduce the greenhouse gases and use alternative energy sources in making daily decisions to live sustainably. Everyone can help by becoming more informed and involved about the climate change challenge.

Catherine Troka, LWVSC Chair would appreciate hearing from members who may be available in helping to staff a two hour shift at the League table. You may email her at [troka@sbcglobal.net](mailto:troka@sbcglobal.net). It is fun to meet and talk with the many people who attend and enjoy Earth Day and may also want to re-register to VOTE or just want information about the League program issues.

**Senate Health Care Committee Hearing- April 18,  
2007 Universal Health Care Bill  
SB 840 & SB 1014**

SB 840 and SB 1014 (the finance companion bill) will be heard in the Senate Health Committee on April 18, 2007 at 1:30 PM. Everyone is welcome to attend to show your support. But all endorsements must be renewed and the more than 500 organizations and individuals are asked to send their renewals immediately.

Individuals and organizations are invited to send their endorsements to the Senate Health Committee with copies to members of the committee. as soon as possible. A sample support letter is available at [www.sen.ca.gov/kuehl](http://www.sen.ca.gov/kuehl). Click on the SB840 icon on the left side and then click SB840 supporters and scroll down to the bottom for sample support letters. Individuals are encouraged to send letters to YOUR legislator first, and to members of the health committee secondly.

In August 2006 during a League meeting, Sheila Kuehl's assistant discussed the status of SB 840 and plan to reintroduce the single payer health care plan. As expected, the Legislature approved the plan that was vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger in 2006. In early 2007 the Governor introduced his substitute plan. On April 18, Senator Kuehl will reintroduce SB 840 and SB 1014. the universal health care plan that would provide coverage for all Californians.

Senator Kuehl anticipated playing a "dual role this year of reintroducing SB 840 that she continues to believe is the best way to control costs and provide comprehensive and quality health insurance for every Californian at an affordable rate". SB840 guarantees the right of each Californian to choose his or her own doctor and continues to foster competition among private healthcare providers and pharmaceutical drug companies. The bill would have replaced all current healthcare coverage premiums, co-pays, deductibles and out of pocket expenses with a single yearly premium from individuals and businesses, assessed on the basis of income. it would also sharply reduce the administrative costs that are bloating the healthcare budget with a single, streamlined claims and reimbursement system.

As Chair of the Senate Health Committee, Senator Kuehl's other role will be to work closely with Senator Perata and Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, who have introduced healthcare reform legislation of their own, as well as with the Governor and his staff, to bring together a number of disparate proposals and craft the kind of incremental plans, that might help get coverage to at least some of the 7 million uninsured Californians. "One in five Californians is uninsured, and those of us fortunate enough to have health insurance are watching our costs increase while our coverage shrinks". Action is needed.

**SB 840 / OneCareNOW**

Campaign Speakers Training  
Sponsored by Health Care for ALL -  
Sacramento Valley

Saturday, May 5, 2007; 9:30AM to  
3:30PM  
Hart Senior Center, 915 27th St.  
Sacramento, CA

Participate in a training day with Helen Acosta, a remarkable professional with years of experience teaching people to speak and with a real commitment to universal, single payer health care and Senator Sheila Kuehl's SB 840 legislation. Helen Acosta will cover the spectrum of speaking situations from the prepared speech and press conference to the on the street, microphone in your face TV moment.

Lunch orders for a Deli sandwich lunch (\$10.00) will be taken during registration.

For more information phone  
Carolyn Negrete at 916-924-5316

**SAFCA Assessment District  
Election Deadline  
April 18, 2007**

If you are one of the eligible  
voters, as a property owner in the  
proposed assessment district, and  
received a ballot, please mail it in  
now.

Your vote is critical to funding for  
Sacramento Flood Protection.

**VOTE NOW!**

## SAVING OUR CLIMATE SAVING OUR LIVES MAJOR CLIMATE CHANGE SYMPOSIUM

by Rick Bettis

On March 29 a major climate change symposium, organized by the Center for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Technologies, was held in Sacramento titled "Saving our Climate: Saving Our Live; California Fights the Pollution Kyoto Forgot" was held in Sacramento.

This symposium was a unique blend of science and policy considerations. Panelist included highly qualified individuals in the area of atmospheric science, such as Nobel Laureate F. Sherwood Rowland from UC Irvine who was honed for his groundbreaking work on the effects of chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) on the "ozone hole" in our atmosphere. This research led to the banning of CFC's and the closing of the atmospheric ozone hole.

Other eminent scientists participated including representative fro the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies, UC Santa Barbara, Utah State, and Stanford. Advocacy groups such as the Sierra club, Friends of the Earth. Presenters also represented the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, Cummins West, and others.

