



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

September 2011

Serving the Citizens of Stanislaus County, California

VOL. 60 NO.2

Message from our President, Susan Novak:

In August, California League members celebrated the culmination of years of the League's work to establish a new state redistricting process. Every League member should be proud to have been part of the partnership that first backed the Voters First Act (Proposition 11 of 2008), and then continued, as a coalition, to monitor its implementation. As the Citizens Redistricting Commission released its final maps, LWVC President Jennifer A. Waggoner applauded the work of both the commissioners and the public. She pointed out that unlike redistricting in the past, the process was open, transparent and participatory—a true citizen-driven process. Through the entire process, the commission treated each other and the public with mutual respect and civility, setting a tone of reasoned discourse and deliberation, even as disparate views were expressed.

On the local level, we applaud the work of the Stanislaus County Redistricting Steering Committee and the Ad Hoc citizen Redistricting Advisory committee for the open and transparent process they used to redraw the Supervisorial districts. I was impressed with their excellent public presentations explaining the redistricting process and criteria. Citizens had the opportunity to view current district maps and give their input on "communities of interest" in their area. The public was also given the opportunity to submit their suggestions in writing or through an easy to use County website.

Voters (including League members) will have a chance to hear the views of local candidates for mayor, city council, and school board at candidate forums to be held in September and October. Sarah Jamieson, our new voter service director, has hit the ground running and with help from Marsha Waggoner has arranged at least 6 nights of forums in different locations. Remember to check our website www.lwvstanislaus.org for an up-to-date schedule. Make attending a forum the one thing you do for League this year. Let's show our appreciation to the citizens willing to serve their communities.

Financial Records Reviewed

Many thanks to Julie Saugstad who made time in her busy schedule to do an informal examination of our financial records for July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. Julie found the records to be in order and reported that "income, deposits, payments and CD's have all been handled in a timely and accurate way with appropriate documentation as needed. Bank statements have been reconciled. Education Fund money has been properly managed and accurate records have been kept. This is especially crucial in order to retain the tax exempt status of this account. Treasurer Seena Rhine should be commended for her fine work on behalf of the League."

Susan Novak, President

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan 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. Membership in the League is open to men and women of all ages. With 92 years of experiences and over 800 local and state affiliates, the League is one of America's most trusted grassroots organizations.

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State Action:

The LWVC is very pleased with the new redistricting process. We have been a part of the redistricting reform movement from the start. We backed The Voters First Act (proposition 11) of 2008 and have continued as a coalition to monitor its implementation. During implementation, we have not focused on the maps themselves, but the process.

We wanted a transparent procedure, accessible to as much public input as possible, and this totally new process seems to have attained that goal. 1500 people showed up to testify and thousands responded electronically to give information on the first draft. After that draft, public comments “poured in” and the commission decided to dispense with a second draft and use continuous interactive feedback between the public and the commission as they drew the final draft. That draft was released on August 15 with a time for additional public comment.

The LWVC supports AB 1148, the proposed California Disclose Act. The Act would mandate a clear statement of sponsorship in political ads funded by wealthy individuals or big corporations. Largest funders would have to appear in the ad, identify themselves and say they helped pay for and approve of the ad’s message. For more information, check out “California Clean Money Campaign.”

Are you curious about whether the League has a stand on a particular piece of legislation or where it is in the legislative process? The State League has a new Bill Status Report site to help you find this information. This site lists current bills on which the LWVC has taken a stand, a brief description of the bill, its status, and whether we support or oppose it. Currently, 40 bills are listed, including ACR 40, which recognizes the League’s accomplishments and memorializes our 85th anniversary. To find this information, go to http://ca.lwv.org/lwvc/action/bsr/bsr_05jun.html. Only those bills on which we have a position are listed here, but a link to all bills presently under consideration in the California Legislature also is provided on the web site.

National Action:

The LWVUS is launching a Clean Air Promise campaign. "We have to promise each other to protect our air. So the League of Women Voters is asking our communities to stand up and demand that our elected officials promise to keep us safe from the pollution that we cannot control ourselves," said LWVUS President, Elizabeth MacNamara.

To sign the promise and request that your friends and elected officials do so, go to the LWVUS web site for instructions. As reported in previous Voters, Congress has been considering measures to destroy the effectiveness of the Clean Air Act and the Environmental Protection Agency.

HR672 that would have terminated the Election Assistance Commission failed to pass on June 22. The bill was brought to vote under suspension of the rules, where debate is limited and passage requires a 2/3 majority. This bill can be re-introduced later under the regular rules. As reported in the last Voter, the League opposes this bill and other efforts to undermine clean elections and curtail citizens’ voting rights.

Ann Krabach, State and National Action

Calling All Volunteers!

