



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

August 2010

Serving the Citizens of Stanislaus County, California

VOL. 59 NO. 18

Calendar of Events

Wednesday, August 11

6:00 p.m.

Board Meeting

League Office

720 13th St, Modesto

Thursday, August 19

6:30 p.m.

Local Action Meeting

League Office

Thursday, August 19

5:00 p.m.

Valley Futures Forum

Speaker: Paul Zykofsky

“Designing for the Future”

201 Needham St, Modesto

(\$10 at Door)

Tuesday August 31

12:00 noon

Lunch and Learn

Speaker: Steve Ashman

Executive Director, CASA

Appetiz Restaurant

Roseburg Square

This calendar is current as of printing. Check LWVSC Website for updates
www.lwvstanislaus.org

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

“League’s values are America’s values,” was the message from outgoing LWVUS President Mary Wilson to the 600+ League members attending Convention 2010 in Atlanta in our 90th anniversary year. Our work has never been more important than right now, she stated. People working against our issues are very visible and “we need to be visible too.” After all, these are issues that League members have studied, re-studied and advocated for over a period of years. For example, League members started working on healthcare reform as an issue in 1990. As one former LWVUS President reminded us, “People know that *we* know what we’re talking about.” So we need to get out there and share what we know!

We can start by supporting LWVC in **defeating** Prop 27 on the November ballot. Don’t be shy in speaking up against this initiative to gut voter-approved LWVC supported Prop 11 and eliminate the Citizens Redistricting Commission. LWVC was awarded the Strengthening Democracy through Reform Award at Convention 2010 for our success in putting together a successful coalition to give California voters back their voice in their own government through Prop 11. Since its passage in 2008, over 30,000 Californians have applied for the 14 member Commission. Remember: League speaks with one voice and on this issue our voice needs to be strong and loud. **Absolutely NO on Prop 27!**

Attending Convention 2010 as your delegate was enormously rewarding, educational and energizing. Join me and your Board in working towards more informed and active participation by the voters in our community. You can help with voter service where we provide nonpartisan information on both sides of an issue and offer forums to give candidates a chance to answer questions on those issues. Or, you can help with the advocacy side of League by answering action alerts from LWVC (<http://ca.lwv.org/index.html>) and LWVUS (<http://www.lwv.org/>). Create your own member logins to take advantage of the members’ only pages.

Your LWVSC Board looks forward to working with you to maintain the League as a visible force for change

Susan Novak, President

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STATE AND NATIONAL

NATIONAL

Two important issues are being considered in the Senate. The Disclose Act was passed in the House of Representatives and is due to be considered in the Senate. The LWV has been lobbying for the bill in the hopes that it will pass in time to influence the upcoming Congressional elections.

Comprehensive climate change and clean energy legislation will be brought to the Senate by the end of July.

Contact Senators Barbara Boxer. Phone:(202) 224-3553,Fax:(202) 224-0454; and Diane Feinstein Phone: (202) 224-3841; Fax:(202) 228-3954 to encourage their support for the Disclose Act and for strong measures to protect the environment. For more information and details, go to www.lwv.org and click on "For members."

STATE

The California LWV strongly supported the redistricting reform act (Proposition 11) that was adopted by California voters in November 2008. Before this act has been fully implemented, two new ballot propositions to change the process adopted by California voters have been placed on this November's ballot.

The reform act established a Citizens Redistricting Commission that will redraw district maps for the state legislature and Board of Equalization after each census.

Proposition 27 would completely eliminate the redistricting commission and return the redistricting authority to the legislature, resulting in more gerrymandered districts. The League strongly opposes this measure.

Proposition 20 would add the authority for redrawing Congressional districts to the Citizens Redistricting Commission. The League will announce its position on this measure soon.

The California LWV has taken stands on five other ballot measures for the November 2010 election. Read about these propositions the on the California LWV web site, www.lwvc.org.

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.

LWVSC Partners with Groundswell on Land Use

The League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County is proud to be a new participant in the Groundswell (www.groundswellsjv.org) project, as approved by our Board during the July meeting. Groundswell, a non-partisan network of people and organizations committed to improving the quality of life in the San Joaquin Valley through better land use decisions, is managed by the American Farmland Trust and funded by a private grant.

