



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

November 2007

Serving the Citizens of Stanislaus County, California

VOL. 58 NO. 5

Calendar of Events

2nd Wednesday's
Wednesday, 6:00 p.m.
Board Meeting

2nd Tuesday's
10:30 a.m.
Local Action Committee
Meetings

January 16, 2008
Wednesday, 7 to 9 p.m.
Ballot Measures
Pros and Cons
Sierra Hall 132
Modesto Junior College

January 22, 2008
Last Day to Register for
February Primary
Election

January 23, 2008
Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Program Planning
Meeting

All meetings are held at the
League Office,
720 13th Street, Modesto, CA

ON-THE-WEB

**LWV Stanislaus
Local Action Program**
http://www.lwvstanislaus.org/local_action.org

**Previous Issues
of the Voter:**
<http://www.lwvstanislaus.org/voter.html>

Carol McFarland Talks about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

At the September Lunch and Learn meeting, Carol McFarland, the Director of Operations for the Society for Handicapped Children and Adults of Stanislaus County discussed how her agency helps implement the ADA. It is a private, non-profit organization and does not receive any grants from government agencies, so it has to do four major fundraisers a year to support its work.

The Society has a trained staff and also uses volunteers who are trained to work with the disabled. Most of the children, aged 8 to 17, have Down's Syndrome or Cerebral Palsy.

Many volunteers are needed, particularly to transport the children to doctor appointments. Other volunteers may work at a school with recreational opportunities for the children. Also, there is a one-week bike camp for children.

Although the Center is in Stanislaus County some clients are served from outside Stanislaus County, as many counties have no such facility. Children as young as five (5) years old can participate in adaptive sports, tailored to their abilities. Amazingly, there is also adaptive water skiing and snow skiing.

Wheel chairs can be loaned by the agency but are not given out permanently to those who might need them permanently. Lots of equipment has been donated to the Center. When wheel chairs are donated, a volunteer repairs them and brings them up to standard condition.

It is always rewarding to hear of the work done by agencies like the Society for Handicapped Children and Adults! Good work!

- *Myrtle Osner, Office Manager*

**LWV of STANISLAUS
COUNTY OFFICERS**

President

Ellen Meyer 579-1603
president@lwwstanislaus.org

Vice President

Ann Krabach 667-1824
vp@lwwstanislaus.org

Secretary

Marie Bairey 523-0663
secretary@lwwstanislaus.org

Treasurer

Julie Saugstad 526-0795
treasurer@lwwstanislaus.org

DIRECTORS

Membership

Lynn Kelso

Jennie Sweeney

Voter Service

Cynthia Morgan

Susan Novak

State and National

Sue Chaffee

Finance Drive

Joan Goldsmith

Local Action

Patty Lundy

Nominating Committee

Cindy van Empel

Joan Patterson

Virginia Lish

Public Relations &

Voter Editor

Debbie Whitmore

newsletter@lsvstanislaus.org

OFF-BOARD

Membership

Laurie Carley

Lunch and Learn

Helen Gordon

Web Master

Stella Beratlis

Office Manager

Myrtle Osner

League Office
720 13th Street, Modesto
209-524-1698
www.lwwstanislaus.org

President's Message:

Dear Member and new Readers:

In this last month's National Voter, the six strategic goals presented to the LWV Council by League President Mary Wilson back in June. The overall goal is to strengthen League's external impact on education and advocacy. The five internal goals are increasing visibility, enhancing League leadership, assuring the League's financial base, growing membership, and embracing technology to accomplish these goals. At the Board meeting, we reviewed a list of accomplishments for the first six months of our League year with reference to these goals. I am pleased to report that we have directed our energies towards all of these goals. I thank all members for assisting the Board with these goals. To see our accomplishments, please check out our website at <http://www.lwwstanislaus.org>.

This month, I went to a regional meeting in Fresno, and our LWVCA President Janis Hirohama gave a wonderful presentation that was positive and motivating. She discussed how she has discovered how much respect the League of Women Voters has with government and private organizations. She also covered a serious point that most of us are aware of: the League of Women Voters is perceived as liberal. This last month, I was informed by someone that they were sure the League was part of the Democratic party! Boy! Were they corrected quickly! As League makes a stronger impact in Stanislaus County and as members, we must remember to promote the League of Women Voters as a NON-PARTISAN, non-profit political organization. This will help us have an accurate image in our community and aid in increasing membership.