Policy considerations were articulated by Dr. Robert Sawyer, Chair of the California Air Resources Board (CARB), James Boyd, of the California Energy Commission, Jan Sharpless former CARB Chair, and Larry Greene of the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality management District.

The symposium proved numerous valuable insights regarding the causes and effects of global warming and the many actions that will be required to mitigate these problems.

### Remember the League at Tax Time

Reminder: Before you mail your finished Federal Income Tax Return on April 15 you can help democracy by "checking the box" for public financing for the presidential presidential election. This financing system allows Americans, not special interests, to control the outcome of the presidential elections. If you want more information contact LWVUS, Maggie Duncan, Communications Coordinator at [mduncan@lww.org](mailto:mduncan@lww.org)

### Membership Survey Information

by Roseanne Chamberlain

The survey that 70 league members returned to the membership committee was very informative and will help the League make the best use of willing volunteers, as well as meet member goals. Here are some highlights of the survey.

The greatest number of members (24) joined since 2000, but nearly as many (21) joined prior to 1969, making a great mix of experience and fresh ideas.

A majority of respondents first became involved with League through advertising or by being invited by a friend or another member, in about equal proportions. Networking is a important strength of the organization. Very long standing members were most likely to have been invited by a friend.

Members cite remarkably similar reasons for remaining involved with League. They believe in League values and goals and want to stay informed on issues. About half of those responding are interested in more than one issue and about half attend general meetings. While 43 of the respondents have attended unit meetings, only about 17 still do so. Twenty seven would be interested in attending "special interest" meetings on a regular basis.

Voter Service is the League activity of greatest interest to those responding (26 responses). Eighteen marked Action/Advocacy, and 13 chose Public Outreach as their most important area. For those who indicated a goal for the next two years, increasing membership was marked most frequently.

Much more information was provided, and the membership committee is grateful to all who submitted comments and ideas. We look forward to implementing these ideas in the next months.

## **Immigration Committee**

### **Immigration - What We've Learned to Date**

*by Lola Acosta*

According to the National League of United Latin American Citizens, the issue of immigration has always prompted contentious attitudes. Since our nation's inception, xenophobic attitudes have cyclically risen and abated depending on the economy, the ability of the newest arrived immigrant community to integrate itself, demographic growth and general fear of "outsiders."

The American Immigration Lawyers Association writes about myths and facts regarding immigration (citations available). Myth Number One: Most immigrants are a drain on the U.S. economy or treasury. Fact: Immigrants are good for the economy and treasury as evidenced by the fact that all individuals who work in the U.S. are required to pay federal income taxes with rare exception. Immigrants pay significant total taxes. The National Academy of Sciences (1997) found that "reducing immigration would make it difficult to support the health and retirement of the baby boom generation."

Myth Number Two: Immigrants take jobs away from Americans. Fact: Immigrants do not take jobs from Americans as evidenced by the fact that immigrants do not increase unemployment among natives. In actuality, states with relatively high immigration actually experience low unemployment. Immigrants fill niches at the high and low end of the labor market. There is no such a thing as a fixed number of jobs available-the number of jobs in America increased by 15 million between 1990 and 2003, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. Further, between 2000 and 2010, more than 33 million new job openings will be created in the U.S. that require only little or moderate training, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Myth Number Three: Immigrants are overrunning America. Fact: The number of immigrants living in the U.S. remains relatively small as a percent of the total population. The annual rate of legal immigration is low by historical measure.

Another view of immigrants comes from an overview of Federal Immigration Policy and Proposed Reforms penned by LWV Immigration Study Committee member Deborah McMillan, East Windsor Hightstown, NJ, immigrants who enter the U.S. legally are most likely to do so as a spouse or child of a citizen or permanent resident or another family member. The next largest group enters under the employment-based preference or as a refugee/asylee. The last group of any size, diversity immigrants, come from a variety of countries under a lottery system without respect to the number entering from their countries via other visa groups.

In our next League Voter, we will provide a glossary of terms and a list of study resources. If any League members would like copies of papers, please e-mail [lola@winfirst.com](mailto:lola@winfirst.com). We welcome members for the Immigration Study Committee.