Forum season is once again upon us in Stanislaus County and the Voter Services Committee is seeking help. There are currently seven forums scheduled with the prospect of adding a few more in the coming weeks. We are seeking moderators, question sorters, timers and greeters to help facilitate these forums in the months of September and October. If you are available on any of the dates listed on the calendar please contact Sarah Jamieson at 209-652-8700 or email her at voterservice@lwwstanislaus.org. Public forums are a vital part of the leagues commitment to voter education and we cannot provide this service to the community without the help of our members. Thank you in advance for your time and assistance!

We need volunteers for the forums –Please contact voterservice@lwwstanislaus.org

Please check our website for updates on these and additional forums!!

<http://lwwstanislaus.org/calendar.html>

“Role of Federal Government in Public Education” Study

Our local League has been participating in the LWVUS study on the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education.

A committee comprised of LWVSC members Mercedes Hart, Colleen Norby, Laurie Carley, Stella Beratlis, Mary Giventer, Sarah Jamieson, Marsha Waggoner, and Priscilla Peters has met twice to review and discuss the study materials and to attempt to arrive at consensus regarding 15 questions set forth by LWVUS.

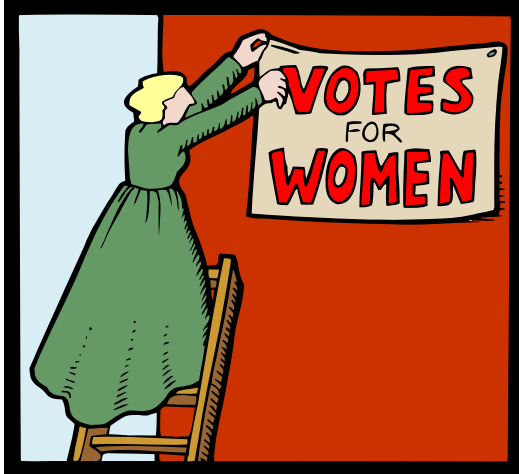
Studies, a fundamental part of our League's grassroots process, are undertaken at the national, state, and local levels to develop positions which the League then uses to affect public policy as well as the procedure for adopting these programs. The scope of this study, as adopted by the LWVUS Board, states:

"The Education Study scope is broad and includes the following areas under the role of the federal government in public education (pre-K through grade 12): the history, funding and equity issues which are addressed under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and the common core standards/assessments which are required for many federal grant programs but are national, not federal. The culminating position will address only those issues delineated in the scope."

Stay tuned for a presentation related to Ed Study topics at the October Lunch & Learn as well as a consensus presentation for LWVSC members during late October or early November. Please check the League Calendar of Events at lwwstanislaus.org/calendar.html for updated information on both presentations.

For those interested in learning more, Education Study background reading materials are available at LWV.org, under For Members > Projects and Programs.

Stella Beratlis, Vice-President



BOARD HIGHLIGHTS:

- L. Carley and S. Beratlis volunteered to serve on the 2011-2012 Nominating Committee
- The Education Study Committee has met twice and come to consensus. They will be presenting to the general membership in October and will then present to the Board in November
- Our treasurer's documents have been reviewed by Julie Saugstad and she found them to be in good order with compliments to S. Rhine
- The membership event commemorating the California Centennial of Women's Suffrage will be co-sponsored with Stanislaus County Office of Education and AAUW and will be held at the Martin G. Petersen Events Center on October 13th –see details in The Voter
- Forums for the November Election are being scheduled

“When I ran away from slavery, it was for myself; when I advocated emancipation, it was for my people; but when I stood up for the rights of women, self was out of the question, and I found a little nobility in the act.”

Frederick Douglass

CELEBRATION OF THE CALIFORNIA WOMEN’S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL

One hundred years ago, on October 11, 1911, after a long and sustained effort, women gained the right to vote in California state elections. The League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County will mark the centennial of this significant event with a celebration to which all members of the public are invited. Co-sponsors are the Stanislaus County Office of Education and the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Turlock Branch.

This presentation will be held on Thursday, October 13, 2011, at the Petersen Event Center of the Stanislaus County Office of Education at H and 12th Streets in Modesto at 7:00 p.m. Parking is available behind the SCOE Building.

Therese (Teri) Lunt, who holds a BA and MA from CSU Stanislaus and lectures at both CSU Stanislaus and Modesto Junior College, will tell about the development of the national women's suffrage movement and then focus on the California campaign, its leaders, and the reasons for its success. She will also trace events from 1911 until women achieved the national right to vote with ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920.

This event will be educational and informative for students as well as adults. Non-alcoholic refreshments will be served.

Hanna Renning, Membership

Modesto Public Transit Options

At the July Lunch and Learn Fred Cavanah, Transit Manager for the City of Modesto, gave an overview of Modesto's public transit options. The services are funded by the state and federal government with 20% to 25% coming from passenger fares.

