



# THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

April 2009

Serving the Citizens of Stanislaus County, California

VOL. 59 NO. 8

## Calendar of Events

**Tuesday, April 7**

6:00 p.m.

Local Action Committee  
Home of Marie Bairey  
Call her for directions

**Wednesday, April 8**

6:00 p.m.

Board Meeting

**Thursday, April 23**

5:00 p.m.

Valley Futures Forum  
201 Needham St, Modesto

**Monday, April 20**

6:30 p.m.

NPV Compact  
Consensus Meeting  
Home of Marsha Waggoner  
916 Kenilworth Ct, Modesto

**Tuesday, April 28**

12:00 Noon

Lunch and Learn  
Appetiz Restaurant  
Roseburg Square

**Saturday May 2**

10:00 a.m.

Annual Meeting  
Appetiz Cafe  
Roseburg Square

Unless noted otherwise,  
All meetings are held at the  
League Office,  
720 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Modesto

This calendar is current as of  
printing. Check LWVSC  
Website for updates  
[www.lwvstanislaus.org](http://www.lwvstanislaus.org)

## National Popular Vote Compact Study

The League has a long-standing position in support of the direct election of the president by popular vote. Now, League members have the opportunity to consider whether to support the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) as a viable process to achieve that result. The NPV Compact would avoid the need for a constitutional amendment abolishing the Electoral College (EC), and would assure that the individual receiving the most votes would become president.

The NPV Compact proposal uses the mechanism of the EC. States that legislatively enact the NPV Compact would agree that their state electors would vote for the individual that received the most votes nationwide. Thus, the popular vote count from all 50 states and the District of Columbia would be added together. State elections officials in all states participating would award their electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the largest number of popular votes.

This alternative method of assigning a state's EC votes would take effect only when enacted by states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes. This 270-vote threshold also corresponds essentially to states representing a majority of the people of the United States.

The plan includes procedural provisions to help assure smooth functioning of the agreement – conditions that deal with states deciding to withdraw from the Compact at the last moment, enforcement issues and recounts.

Currently four states have passed legislation to enact the NPV Compact.

There are pros and cons to this plan, which are discussed in full in papers found on the LWVUS Web site. ([www.lwv.org/NPV](http://www.lwv.org/NPV)) Summaries of these papers are also available. League members can learn more about the plan from these sources and consider its ramifications at consensus meetings across the country.

Our consensus meeting will be on **Monday, April 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at 916 Kenilworth Ct., Modesto**, the home of Marsha Waggoner. Be sure to attend! Who better than the League to be ready to speak to this good-government issue? Our study group members are: Marsha Waggoner, Jill Sousa, Mildred Kinser and Susan Novak (study chair).

To prepare for the April 20th consensus meeting, please try to read the above mentioned material prepared by the National LWVUS study committee before the meeting. Study group members will review the arguments both for and against the NPV compact and lead a discussion of the consensus questions. Refreshments will be served!

Adapted from the LWVUS Website  
*Susan Novak, First Vice President.*

**LWV of STANISLAUS COUNTY**  
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**Colleen Norby**

**Margie Lipsky (Off Board)**

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**Ellen Dunbar**

**Marsha Waggoner (Off Board)**

*Finance Drive*

**Amy Wolfe**

*Public Relations*

**Susan Novak**

*State and National Action*

**Sue Chaffee**

*Local Action*

**Patty Beyer**

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**Jean Tenney**

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*Lunch and Learn*

**Mildred Kinser**

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*League Office*

**720 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Modesto**

**209-524-1698**

**[www.lwvstanislaus.org](http://www.lwvstanislaus.org)**

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Dear Members,

Enclosed in this *Voter* is our special Call to Annual Meeting Insert. Though all our activities and events are important, ANNUAL MEETING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENT TO ATTEND. At our Annual Meeting we elect the next slate of officers and approve our next budget and local positions. This year I am very pleased that Trudy Schafer, LWVC Senior Director for Program, is coming again to our League to speak on the issues LWVC is involved with this year. Trudy is very dedicated to League, and I am proud to inform you that she and my mother worked together in the Sacramento League when I was growing up! Please be sure to send in your tear sheet with your breakfast choice. I look forward to seeing you May 2<sup>nd</sup>!