As part of the LWVSC's participation, a profile of our organization will be listed on the Groundswell website. Additionally, our contacts will be notified via action alerts and an event calendar about pending land use policy decisions and other related issues so that we can mobilize our Local Action committee members to take action if needed.

Although the website's formal launch is scheduled for later this summer, you can visit the Groundswell site now to see what it offers. There are sections for each county in the San Joaquin Valley, with links to foundational planning documents, local public officials, and vital statistics; useful reports and studies on topics related to land use; a master events calendar; and more.

As an educational and networking tool, Groundswell will allow LWVSC to inform the community about ways in which citizens can affect land use policy through the local decision-making process. We're excited to be a part of this valuable project, which aligns perfectly with our local position on land use planning.

Stella Beratlis, 2nd Vice President

Welcome Our Newest Members

Sally Amaral
Anne Bartlett
Megan Carley
Carmen Morad

We look forward to seeing you at our events

Local Action to Study Local Ballot Measures

A meeting to study and recommend action on two proposed local measures on the November ballot is scheduled for Thursday, August 19 at 6:30 pm at the League office.

- The City of Modesto has placed a Charter amendment to change procedures for run-off elections for City Council and the Mayor.
- Residents of unincorporated Parklawn requested a Measure M vote to extend sewers to their neighborhood off Hatch Road.

The pros and cons of these measures will be presented along with relevant League positions.

All members are encouraged to learn about the measures and participate in the discussion.

State ballot measures concerned with redistricting - Propositions 20 and 27 - will also be discussed.

Marie Bairey, Local Action Director

I WANT TO ADD MY VOICE TO YOURS BY JOINING THE LEAGUE OF 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: _____

Please deliver my *Voter* by: E-mail ___ US mail ___

MAIL TO

LWVSC

P.O. Box E

Modesto, CA 95352.

August 31 Lunch and Learn
Steve Ashman, Executive Director of CASA

The volunteers at CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Stanislaus County are trained to be the voice of dependent children during court hearings. This month's speaker, Steve Ashman, will offer our League additional insight relating to our League position on Child Abuse and Neglect. Please join us.

July 27 Lunch and Learn

Tori Hughes, Patterson Police Chief

Law enforcement from the female perspective: That was the Sheriff's Lieutenant/ Patterson Police Chief Tori Hughes' topic at the July Lunch and Learn. (Patterson contracts with the Sheriff for its police services). Chief Hughes was motivated to pursue law enforcement as a career after a childhood experience when law enforcement was unable to help to her and her family. She wanted to change the perception of police officers. She brings a background of extensive training and varied experience to her latest responsibility.

Chief Hughes considers compassion and communication keys to her success. Yes, she had to prove that she could respond with force and give support to her male counterparts when necessary. But she also found she could "talk them into the handcuffs". Similarly, community policing, which emphasizes education and prevention, is successful because of the relationships established with local residents. Whereas academy training focuses on the law and physical skills, there is a need for officers to develop "Tactical Communication", a course she teaches.

She sees a need for more female law enforcement officers, but with layoffs and tight budgets, she doesn't see that happening soon. In the meantime, she acts as a mentor to female officers as they face the challenges of the male dominated culture of law enforcement

As chief, she maintains an open door policy for the officers and the residents. Her goal is to make any and all community contacts positive. She also strives to create a positive, supportive working environment for her officers. "A happy cop is a good cop."

Marie Bairey

Convention Action

It was exciting to be your delegate representing our League in program decisions for the next two years. Ours is a grassroots organization. Delegates, like me, representing Leagues, like ours, vote on what issues to study or emphasize. After much discussion, we adopted two new studies:

1) **The federal role in public education**, particularly policy-making, with possible consideration of funding, common standards and or governance relationships among all levels of government.

2) **Privatization**: the policy agenda to transfer government functions and assets to the private sector.

The scope of these studies is dependent on the ability to raise funds to support them.

