



Santa Clara Libertarian

Volume 34, Issue 1 January 2006

News of Local Libertarians' Efforts and Feats

LPSCC Convention Applauds Private "Charity"

I bust myths. And I think the public needs to bust its own myths."

Susan Hamilton's words jibe so well with the principles of the Libertarian Party, that we invited her to speak at the annual convention of the Libertarian Party of Santa Clara County, held on Jan. 10 in Mountain View. Hamilton is Executive Director of VTF Services, "a non-profit organization providing service to the industrial community." So, what?

VTF Services is special because they find people with disabilities, train them in jobs ranging

Being an advocate in the community means taking a stand.

from tree spraying to assembly of software kits, and put them to work—for actual money, paid by actual businesses and individuals—and because they refuse to take a penny from taxpayers.

Hamilton's passion for her work was clear the moment she started her speech—she pulled a box of tissue from her bag in case her eyes started to well up during her talk, and said we

were welcome to help themselves in case we, too, were moved by her speech. Then she explained how she'd taken her teenage outrage at bullies' taunting of disabled classmates, and combined that with a degree in Industrial Edu-



Photo: Elizabeth C. Brierly

VTF Services Executive Director Susan Hamilton is an intensely passionate leader.

cation. This made her the perfect choice to direct this amazing organization. She said that being an advocate in the community means taking a stand—and that's what Hamilton has done.

As for those myths that need busting, Hamilton shared how most of her staff members would usually be viewed as incapable of being productive workers. The organization's chief gardener, for example, is rather hunched over. She said VTF hires people with physical disabilities, as well as those with mental retardation but who are 50–60% high functioning.

"I'm very excited to help people see that our perceptions of disability are nonsense," Hamilton exuded. "People who have a job have pride in themselves." Assessing the Americans with Disabilities Act, Hamilton said, "I don't like how it was written. It's too much, for too little."

The LPSCC has used VTF for several years to assemble and label this very newsletter. Says Newsletter Chair Mark Hinkle, "We've been so pleased with the attitude and responsiveness of VTF's staff, the turnaround time, and frankly,

See Applauds, page 4

LP of Santa Clara Members Elect New Leaders for 2006

Along with camaraderie over dinner, and inspiration from guest speaker Susan Hamilton, business was the order of the day at LPSCC's annual convention, held on Jan. 10. Each officer gave his quarterly report, and we elected our new leadership for 2006.

Allen Hacker, whose his work as a Texan's Campaign Manager during Election 2006 is compelling him to step down as Chair, was elected Vice Chair, while the uncontested Kevin Takenaga, who served as 2005 Chair of both our Membership & Campaigns Committees, was elected to succeed him. Hacker & Takenaga both serve on the LP of California (LPC) Exec. Committee as At-Large Representatives. (See their respective messages; page 2.) Our 2005 Vice Chair, Allen Rice, chose not to continue as an LPSCC officer this term.

Mark Johnson, our 2005 Publicity Chair and Acting Secretary for this convention, was elected as Secretary.

In a contested race for Treasurer, incumbent Al Newman was succeeded, two to one, by M Carling, also an LPC at-large representative.

Subcommittee chairs were filled as follows:

Newsletter: Mark Hinkle (incumbent)

Campaigns: Scott Lieberman

Activities: Lois Garcia



Photo: Elizabeth C. Brierly

LPSCC's new team of leaders for 2006: (L-R): Kevin Takenaga, Chair; Mark Hinkle, Newsletter Chair; Scott Lieberman, Campaigns Chair; Allen Hacker, Vice Chair; Mark Johnson, Secretary; Lois Garcia, Activities Chair; M Carling, Treasurer.

Committees remaining open are: Membership, Fundraising, Publicity, and Local Organizing.

We elected fewer delegates to the Feb. state LP convention than we're allotted by LPC, so you may still be appointed. Delegates include:

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Steve Alexander | Logan Hinkle |
| Alberta Brierly | Mark Hinkle |
| Elizabeth Brierly | Scott Lieberman |
| M Carling | Lionel Silva |
| Laura Ferrer | Ray Strong |

- | | |
|--------------|----------------|
| Lois Garcia | Kevin Takenaga |
| Allen Hacker | John Webster |
| Linda Hinkle | |

The Judicial Committee had a mini-contest when M Carling nominated Logan Hinkle, a minor not present at the convention. The three other nominees prevailed: Cathi Brown, Al Newman, and Jeff Smith.

