



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

July-August 2007

Serving the Citizens of Stanislaus County, California

VOL. 58 NO. 2

Calendar of Events

August 8

Wednesday 6:30 p.m.
Board Meeting
League Office

August 28

Tuesday 12 noon
Lunch and Learn
Appetiz Restaurant

September 5

Wednesday 6:30 p.m.
Consensus Meeting:
District Elections Position
Statement
League Office

ON-THE-WEB

Previous issues of the Voter are available at:
<http://www.lwvstanislaus.org/voter.html>

Visit "CapWiz" (the League of Women Voters Legislative Action Center) from our Action & Advocacy page at:
[http://www.lwvstanislaus.org/about action.html](http://www.lwvstanislaus.org/about_action.html)

LWV California
"Stands on Issues"
<http://www.ca.lwv.org/lwvc/issues>

MODESTO IRRIGATION DISTRICT'S JOHN KIDD GIVES A BIRD'S EYE VIEW!

At the June Lunch and Learn, MID's Board president, John Kidd, explained the dual role of the District. As one of the earliest Irrigation Districts established in California, MID's primary role is water provision. All farms south of the Stanislaus River and north of the Tuolumne in our area receive their irrigation water from MID. With electricity generated at the New Don Pedro Dam, the MID provides for the basic power needs in its territory. Adding renewable power sources is required by state law. The MID has a solar unit on its roof and is thinking of adding more. Solar units are made in China and shipped over here.

Peak power usage comes between 4:30 and 8:30 p.m. during summer. This timing, caused by air conditioning usage, doesn't match the peak power provided by the generation from the dam. Customers are being asked to turn off their air conditioning on a rotating basis to meet this need, and we were urged to sign up for this program. If everyone participated, the costs of generating electricity to meet this high demand could be lowered by half!

Mr. Kidd discussed the San Francisco's request to buy water from the Oakdale Irrigation District, which would take more water out of Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. Oakdale would send some water to MID to replace this; BUT, we would lose the generating power with this swap!

We asked about how the directors are elected. They serve a four-year term in their division. The five District borders are re-aligned every eight years to balance population and acreage represented.

Asked about the new treatment plant which provides drinking water for Modesto, he noted the upgrade was financed by both the City of Modesto and the MID. He mentioned that wells are shut down and capped off, if they can't be fixed to provide drinking water; so, the surface water treatment plant is needed to make up the loss.

You who have been League members a long time may remember Susan Woodworth who attended every MID board meeting for years representing our League. That's a really great way to keep our elected representatives on their toes!

-Myrtle Osner, Office Manager

**LWV of STANISLAUS
COUNTY OFFICERS**

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ellen-e@sbcglobal.net

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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

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Public Relations &

Voter Editor

Debbie Whitmore

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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.lwvstanislaus.org

President's Message:

Dear Members:

I hope this Voter finds you well and enjoying summer vacations. Your League Board took one month off as well, or so I thought. Boy, have they been busy!

The Board found a Local Action Chair by doing some realigning of the current Board Structure. Ann Krabach is taking on the responsibility of being the sole Vice President, and Patty Lundy will lead Local Action. I am so excited that we have all board positions filled and that Ann and Patty accepted these roles.

Susan and Cynthia are already on top of the game with planning for the fall election periods. Look for news in upcoming Voters and keep an ear out for our Public Service Announcements on our local radio stations.

Joan and her Finance Drive Committee have found financial advisers in communities outside Modesto and are preparing for our Annual Finance Drive to start in September.

Local Action Committee, led by Marie, is studying Municipal Elections and information is being gathered to decide whether we will adopt a position. Secretary Marie is also keeping our memories sharp by recording meeting minutes so that we have more detailed information and history.

Sue is delving into State and National and keeping us up to date at that level.

Lynn, Jennie, and Laurie sent out Membership due letters to our members and prepared a membership survey (enclosed in this Voter). I hope you continue your membership.

Webmaster Stella has added our local positions and membership survey for all to see on our website and will be adding more to make our website more informative.

Treasurer Julie is on track finalizing 2006-2007 accounts for the year-end audit.