- Modesto Area Express (MAX): Fifty-four buses provide fixed schedule and route service. It carries 10,000 – 14,000 riders per day – with peak time ridership from students – at a cost of \$11 million per year.
- Dial a Ride: The City establishes rules and standards for this program in compliance with ADA regulations to serve qualified people with disabilities. It contracts out with Storer Transportation.
- Transportation Center – This hub for all public transportation is operated by the City.
- Amtrak Station – Amtrak uses this City-owned and operated facility without charge.
- Taxis – The City screens drivers and establishes vehicle safety standards, but the taxis are otherwise unregulated. This includes fares. There are 16 taxi companies in Modesto.

Mr. Cavanah commented on the environmental and economic advantages of public transit. Though the big buses may sometimes appear underutilized, they are actually more efficient as they serve maximum numbers of riders (students) better and cheaper than several smaller buses. He observed that bus ridership is an economic indicator; during the downturn, ridership fell by 15%, but with signs of economic recovery there is an upswing in bus passengers. He also described the buses' clean air technology, making them practically non-polluters. While fuel- saving vehicles are still very expensive, the MAX "Prius-like" bus uses 50% less fuel.

Marie Bairrey

Welcome to Our New Members!

Lee Brooks; email: mrbro27@comcast.net
Patricia Phelan; email: trish9000@yahoo.com

Lunch and Learn

Our August 30th speaker Rebecca Phillips Abbott is the Executive Director and Curator of the Carnegie Arts Center in Turlock. She comes to this new assignment with an impressive background in art. Rebecca has served as an advocate and volunteer consultant to the Carnegie Arts Center since 2008. She is currently preparing the opening exhibit of Ansel Adams California in September.

Our Lunch and Learn speaker on September 27th will be Jane Wagner-Tyack, the Past- President of the San Joaquin LWV. She participated on a panel at LWVC convention discussing "Water issues, the myths and the facts". This topic continues to appear regularly in the media. We have asked Jane to help us sort this out. Join us for lunch the last Tuesday of September at Appetez Restaurant at noon. Any vegetarian meal should be reserved with the restaurant in advance.

Margie Lipsky, Lunch and Learn Director

Membership Renewal

Thank you to everyone who has already renewed! It is not too late. Please make sure that you include your up-to-date telephone number and email address when renewing. Thank you!

Colleen Norby, Membership Committee

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**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
.....

You're Invited to a Celebration of Women's Right to Vote



CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE CENTENNIAL 1911 - 2011

Celebrating 100 Years...

Date

October 13, 2011

Time

7:00pm – 9:00pm

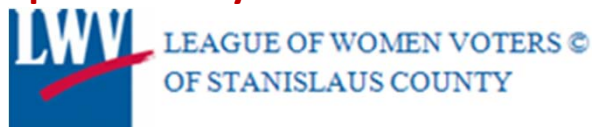
Location

Petersen Event Center
720 12th Street
Modesto, CA 95354

Free Admission:

Open to the public

Sponsored by:



Join Us: Celebrate CA's history of this achievement and its impact, and enjoy an overview of the national Women's Suffrage Movement leading to the ratification of the 19th amendment in 1920.

Guest Speaker: Teri Lunt, History Instructor at CSU, Stanislaus and MJC. Q&A session will follow.

Refreshments: Will be provided.

Contact: LWV Stanislaus County
(209) 524-1698
www.lwvstanislaus.org



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League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County
P.O. Box E
Modesto, CA 95352

CALENDAR OF EVENTS
(Check Website for Updates)

Wednesday, September 14	CHANGE OF TIME: 6:30 p.m. Board Meeting, CHANGE OF LOCATION: Dale Commons, 3900 Dale Road
Tuesday, September 20 6:00 pm 7:15 pm	MJC East, Forum 101 FORUM: District 3 Modesto City Council FORUM: Modesto City Schools Forum
Tuesday, September 27	12:00 Noon – Lunch and Learn Appetiz Restaurant, Roseburg Square, Modesto Speaker: Jane Wagner Tyack, LWV San Joaquin County Topic: Water Issues: The Myths and the Facts
Tuesday, October 4	CHANGE OF DATE & TIME: 6:30 p.m. Board Meeting, CHANGE OF LOCATION: Dale Commons, 3900 Dale Road
Thursday, October 6 6:30 pm	Beyer High School FORUM: Modesto City Council: Districts 5 & 6
Wednesday, October 12 6:30 pm	1010 10th Street, Modesto FORUM: Modesto Mayor
Thursday, October 13	A CELEBRATION OF THE CENTENNIAL OF CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE 7:00 p.m. Petersen Event Center, Modesto CA
Wednesday, October 19 Time TBA	Agnes Baptist School FORUM: District 1 Modesto City Council FORUM: Stanislaus Union Board of Education
TBA	FORUM: Sylvan School Board