If you're interested in getting involved, contact Chair Kevin Takenaga at Kevin@LPty.net. ■



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News of Local Libertarians'
Efforts and Feats

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PAST ISSUES

From 1998 on: www.SC.CA.LP.org/scl/

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“...The theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single sentence: Abolition of private property.”

– *The Communist Manifesto*
Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels

Correction

We reported in the November issue of *Santa Clara Libertarian* (“LP Reaches Out to Youth at Largest JSA Convention Ever,” page 1) that one John Nahas participated at the LP booth at the JSA Convention in Santa Clara on Nov. 19, 2005. Since then, we have learned that Mr. Nahas was not a participant. We apologize for the error. ■

■ Message from the Chair

A Shift in Leadership & Planning a New Year

As your outgoing Chair, I'd like to acknowledge everyone who helped the Libertarian Party of Santa Clara County last year, and especially those who served as officers. I ask them to continue to support my successor, Kevin Takenaga, at an even higher level, because there is more work to be done. I have every confidence in Kevin and his vision for the coming year, and I'm already enjoying helping him with that.

And now, here's Kevin....

–*Allen Hacker*
Immediate Past Chair, LPSCC

I want to thank the outgoing LPSCC executive team, and to welcome the recently elected officers and committee chairs for the 2006–2007 term, especially our newest members: M Carling, Treasurer; Scott Lieberman, Campaigns Chair; and Lois Garcia, Activities Chair. This new team and I are in the midst of creating our 2006 LPSCC plan, and we hope to unveil parts of that plan to the Central Committee soon.

February will bring the convention of the Libertarian Party of California (LPC), so at the LPSCC convention on Jan. 10, we selected delegates from Santa Clara County. There are still spots left in our delegation which we have the right to fill, so if you wish to represent us at the annual statewide gathering, let us know soon, and then register for the LPC convention (visit <http://CA.LP.org/convention.shtml>).

If you haven't already made a pledge to the LPSCC, you may do so via our web site, at www.SC.CA.LP.org/pledge. Your monthly pledge will go a long way toward helping offset administrative costs we will incur this year, and will allow us to fund pro-



Photo: Elizabeth C. Brierly

Newly elected Chair Kevin Takenaga (right) takes the gavel from immediate past Chair Allen Hacker, at LPSCC's annual convention. Mountain View, Jan. 10.

grams to increase our visibility in the county.

Finally, 2006 is a gubernatorial election year. All statewide offices are up for grabs, including the State Assembly and State Senate seats in our area. If you are interested in running for a local office in your area, contact Scott Lieberman, our Campaigns Chair, for further assistance (Scott73@Earthlink.net). Candidates are starting to circulate petitions to obtain ballot status, and we will be asking your help soon in signing, and even helping circulate, those petitions, which can significantly offset our candidates' filing fees.

I look forward to an exciting year for the LPSCC, and to serving you in my new capacity as your Chair.

–*Kevin Takenaga*
Chair, LPSCC

Eminent Domain Imminent in your Neighborhood?

You can do something! The LP of California has a special committee dedicated to closing for good the floodgates of eminent domain abuse in California. Get involved and save property rights! Contact **Jay Smith**, LPC Eminent Domain Committee Chair, by telephone at (559) 225-5443, or via e-mail at Jae4free@aol.com.



Coming Soon: libertarian Events in the Bay Area

LP of Santa Clara County

February Gathering

See page 6 for article.