April 20<sup>th</sup>. League members have the wonderful opportunity to participate in a consensus meeting in a LWVUS Study-National Popular Vote Compact Study. As Vice President Susan Novak states in her article: "***Who better than the League to be ready to speak to this good-government issue?***" We look forward to seeing you!

This March, I had the wonderful opportunity through Leadership Modesto to go to our State Capital and hear State Senator Dave Cogdill, State Assembly Representatives Tom Berryhill and Bill Berryhill speak on their concerns and what they are working on. In separate presentations, they stated the exact same concerns: water, state budget, term-limits, and bipartisanship. All three of our representatives have water as the top priority on their agendas - ensuring water needs are met for our region with the increasing demands from the rest of the state. The state budget needs to be done in a timely manner with all representatives working together. Term limits are a concern as more time is needed for representatives to get up to speed and then have time to actually work on concerns. Lastly, they all stated that the political parties need to work together to meet the needs and goals of California and its citizens.

Our Spring Membership event was a great success with a very informative presentation from our speaker Greg Nyhoff, Modesto City Manager. Margie Lipsky and her "top chef" team did a wonderful job with location and cuisine. Thank you members who attended and for bringing many guests to this yearly event.

In this *Voter* is our Finance Drive Report Update from our Finance Director, Amy Wolfe, noting others who have generously supported our organization. Many thanks go to these members of League and community donors.

See you at the Annual Meeting 2009-2010!

*Ellen Meyer, President*

**DIVERSITY POLICY:**

League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County 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.

## State and National

### National

The **E-Verify system** that expired March 13 has been seen as a way to enforce employers' validation of their new hires' immigration status. It is being debated federally. The Internet-based system allows employers to check the immigration status of a new hire against the Social Security and Homeland Security's databases. Since 1986, employers have been required to confirm that new employees are authorized to work in the US. Only 16 States, California being one of them, have been using the E-Verify system to ascertain the employees' status. US Citizenship and Immigration Services Director, Sharon Rummery, believes her agency could process the estimated 63 million queries per year that would be submitted to the system. Some legislators and labor representatives doubt that the system is accurate enough to be foolproof and fair. Mark Rosenblum of Migration and Policy Institute believes that the statute should become part of the total immigration reform.

**Federal stimulus** money (\$650,000) will be coming to our county from May through September to help put 14-24 year-olds to work in public sector agencies. The Stanislaus County ROP is doing the legwork in anticipation of the funds arriving. If you have ideas for public sector jobs for this age group, please contact me at [chaffee.s@monet.k12.ca.us](mailto:chaffee.s@monet.k12.ca.us).

### State

As part of the **Intel Talent Search**, three 17-year-olds from the Bay Area were entertained in the White House by President Obama, along with three dozen finalists from the rest of the US. Julia Ransohoff worked in the Stanford University research lab, focusing on how male and female stem cells affected the growth of transplantable hearts. Mariana Mao investigated the gravitational forces generated by both the Milky Way and black holes of distant galaxies. Aniruddha Deshmukh discovered that a metal-based compound placed in the soils after California sagebrush had been burned off by wild fires would help with re-growth of the sage by reducing the cyanide left in the sage's ash. President Obama entertained these promising scientists to show that math and science education in the US is important and could be thriving with further governmental support. "When private sector companies see the government backing research, then they tend to 'jump on board' and follow suit. Then all of us benefit", he said.