In October, we were very involved with Voter Service activities. I wish to thank Susan Novak and Cynthia Morgan for their efforts in organizing forums and voter registration, and thanks go to all members who assisted at these events. I am very proud that our League held forums in two of our communities-Modesto and Turlock- as well as registering voters in four communities- Salida, Patterson, Modesto and Turlock. We have been maintaining our presence in the communities that we have always served and are adding new ones. We are also increasing membership involvement. Ann Krabach and Hanna Renning were both excited to assist at a forum in Turlock close to home!

Plans are currently in the works to send League representatives to City Council meetings to introduce ourselves as a county-wide League. We are looking for members to assist us in this very important project. This project will increase our visibility and hopefully attract new members and create new exciting ways to assist in the County.

(Continued on Page 3)

DIVERSITY POLICY:

League of Women Voters of Modesto in both its values and practices affirms its belief and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means that there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

This will be the last Voter of 2007! Our next Voter will be published in January 2008. I wish all of you a wonderful Holiday season and **THANK YOU** for being a part of League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County this year. Your membership and involvement are valued by those in the League and in the community!

Sincerely,

Ellen Meyer, President



New Internship Program

Over the years, our League has become more and more involved with the local colleges in a variety of ways. Last year, we had a student from Stanislaus County assist with the Smartvoter website for a class project. This year, we were asked by Political Science Instructor Steve Miller (a League member) whether we would assist with his internship in political science class by allowing a student to intern with us.

Steve and Professor Richard Higginbotham started the class this semester. Sonia Moctezuma, our student intern, has been assisting at forums, voter registration and helping with Smart Voter website (see her article on Page 4). Due to increased involvement, the Board approved the establishment of an internship program. This program would be set up to use and save League members in the future a lot of time. Hopefully, we can use this program for colleges and high schools, too!

League members are invited to send in suggestions for this internship to me at president@lwv.org. We are hoping to have this project finalized for board approval by January 2008.

- *Ellen Meyer, President*

LOCAL ACTION

Local Action Committee Discusses District Elections!!

The Local Action committee met in September and selected the second Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. for its meetings. It was considered important that, as a Countywide League, we continue monitoring action in areas outside Modesto, but we need members in those areas to actively participate with the Committee. President Ellen Meyer will encourage the formation of local units in the areas outside Modesto area.

Marie Bairey gave an excellent presentation on the current status of the district elections proposal. We will continue monitoring the City of Modesto advisory vote on the November ballot. Since the city had already set up a series of informative meetings to educate about the vote, it was not considered necessary for the League to duplicate this. However, at the November 13th meeting, we will evaluate the election by district proposal for the Modesto City Council and set a timetable to decide whether to support a district proposal.

The advisory vote on the ballot asks voters, "Should Modesto change its system of electing City Council members?" A second advisory vote asks, "If the City of Modesto were to change its system of electing City Council members, which of the following systems would you prefer? The Mayor would remain elected by all voters in the City under either option." The choices are:

- a. **"By District"**: Six districts where candidates must live in the District they wish to represent and the voters who live in the District vote on who will represent that District; or
- b. **"Mixed"**: Two at-large council seats where candidates may live anywhere in the City and are voted on by all City voters and six districts where candidates must live in the district they wish to represent and the voters who live in the District vote on who will represent that District.

Members who are unable to attend the Local Action Committee meeting are welcome to e-mail their opinions to Patty Lundy at pattylundy@sbcglobal.net.

- *Patty Lundy, Local Action Director*



MEET SONIA!

Hello! My name is Sonia Moctezuma and I attend Modesto Junior College. As a college student, I am involved in many school activities. Currently, I am the Vice President of Senate for the Associated Students of Modesto Junior College (ASMJC), the MJC student government. As the Vice President, my job is mainly to represent the students of MJC. It is important for ASMJC to let the student's voices be heard.

My main goal as the Vice President is to make college life more enjoyable for students. This semester, I am participating in the League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County internship program with the help of my political science professor Steve Miller, a League member.

I have assisted at the Modesto City Council forum and the Modesto City School Board forum. I am assisting with the Smartvoter website project, ensuring all candidates receive letters of invitation to put their information on the website. I have also been studying the League for research papers for school. I enjoy political science classes, and learning about the League.

- *Sonia Moctezuma, League Intern*

FINANCE DRIVE UPDATE... KEEP YOUR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS COMING!

The 2007-2008 Finance Drive is making progress, but we still need your help!