### **LWVUS Immigration Study Background Papers**

*Available at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)*

- Economic Aspects of Authorized and Unauthorized Immigration- January 10, 2007
- Immigration and the Economy- January 10, 2007
- Immigration and the Economy-January 10, 2007
- Overview: Federal Immigration Policy and Proposed Reforms- January 10, 2007
- Effects of Global Interdependence on Migration- January 19, 2007
- Federal Immigration Policy: Enforcement Issues- March 22, 2007
- What Motivates Immigration to America?- March 27, 2007
- U.S. Immigration Policy & Family Reunification- April 5, 2007 (Final)

## LWVUS Immigration Study

“U.S. Immigration Today- A California Perspective” was the topic of the general meeting to “kick-off” the LWVUS Immigration Study by the Sacramento chapter. It featured speakers Judge Cruz Reynoso and Professor Steven Ybarra, J.D. Both have years of experience with immigration as attorneys, educators, activists and community leaders.

Judge Reynoso opened by emphasizing the impact of labels particularly between illegal alien and undocumented person. Illegal alien is reminiscent of the slavery era when people were dehumanized and stripped of their humanity and treated like animals by the use of the word slave. He recommends the word “undocumented” and encouraged members to remain fair, flexible and open to understanding immigration history, issues and the need for change in the laws. He displayed his thick copy of the “Undocumented Workers Commission Report” that evolved into the 1986 Simpson-Mazzoli Bill which put the onus on employers to prohibit the hiring of undocumented workers. He valued the outcome of his service on the commission.

The Judge emphasized that unenforced laws and the lack of sanctions have contributed to the immigration situation today. It is estimated we have 11-12 million undocumented persons in the U.S., largely due to two economic conditions: the disparity between the the U.S. and Mexico and the demand for low wage workers by U.S. employers. He recommends that the U.S. consider a “Marshall Plan” to help Mexico improve their economy and urged that UN standards for the honest and decent treatment of workers become the U.S. practice. He advocated that undocumented persons who break the law should be punished.

Professor Steve Ybarra, who worked for Judge Reynoso as a student, told of the Judge’s achievements in area of farm worker safety, fresh drinking water, toilets in agricultural fields and other humane benefits. Professor Ybarra explained that the current anger about undocumented workers is based on fear and he encouraged the League members to read “North of Mexico” by Carey McWilliams that describes the US inconsistent immigration policy. Since WW I and II the U.S. government approved the recruitment of Mexican workers and tolerated migration for the farm and industrial workers. An estimated 37% of Mexican immigrants arrived in the early 1990’s with 20 million residents identifying themselves as Mexican in the 2000 census. Although the government is said to object to the influx of workers over the border the pressure of corporations and businesses for low wage labor contributes to a double standard.

He attributes Mexico’s problems to overpopulation and traced them to penicillin that saves lives and the church that prevents uneducated women from using birth control. U.S. foreign aid policy that prohibits the teaching of birth control adds to the population explosion. The economy of Mexico also suffers from corruption, lack of infrastructure to transport goods and significant unemployment for all residents including the educated and professionals with 50% of young graduates unable to find jobs in every profession. The average wage in Oaxaca is \$4 day and a pound of corn is \$3. He encouraged the League study to fully understand all dimensions of the immigration issue before supporting recommendations.

During the Q & A both speakers were asked many questions i.e. NAFTA, Guest Workers Programs and Amnesty etc. They were disappointed with North American Free Trade Act, NAFTA, and noted it is not benefiting either country as anticipated. They consider the proposed “guest worker” program to be exploitive, but the bill has no sponsors and has not been forwarded to Congress so it’s future is uncertain. It could be limited to farm workers on a seasonal basis only. Judge Reynoso suggested a law that establishes an ombudsman to protect workers in this country; enables them to work here for five years for different employers and allows them the flexibility to return to Mexico to visit their families. Amnesty proposal would bring practicalities to the forefront.

The LWVSC Immigration Committee committee members include: Lola Acosta, Judy Hoefling, Ruth Range, Anne Rudin, Roseanna Torretta, Eileen Heaser, Betty Green-Heffern, Flo Arnoldy, Chuck O’Neil, Barbara Hopkins and anyone who is interested is invited to participate. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 11, 2007 at noon in the LWVSC Conference Room, 801 12th St.



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**LWVSC VOTER Calendar**

**April - November**

- April 11 - noon - Immigration Study Committee - Office
- April 17 - 9:30 a.m. - Flood Control Committee - Office
- April 16 & 17- Unit Meetings
- April 18 - General Meeting Panel- Affordable Housing & Homeless
- April 25 - Board Meeting
- May 2 - Capitol Day - Prevention- Planned Parenthood
- May 14 & 15 Units
- May 18-19 - LWVSC Convention - Bakersfield
- June 2 - Annual Meeting- Casa Gardes Meeting Room
- June 8-9 - LWVUS- Washington, D.C.Presidents Council
- August 25 - Women's Equality Day Parade - Capitol

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