President Obama's executive order of 3/09 overturns 8 years of limited **research on stem cells**. Three million dollars will be coming to California for stem cell research. Embryonic stem cells retain the capacity to transform into any type of cell in the body, from neurons to beating heart cells. Researchers envision cell therapies that would replace damaged spinal nerves, reinforce weakened heart muscle or restore a diabetic's ability to manufacture insulin. For the last ten years, researchers have been limited to working with re-engineered adult cells. Dr. Arnold Kriegstein of the Eli and Edythe Broad Center of Regeneration Medicine and Stem Cell Research at UCSF says that these cells have tremendous promise as therapies. But according to the pioneer of adult stem cell research, Dr. Shinya Yamanaka of UCSF's Gladstone Institute and Kyoto University, the ability to work with both embryonic and adult cells and to test which would be the better for each of these advances, will be possible now. Dr. Yamanaka was present at the White House for the executive order's signing.

President Obama said he believes that the majority of Americans have concluded that the work with stem cells holds the potential for medical advances and can be done within responsible ethical boundaries. "When government fails to make these investments, opportunities are missed. Promising avenues go unexplored," he said. "Some of our best scientists leave for other countries that will sponsor their work. And those countries may surge ahead of ours in the advances that transform lives."

*Sue Chaffee, State and National Director*

## Local Action

### Observers needed for Local Action Participate in League from your home!

As part of our Local Action work, League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County needs observers to report what is taking place in our communities. Many council and commission meetings are televised or webcast so members can observe at home.

An observer does not have to be an expert on local government issues. Just take notes on the events of the meeting and report to our Local Action Committee.

By observing from home or attending these meetings, you will learn what issues our communities are facing and how these issues are being addressed. Your notes will assist Local Action to decide what issues to address in accordance with our Local Program Positions.

Observers are needed for the following:

- City Council meetings in all nine cities in the county
- Stanislaus County Supervisors meetings
- Modesto Irrigation District meetings
- Planning Commission meetings in all nine cities in the county

Please contact Ellen Meyer at [ellen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ellen@sbcglobal.net) or Marie Bairey at [gbandmb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gbandmb@sbcglobal.net)

*Ellen Meyer, President*

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

Student Membership     \$15     \_\_\_\_\_  
Individual Membership   \$60     \_\_\_\_\_  
Household Membership   \$90     \_\_\_\_\_

Please contact me with more information:

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone (for directory): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

#### MAIL TO

LWVSC

P.O. Box E

Modesto, CA 95352.

## Yes to Invest

“Students United! We’ll never be divided!” chanted thousands of students from the steps of the State Capitol on Monday, March 16th. “What were they uniting for?” you may ask. To advocate for California Community College funding. The recent budget treated community colleges fairly well, but students are concerned about how the future cuts will turn out and are worried about tuition fees being raised. The Student Senate for California Community Colleges organized this peaceful march to the capital and invited schools from across the state to participate.

Modesto Junior College was one of many schools in attendance, with about 200 students ready to tell our legislature to remember to put colleges first. Having an affordable education available to everyone is extremely important for the future of our state. MJC is home to many students of all ages in all different situations.

We were greeted with a drum circle after we marched from Raley Field to the steps of the State Capitol. Once all the schools were gathered together, the guest speakers began to share words with the students. Many of the speakers were students from community colleges, universities and state colleges, but there were a number of keynote speakers, including Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi. Shortly after the last speaker, five students from MJC, four of whom are involved in student government, met with Tom Berryhill and staffers of Bill Berryhill and Dave Cogdill. It is important that we deliver our message to our representatives so we can be certain that they are clear on what we are asking for.

We took part in our political experience and stated that funding community colleges would be the best bet for our future. I am constantly running into students from MJC who share with me how exciting the experience was, and how they enjoyed it. I believe the hard work of the Associated Students of Modesto Junior College, as well as the hard work of the Student Senate for California Community Colleges, paid off. We reminded our representatives that students should be first. Students are united and will not be divided!