GOAL: \$8,700

RECEIVED: \$6,710

- *Joan Goldsmith,
Finance Drive
Director*

THE LEAGUE WANTS YOU!

Joining the League is a commitment to democracy and good government...but the League also requires governance! YOU can help the League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County grow and thrive.

The Nominating Committee is seeking members who want to help keep the League growing by volunteering their talents. Do you have computer skills? Are you interested in promoting participation in government? Do you want to translate your passion for democracy into ACTION and have a positive effect on your community?

Please contact Cindy van Empel at 577.8802 or e-mail cvanempel@gmail.com

SECRETARY'S REPORT

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:

- The LWV Stanislaus six-month activity summary for LWV Stanislaus is on the web.
- A Student Internship Program is being developed, outlining guidelines and expectations for future student interns.
- The Board endorsed Patty Lundy's interest in establishing a Local Action Blog.
- Smartvoter.org candidate list and polling place look-up is operational!
- League membership in Stanislaus Commission for Women renewed.

- *Marie Bairey, Secretary*



LWVSC MEMBERSHIP CORNER

With much regret, we report the passing of one of our long-time League members, Helen Ralph, who was active in efforts to improve education for children. She is survived by three daughters. We will all miss her!

VOTER ACTIVITIES HELP INFORM THE COUNTY!

Modesto Forums

Two candidate forums were held with the assistance of League member volunteers:

Modesto City Council- Chair 1 and Chair 6

Participants: Robert Farrace, Dave Lopez, and Robert Stanford for Chair 1; Brad Hawn and Tom Maher participated for Chair 6

Modesto City Schools- Board of Education

Participants: Kimberly Spina, Rickey McGill, Gary Lopez, Maria Alvarez, and Steven Grenbeaux; Sent Statement: Dale "Gene" Williams

A big thanks to the candidates! Without their participation, this public exchange of ideas on the issues would not be possible! We also can't thank the League moderators enough for their important part in making these forums possible! Our two moderators were Julie Saugstad for the Modesto City Schools' Board of Education and Marie Bairey for the Modesto City Council races. They were assisted by League members serving as question sorters, timers, greeters, and those answering the phones. Member volunteers were: Linda Walden, Diane Bartlett, Debbie Whitmore, Joan Patterson, Lynn Kelso, Francie Fovinci, Jennie Sweeny, Lucille Lotko, Seena Rhine, Margie Lipsky, and Bev and Ralph Sturtevant.

Thanks also to the City of Modesto for allowing use of the Council Chambers and for donating the public access TV coverage. Without their support, we would not be able to broadcast our forums!

We had excellent coverage of the forums in the *Modesto Bee* and the forums were rebroadcast every Saturday evening up until election day on Cable Channel 7.

Turlock Board of Education Forum

We joined with the Turlock PTA Council and the Walnut School PTA to present a forum on October 17. Susan Novak moderated and Turlock members Hanna Rennig and Ann Krabach assisted with question-sorting and timing. More about this forum in the next *Voter*!

(Continued Next Column)

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Voter Registration

We registered voters at four Stanislaus County libraries on Monday, October 22, the last day to register to vote for the November election. Thank you to the following members for volunteering their time at the following locations. Remember to vote on November 6.

Modesto Library: Myrtle Osner, Margie Lipsky, Polly Klopfer, Nancy Smith, Linda Walden and Susan Novak.

Salida Library: Marie Bairey and Debbie Kleinfelder

Patterson Library: Ellen Meyer and Joan Goldsmith

Turlock Library: Hanna Renning, Cynthia Morgan, Ann Krabach, Diane Bartlett and Elizabeth Vestal.

We plan to register voters again in January for the February 5, 2008, election that includes the Presidential Primary race. We could use your help!

- *Susan Novak and Cynthia Morgan*

I WANT TO ADD MY VOICE TO YOURS BY JOINING THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF STANISLAUS COUNTY!

Student Membership	\$15	_____
Individual Membership	\$50	_____
Household Membership	\$75	_____

Please contact me with more information:

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone (for directory): _____

Email: _____

MAIL TO:

LWVSC P.O. Box E, Modesto, CA 95352

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

Tear off and send to:
League of Women Voters of
Stanislaus County
P.O. Box E
Modesto, CA 95352
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit
U.S. Postage
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HOLIDAY FLING

Monday, December 3
7 to 9 p.m.

At the Home of Lynne and Albion Fenderson

Guest Speaker:

David Pier, Executive Director
Gallo Center for the Arts