When: **Wednesday, Feb. 8, 7:00 P.M.**
Where: Bakers Square
165 Los Gatos–Saratoga Ave. Los Gatos
(408) 354-4733
For info: www.SC.CA.LP.org
LoisGarcia2001@Yahoo.com
(650) 814-3245

Speakers Bureau

When: **Tuesday, Mar. 14, 7:00 P.M.**
Where: Bakers Square
165 Los Gatos–Saratoga Ave. Los Gatos
For info: www.SC.CA.LP.org

Civil Society Institute, Santa Clara University
Prof. Mason Gaffney of U.C. Riverside:

“What the Free Market Must Do with Land”

When: **Wed., Feb. 15, 2006, 5:30–7:00 P. M.**
Where: Calif. Mission Room (née Brass Rail)
Benson Memorial Center
For info: www.SCU.edu/csi/events/

SJSU Saurman Lecture Series

Wayne A. Leighton, Sr. Economist, FCC:
The Do's and Don'ts of Wireless Deregulation:

Lessons from Latin America

When: **Tues., Feb. 21, 2006, 5:15–6:45 P.M.**
Where: Martin Luther King Library, Room 225
San Jose State University
For info: www2.SJSU.edu/depts/economics

Would You Hire This Party?

by **Brian Darby**
Member, LP of Santa Clara County

Rare is the person who has not had a quarrel with government. Most involve money in some way, but those involving a home or a neighborhood may generate the most public action. **Kevin Takenaga** and I spoke to a person whose own quarrel led her all the way to elected office in Sunnyvale.

Melinda Hamilton was elected to the City Council in 2003, winning 56% of the vote in a campaign against an incumbent. This is quite an accomplishment, considering the advantage most incumbents enjoy. The whole process took nearly two years.

How did she do it? Motivation, hard work, communication skills, and luck—but mostly persistence. Hamilton modestly stressed the part that luck played, but in listening to her account, it became clear that luck was a small factor. Besides, what can luck teach us about our own campaigns?

That brings us to our purpose for the interview. Why interview a person who is not a Libertarian for a Libertarian audience? The answer

lies in our recent election results.

Melinda Hamilton lives in a neighborhood that would have been radically changed by a proposal of the Sunnyvale Redevelopment Agency. The city planned to allow builders to erect new, high-rise buildings right next to existing residences. This made no sense to Hamilton and her neighbors. The city already had three giant office buildings standing vacant, eroding the quality of the neighborhood. Worse, they feared the builders would ask the city to use their powers of eminent domain on their behalf, just as it had in the 1970's. Hamilton and seven neighbors organized the "Friends of Sunnyvale."

Their first move was not to public office; it was to public officials. Certainly, the City Council would consider another viewpoint, especially about a plan which had many citizens concerned. You can guess the answer to that one: not interested. If the plan itself was the council's first mistake, being unresponsive was their second. It did not occur to Hamilton that this was an opportunity. She was not interested in public office. She thought that maybe the law should change. In the process of research, Hamilton attended a Libertarian event focused on the abuses of eminent domain. While she is not a Libertarian, not even with a small "L," she found much to agree with on that one issue. As for luck, Louis Pasteur remarked, "Fortune

favors the prepared mind." Hamilton and the Friends of Sunnyvale were preparing, but not for the fight they imagined.

There still exists a way for citizens to bypass legislative bodies and propose changes to the law: the initiative process. Sunnyvale became a "chartered" city in 1949. Any citizen can get an initiative onto the ballot to change the charter, by collecting the appropriate number of signatures. Friends of Sunnyvale proposed 3 initiatives for the 2003 election: a height limit for buildings in the city, a limit on the use of eminent domain, and public approval for redevelopment plans.

The initiatives never made it to the ballot.

Hamilton had been preparing for this fight for a long time—she just didn't know it. Her 1993 B.A. in Communications led to various marketing positions, mostly related to technology. In 1997, she was graduated from Leadership Sunnyvale. (In fact, all but one of the current City Council members are graduates of that program.)

So they began organizing. Altogether, about 80 people fanned out through Sunnyvale neighborhoods collecting signatures. Many a weekend was spent with clipboard in hand at public buildings, supermarkets, and malls. But when they presented the signatures, the city discovered a mistake. The city clerk had given them the wrong number—sorry, it should have been higher. Hamilton challenged in court, but the judge agreed with the city. The initiatives were

■ See **Hire**, page 3

Photo courtesy of Brian Darby



Brian Darby

Bay Area LP Activist Now a Director of Free State Project

Bay Area LP activist **Morey Straus** has been elected to a director role within the Free State Project. The Free State Project (F.S.P.) seeks the agreement of 20,000 activists to move to a single state, where they will work toward limiting government to the protection of life, liberty, and property.