*Malerie Michael Student Member,*

## Board Highlights

February 11, 2009

- Finance Drive is inching closer to the \$8000 goal.
- Valley Futures Forum is a group formed recently to discuss planning issues. They will meet monthly to hear invited speakers. We are looking for a member to serve as League's representative.
- LWV Stanislaus County will participate in the LWVUS study on the National Popular Vote Compact – an alternative to the Electoral College which does not require a Constitutional amendment. Consensus April 22.

March 11, 2009

- Renewed LWVSC membership in Stanislaus County Commission for Women.
- Approved Ellen Meyer as LWVSC delegate to LWV Convention in Long Beach May 15 – 17.
- Accepted with regret Patty Beyer's resignation as Local Action Director.
- Approved Budget Committee's proposed 2009-2010 Budget and Nominating Committee's proposed Slate of Officers and Directors for membership approval at Annual Meeting May 2.



*Marie Bairey,, Secretary*

### Welcome Our Newest Members

Alexandra Hoffmann (student)

Lou McGrath

Alfredo Nava

*We look forward to seeing you  
at our events*

## Finance Drive – Additional Thank You's

Additional League and community members have generously given to our annual Finance Drive. Our sincerest thanks to:

Jeanie Jones

Ann Krabach

Ann K. Lynn

Lisa Mantarro-Moore

Larry and Robin Martin

Colleen Norby

Amy and Rich Wolfe

City of Riverbank

Foster Farms

In addition, this year we offered donors and members the opportunity to make gifts in honor and memorial of friends and loved ones. The following individuals had donations made in their honor or their memory:

Milt Davis – Memorial

Marjorie Fovinci – Memorial

Adel Heyman – Memorial

Kenni Friedman – Honor

Elizabeth Vestal - Honor

*Amy Christensen Wolfe, Finance Drive Director*

## Local Action

### LWV Stanislaus County Gang Position

In 2006, LWV Stanislaus County conducted a study on gangs in our community. In 2007, we adopted a Gang Violence position which supports intervention and enrichment programs at the elementary school level and beyond. The focus is to prevent young people from joining gangs.

In January, the Local Action Committee reviewed the position and determined that a follow-up to answer the following question would be in order: What gang prevention resources are available in our community? The Committee developed a procedure for contacting various youth oriented organizations in the community to identify out-reach components of their programs that address youth at-risk, disadvantaged youth or gang prevention.

At its February meeting, the LWV Board agreed this would be a good idea, but the project would require a coordinator and members interested in participating in the project. The Committee welcomes comments, suggestions, and volunteers for this update project. Contact Marie Bairey or Ellen Meyer.

*Local Action Committee*

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  
LWV Modesto  
P.O. Box E  
Modesto, CA 95352  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Modesto, CA  
Permit No. 69

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

(Check Website for Updates)

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Tuesday, April 7</b>   | <b>6:00 p.m. Local Action Committee</b><br>Home of Marie Bairey (Call her for directions)  |
| <b>Wednesday, April 8</b> | <b>6:00 p.m. Board Meeting</b><br>League Office, 720 13th Street, Modesto  |
| <b>Thursday, April 23</b> | <b>5:00 p.m. Valley Futures Forum</b><br>201 Needham Street, Modesto<br>Topic: San Joaquin Valley Blueprint (\$10 charge)  |
| <b>Monday, April 20</b>   | <b>6:30 p.m. NPV Compact Consensus Meeting</b><br>Home of Marsha Waggoner<br>916 Kenilworth Ct., Modesto   |
| <b>Tuesday, April 28</b>  | <b>12 Noon Lunch and Learn, Appetez Restaurant</b><br>Roseburg Square, Modesto<br>\$11.00 For special dietary needs call one day ahead<br>Speaker: Ed Katen, Mayor of Newman |
| <b>Saturday, May 2</b>    | <b>10:00 a.m. - 12:00 Noon Annual Meeting</b><br>Appetaz Cafe, Roseburg Square<br>See insert for more information  |