Helen has great speakers planned for Lunch and Learns and the food is great too!

Myrtle is holding down the fort with our League phone and assisting with The Voter and with Lunch and Learns.

Last, but not least, Debbie is putting her creative talents to our wonderful Voter and redesigning the looks and the contents!

Don't forget to renew your membership. I look forward to seeing your membership survey soon and serving with you this year. We'll have fun!

Sincerely,

Ellen Meyer, President

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.

A CALL TO ACTION! From LWV CALIFORNIA... Support SB 840 (Kuehl)

SB 840 has been introduced in the State Legislature and is supported by LWV California. It is the California Universal Healthcare Act. The momentum for single payer Universal health care remains strong. We must educate our senators and assembly members of the advantages and cost savings that this system could provide for all Californians. Among the competing plans, Senator Kuehl's plan is still the only viable solution for the health care crisis. It provides for a publicly financed system that is a real universal health care plan. It provides for:

- A universal, risk pool that spreads the risk over the entire population, simplifying administration and saving billions of dollars that can be spent on real health care.
- A funding plan that requires the most economical and fair health care contributions from employers, individuals, state and local governments and other sources.
- Savings on current health care spending.
- The ability of all California residents to choose their own doctors.
- Savings in current health care spending by most individuals, families and governments.

Write, e-mail, or phone your local representatives at the state level:

Senate: Jeff Denham and Chuck Poochigian
Assembly: Tom Berryhill and Greg Aghazarian

(Note: Stanislaus County has several Senate and Assembly Districts)

For further information, check out the LWV CA website at:

<http://ca.lwv.org/lwvc/action/healthcare/index.html>

- *Myrtle Osner, Office Manager*

LOCAL ACTION

Municipal Election Study Closes In

At its July 18 meeting, the Municipal Election Systems study committee prepared a draft report to present at the August meeting of the Board. The report includes findings from the Committee's review of related literature and other studies on the issue as well as results from interviews with members of the community who have experience with or interest in how our city council members are elected. Based on this information, the Committee concluded that it is time to consider a change in the way council members are elected in Modesto. Rather than endorse a specific system, the Committee is recommending criteria by which to evaluate an election system in order to ensure local government that is open, accountable and responsive and promotes opportunities for full participation by voters and candidates.

If the Board approves the report and consensus question, we will conduct a general meeting of the membership for consensus. This will be an opportunity for all League members to learn more about the issue, give input, reach consensus and decide if the recommendations should become part of our Local Program. The general meeting is tentatively set for Wednesday, September 5 at 7 pm at the League office. The next issue of the Voter will include a summary of the report and its recommendations to prepare members for the general meeting.

- *Marie Bairey, Study Chair*

PAST LEAGUE PRESIDENTS: Where are you now?

As a past-President of the League of Women Voters, you provide a model for all. If you'd like to share your accomplishments to help motivate others to great heights, please contact the Voter Editor at:

quailcreek@aol.com

We'd LOVE to share your story of accomplishment!

VOTER SERVICE - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

September and October are two of our League's busiest months of the year! Candidate forums, voter registration, and pros and cons presentations take place during these two months, prior to the November election. This year, there are races for mayor and city council positions in both Modesto and Ceres. School board races are occurring in EVERY district in our county.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!

Even if you have never worked at a forum or registered voters, YOU CAN DO IT!

Please make a commitment to participate at a forum or voter registration event. Everyone has an hour or two to help democracy work!

Volunteer by e-mailing Susan Novak at snovak2@sdbcglobal.net or phoning Cynthia Morgan at 667.8150.

- Susan Novak, Voter Service

***** LEAGUE IN THE NEWS *****

LWVUS President Marches for DC Voting Rights; over 3,000 activists call their Senators (NEW)

July: In D.C., President Wilson marched for DC Voting Rights alongside League volunteers, DC Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton, and others. Chanting, "No Vacation without Representation," Wilson and the others urged Senators to vote on the DC House Voting Rights Act before leaving for their August recess. The League and other groups motivated more than 3,000 activists nationwide to call their Senators and demand representation for citizens living in our nation's capital.