It was a fit of depression after the November, 2004 elections that prompted Straus to become an active volunteer for the F.S.P. He has been participating in several outreach efforts, the most visible being his roles as Local Group Leader for Northern California-based members, and liaison to the single-issue motorcyclists' rights community.

"I look forward to working with our officers toward renewing enthusiasm for the project among our volunteers," said Straus of his election. "Greater communication and interaction between stakeholders will be a big part of making 'Liberty in Our Lifetime' a reality."

In 2003, New Hampshire was chosen as the Free State.

When asked about his own relocation plans, he pointed to the "First 1,000" pledge. Straus explained that this is a new pledge intended for near-term results. "We need a thousand signers by the end of 2006. If that is successful, then all 1,000 of us are on our honor to move by the end of 2008."

The Free State Project was spawned in late 2001 by Yale University political science professor **Jason Sorens**. In 2003, project participants chose New Hampshire as the Free State. While the statement of intent does not require participants to move until a level of 20,000 signatories has been reached, many are choosing to get started right away. As of this writing, nearly 400 of the 7,000 participants are in New Hampshire. The New Hampshire Underground—"New Hampshire's Pro-Liberty Community"—only indirectly related to the F.S.P.—is quickly becoming the de facto gathering point for in-state liberty activism (see <http://NHFree.com>).



Photo: Elizabeth C. Briery

Morey Straus participating in LPSCC's Election 2006 candidate training session, held Oct. 19, 2005 at School of Choice in Sunnyvale.

For more information, or to get involved as a friend or participant of the Free State Project, you may visit them on the Web at www.FreeStateProject.org. ■

Hire

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dead. But Hamilton wasn't. The count was 0–2, and she decided to swing away.

It was not much of a stretch at that point. Already, she had an organization; she already knew a successful campaign manager, who agreed to take on her campaign; and she already had the public exposure from press coverage of the initiatives, and all those days spent gathering signatures. Her preparation had led her to this opportunity.

But she knew it would not be enough. Hamilton refused to be a one-issue candidate. She began to prepare for all the issues that she would face as a council member. If she won, she wanted to do a good job. It was that attitude that likely put her over the top. With that attitude, she agreed to talk to Sunnyvale Libertarians on the Sunday evening following Thanksgiving. With that attitude, she was completely gracious when it turned into only two people. She explained that she meets with anyone who asks, if her schedule allows.

Hamilton is not a Libertarian. She takes a conventional view of government. Her agenda does not include significant decreases in regulation or spending. The issues she'd really like to promote are quality of life and "green" building methods. She still wants to restrict the use of eminent domain to the public purposes allowed by the Constitution.

Why interview a non-Libertarian for a Libertarian audience? You learn to win by talking to winners. In case the point has been lost, we are a political party. That means our primary purpose is to get people elected. How many candidates supported by the LPSCC won election last time? One? Two? What do we need to do to lay the foundation, for us as a political party, to get the right people elected?

Melinda Hamilton's experience holds part of the answer. This is an analysis of a successful campaign, not an endorsement. By chance, some might say, Hamilton was prepared. At each step, she was prepared for a reasonable stretch to the next. She did not try to go from nowhere to national candidate. When opportunity arose, she took it. She succeeded at the critical skills: knowledge, communication, and organization. She had practical people skills and an issue that clearly motivated others to help. At each step, she had clear results that proved her ability to take on the next step. She had performed.

Hamilton had proved that she cared about what the voters cared about, and she had proved that she could serve that constituency. The incumbent was a part of an existing Council that had proven unresponsive to those same voters. Did he really have a chance?

Will Libertarians ever have a chance, unless we can prove the same things? Can we perform? Can we actually serve a constituency? Can we prove it? An election is a job interview. Ask yourself, "Based on our execution to date, would you hire us?" Instead of separating ourselves,

Applauds

from Page 1

their reasonable rates. I can't imagine a better marriage of a privately-funded solution with our local party's needs."

In 2001, the Mountain View Chamber of Commerce awarded Hamilton its annual Athena



Photo: Elizabeth C. Brierly

Don Cormier, LPSCC member and host of "Free and Clear" radio show, KKUP 91.5 FM

Award, which was created to honor outstanding Mountain View leaders who have achieved a high level of professional excellence in both business and the community.