You might remember that our League participated in the LWVUS study of the use of the National Popular Vote as a way to achieve the goal of direct popular vote of the U.S. President. We (LWVSC) voted in support of NPV but nationally leagues failed to reach consensus. At Convention, a grassroots effort led by LWV Arizona garnered enough votes to pass it by concurrence on the Convention floor. Having been the study chair for our League, I had a great time lobbying others at Convention. I wish some of my fellow study group members could have been there.

We also adopted an updated Arms Control Position by concurrence. This is a position that LWVSC members asked to be re-studied at past annual program planning meetings.

For a full review of Convention action, go to <https://member.lwv.org/Login.asp> . After logging in, click on the "for members" menu at top of page, then click on "Council and Convention" in left hand column.

Susan Novak, President

Board Highlights

July 14, 2010

- Ad Hoc Ed Fund Committee recommended that we move our Ed Fund account to LWVUS to save the 3% administration fee charged by LWVC.
- Executive Committee met and started the process of changing banks.
- Approved a request from AAUW Turlock to co-sponsor a program on the California budget process. This event will be held on October 27th. Location to be announced.
- Decided to hold a general membership meeting on August 19th at the League office to discuss adopting a position on Modesto local ballot issues and on action we can take to defeat Prop 27 on the November ballot. LWVC is prioritizing the defeat of Prop 27.



Laurie Carley, Secretary

VOTER SERVICE

Marsha Waggoner and Susan Novak went as observers to the MiWuk-Sugar Pine Fire District election in MiWuk on Tuesday, July 13th. SCI Consulting Group, the contracted company that ran the all mail-in election for the fire district asked for League participation, as impartial observers. This consulting group is one that contracts with districts and election departments to handle an all mail-in election. Marsha and Susan came away more informed about the mail-in election process and how easily it can expedite elections. This could not have occurred without the use of computers and technology and we foresee the implementation of this process more frequently in the future.

Marsha Wagonner, Voter Service

Sign up for E-mail Voter!

In an effort to reduce expenses, which is especially important in these times of tight budgets and scarce dollars, LWVSC is offering our *Voter* to members via e-mail starting with the June/July issue. The *Voter* is already available on our website. This change will save postage and printing costs, and it will take advantage of available technology. One great example: you can go directly from the e-mail version to the website of any link you click on.

To date, 56 LWVSC households have agreed to receive the *Voter* by e-mail; many were eager to “save a tree or two”. It is not too late for members and donors to make the change. If you want to receive your *Voter* via e-mail, contact Marie Bairey (localaction@lrvstanislaus.org), or call her at 523-0663 to get on the e-list.

Summer Smart Voter Intern

Anne Bartlett, entering her third year as a Communications major at Cal State University, East Bay, has volunteered to be our League’s student intern for the next month before returning to Fall classes. As our newest student member and intern, Anne has already added and updated the Media links on our Smart Voter Home Page and will be preparing e-mail letters to Stanislaus County candidates inviting them to participate in Smart Voter in the November election. Anne will be updating the contacts section of our Public Relations binder and is interested in helping Jean Tenney turn our *Voter* into a true e-newsletter. In addition to helping League this summer, Anne has volunteered time at the Stanislaus County Library in Modesto.

Susan Novak, President

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.

**League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County
LWV Modesto
P.O. Box E
Modesto, CA 9535**

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS
(Check Website for Updates)**

Wednesday, August 11

**6:00 p.m. Board Meeting
League Office, 720 13th Street, Modesto**

Thursday, August 19

**6:30 p.m. Local Action Committee
League Office
(See details on page 3)**

Thursday, August 19

**5:00 p.m. Valley Futures Forum
Speaker: Paul Zykofsky, on “Innovations in Designing for Pedestrians: revitalizing communities through increased walkability”
(\$10 at the door)**

Tuesday, August 31

**12 Noon Lunch and Learn, Appetez Restaurant
Roseburg Square, Modesto \$11. For special needs Call a day ahead
Speaker: Steve Ashman, Executive Director of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Stanislaus County, on Child Abuse and Neglect**