Also at the meeting was Mountain View Vice Mayor **Greg Perry**, who announced formation of a coalition to oppose the new proposed 0.25% county sales tax to fund the expansion of BART to San Jose. The exorbitant project has so few redeeming qualities that even the Sierra Club is opposed. Perry welcomed several LPSCC members as volunteers for his coalition, Citizens for Sensible Transportation Solutions, and is eager for more. (See Perry's article on page 5.) Hopefully this coalition will succeed in aborting yet another burdensome government debacle.

Also wasting no time in recruiting volunteers,

by appearing to claim that only we have principles, maybe we should focus on involving ourselves—with service—and becoming the party of performance. Judge Jim Gray and I discussed just that during the Santa Clara fund-raiser for Badnarik in 2004. Now the Washington Post is touting the idea—with Newt Gingrich, no less.

Pasteur, not counting on luck, revealed the true secret to his success: "My strength lies solely in my tenacity." Where is our tenacity? We go through phone lists to find people to become candidates. What does that say about our willingness to spend time and effort to prepare candidates to serve, about the quality of candidates we are willing to accept, about our understanding of the electorate?

Einstein defined insanity as "doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." Don't we, at each election, repeat the same process, with the same dismal results? Hamilton shows us the fallacy of a "for us or against us" stance about Libertarian issues. She agrees with us on eminent domain. We must be willing to build upon that. We must build upon

Lionel Silva, an LP candidate running for Assembly District 24, introduced himself and spoke about his campaign platform, which includes the ban of eminent domain abuse, and a call for the Assembly to move to a part-time basis. With those principles, he had no trouble signing up signature gatherers from among the convention attendees.

Don Cormier was also on hand, and announced his long-running radio talk show, "Free and Clear," and invited candidates to be guests on the program. The program airs on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, from 6:00–8:00 A.M., on KKUP 91.5 FM.

All in all, the LPSCC convention delivered on its promise to let us connect with like-minded people and to get inspired about local Libertarianism in the year to come. ■



Photo: Elizabeth C. Brierly

Lionel Silva, LP candidate for Assembly District 24, in the Willow Glen area of San Jose

agreement, not dismiss because of disagreement. Dismissing for disagreement has earned Libertarians the reputation of "eating their young."

We could make this year different, but we will have to do different things. What would happen if we started talking about serving the voters, not just convincing them? If we talked about preparation, not just willingness? If we looked for real opportunity on the ballot, not just availability? If we looked at the "election-when-we-will-be-ready," not just the next one?

Melinda Hamilton is not the only successful candidate we can learn from. In future articles, I hope to share insights from other election winners...maybe even Libertarians.

If you were a voter, would you hire this Party? Eventually, I hope to hear, "Yes!" ■

BRIAN DARBY has been a San Jose resident for nine years and an LP member for five. He is a Certified Information System Security Professional, and works for National Semiconductor as a Senior Information Security Analyst.

Invite your family, friends, and colleagues to join the Libertarian Party!



The Libertarian Party
of Santa Clara County
 P.O. Box 60171, Sunnyvale, CA 94088-0171

Please print:

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State/ZIP code: _____
 Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

The Libertarian Party is the party of principle. To assure and affirm that our party never strays from its principles, we *request* our members to sign the pledge below. (Non-signers cannot vote on Party business.)

I hereby certify that I do not believe in or advocate the initiation of force as a means of achieving political or social goals.

Signature: _____

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NEW MEMBER RENEWAL

\$25 Basic (new member only)..... \$ _____
 \$50 Basic (membership renewal)..... \$ _____
 \$100 Sustaining..... \$ _____
 \$250 Sponsor \$ _____
 \$500 Patron \$ _____
 \$1,000 Benefactor \$ _____
 \$2,000 Life Member \$ _____

MY ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION TO LPSCC:

Monthly pledge (\$10 minimum)..... \$ _____
 One-time donation..... \$ _____

Payment method:

Check: Make payable to **Libertarian Party**

Credit card:
 Visa MasterCard Discover (circle one)
 Card no.: _____
 Expiration date: _____
 Cardholder name: _____
 Signature: _____

VTA Would Throw Good Money after Bad

by Greg Perry
Citizens for Sensible Transportation

Santa Clara's Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is currently planning a new, 0.25% sales tax, primarily to extend Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) from Fremont to San Jose.

VTA is not a great candidate for a new tax. They are the least efficient major transit agency in the country, as measured by dollars spent on buses per hour of bus service. In fact, if the VTA were to bring their costs down to the national average, it would generate more money than a new tax.

This is not the first time the VTA has asked for a new tax. There were similar measures in 1984, 1996, and 2000. Once state and federal funds are included, the VTA receives over \$400 million per year of taxpayer money.

Nor is this the first time the VTA has promised to run a train to Fremont. Both the 1996 and 2000 measures promised to run trains to Fremont. Despite passage of both measures, neither train line has been built.

The proposal to extend BART to San Jose deserves scrutiny. When the federal government ranked projects for cost-effectiveness, BART to San Jose received the lowest possible rating. The project as a whole was rated "not recommended" and ineligible for funding. Clearly, the project has some problems.

One way to deal with these problems would be to consider other, more cost-effective alternatives. Instead, the official VTA response has

been to request that the federal government re-define the phrase "cost-effectiveness."

There are many reasons that BART-San Jose didn't rank well for cost effectiveness. It is hugely expensive—about 6 billion current-year dollars. BART runs on a different track width and a different voltage from that of the rest of the world. Everything is a custom order, and therefore more costly.

Similarly, the route chosen is very expensive. The current proposal is for a tunnel under Santa Clara Street, directly under a proposed light-rail line on the surface. There are also multiple bus routes on the same street. Public transit makes up approximately three percent of all trips in Santa Clara County, and is not predicted to grow above six percent, even if we build everything. Two train lines and a bus for the one street is probably excessive. (Two trains and a bus might make sense for San Francisco's Market Street. However, you can't erect buildings that tall so near the airport, and for good reason.)

Even former BART directors Roy Nakedegawa and Sherman Lewis have written publicly against

the proposal. Both make the point that, for far less money, you could build a standard-gauge system that is built from, and compatible with, industry-standard parts. And, by running on the same standard-gauge track that is used in the rest of the country, it would be easier to expand.

In general, building BART to San Jose simply doesn't make sense. It's an inefficient proposal, from an inefficient agency. ■

GREG PERRY is Vice Mayor of Mountain View & was recently appointed to VTA. He has served as City Councilman, and on VTA's Policy Advisory Committee, each for 3 years. Perry founded Citizens for Sensible Transportation Solutions to oppose the new sales tax for BART. You may reach him at Greg_Perry1234@Yahoo.com.





Santa Clara Libertarian

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Feb. 24–27, 2006

Liberty at Sea '06

Libertarian Party
of California
annual convention

1-877-884-1776
www.CA.LP.org

February Gathering

All Santa Clara County Libertarians are cordially invited to our next gathering!

- If you missed the county convention dinner in January, this is your opportunity to meet the new officers of your Executive Committee. Let us know what you would like to see happen in the coming year.
- If you plan on attending the state LP convention in February, but are not yet a delegate, please come out and let us know that you would like to be on the LPSCC roster.
- We'll be gathering signatures for 2006 LP statewide & local candidates. If you are interested in running, now's the time to announce your intentions, and to help us to help you.

When: Wednesday, Feb. 8, 7:00 P.M.

Where: Bakers Square
165 Los Gatos–Saratoga Ave.
Los Gatos, CA 95030
(408) 354-4733

If you've always wanted to get involved, but weren't quite sure how, come out and have some pie with us! This is a casual meeting with a semi-formal agenda. You may bring up any topic that concerns you. You can find out more about various projects and committees that are forming.

Do you know these Libertarians?



Photo: Elizabeth C. Brierly

*This is LPSCC's **Judicial Committee**, elected on Jan. 10 (L–R): **Jeff Smith, Cathi Brown, Al Newman***

We are a friendly bunch!

For more information, e-mail me at LoisGarcia2001@Yahoo.com or telephone me at (650)814-3245. I hope to see you on Feb. 8!

–Lois Garcia
Activities Chair, LPSCC

Coverage of LPSCC's
Annual Convention
starts on page 1!