(From LWV Web Site)

FINANCE DRIVE COMMITTEE WORKS TO REACH ALL OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

EXPANDED MAILING TO POLITICALLY ACTIVE PEOPLE:

In the past, the Finance Drive sent mailings to the Modesto City Council, the Modesto Board of Education, the County Supervisors and other elected individuals, businesses and individuals as suggested by our advisors and committee. This year, because we are now a county League, we have expanded our mailing list to include all of the nine (9) city councils, city clerks, high school boards, and planning commissions for each city. We are adding other county potential donor names as they are suggested to us. In the past our finance advisors have been Modesto individuals who have graciously agreed to write personal notes on letters we sent to the donors. These notes have been very effective. To help reach out to the county, we have added new finance advisors including individuals from six (6) more cities-Ceres, Oakdale, Newman, Patterson, Riverbank and Turlock.

NEW FINANCE ADVISORS... We welcome the finance advisors for 2007-2008: **Modesto** - Paul Baxter, Pat Cole, Milt and Carole Davis, Kenni Friedman, Debbie Kleinfelder, Margie Lipsky, Larry Martin, Myrtle Osner, Alita Roberts, Doris Scanlon, Tom Van Groningen; **Ceres** - Lisa Mantarro-Moore; **Oakdale** - Mickey Peabody; **Newman/Patterson** - Susan Mattos; **Riverbank** - Karen Tabacco; **Turlock** - Robin Schlitz.

MEMBERS CAN HELP! All members will receive a fund drive request in early September. We hope you will be generous in your contributions as these monies will be used to expand our services to the entire county, as we have interest and volunteers.

You can also help by making a presentation to the nine city councils to request their support of this fundraiser. A script has been prepared to make it easier for you.

*If you are interested in helping, please contact
Membership Director,
Jennie Sweeney!*

- Joan Goldsmith, Finance Drive Director
- Committee: Lynn Kelso, Gloria Skol, Margie Lipsky, and Myrtle Osner

LWVStanislaus.org USAGE SOARS!

As the Valley's summer temperatures sizzle, so does the popularity of www.lwvstanislaus.org, our League's local Web site. A significant gateway to LWVSC, www.lwvstanislaus.org brings in both members of the public and local League members to view pages on the site.

You can help boost our July numbers to an all-time high just by typing in www.lwvstanislaus.org in your Internet browser and taking a look around our easy pages.

Here's a summary of requests for pages on our website for 2007:

Jan:	2,851
Feb:	2,163
Mar:	3,245
Apr:	3,091
May:	2,499
Jun:	3,142
July 1-15:	1,842

- Stella Beratlis, Web Master

PUBLIC TRANSIT FUNDING AT RISK! YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

President Ellen Meyer received a special alert requesting League action and support to save more \$500 million in transit capital, operations, and maintenance funding that could be lost during the final State budget negotiations.

For more information about the issues and how you can make a difference, logon to:

www.odyssey.org

Your faxes to Budget Conference Committee members, and to Senate and Assembly Leaders (for long-term solutions) are needed!

SECRETARY'S REPORT

JULY BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- Patty Lundy was elected the new Local Action Chair and the Board was realigned to shift her duties to our President, Ellen Meyer. (Thank you, Patty!)
- Joan Goldsmith and the Finance Drive Committee are working hard recruiting Finance Advisors for the upcoming drive (see her article in this Voter issue.) She is looking for more help!
- Susan Novak is busy collecting information and brochures for the voter registration drives and upcoming forums. These are important events and she is looking for help, as well.
- Marie Bairey is making great progress on the Municipal District Elections Study (see her update in this issue of the Voter).

- Marie Bairey, Secretary

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
PAID
Modesto, CA
Permit No. 69



UPCOMING EVENTS



August 28

Kit McClurg

“Is your food safe to eat?”

(Senior Health Specialist,
Stanislaus County)

At 12 Noon, Appetez Restaurant in
Roseburg Square
\$11.00 for chef's entrée
For vegetarian entree,
call Appetez one day ahead!

October 6

**LWV California
REGIONAL WORKSHOP**

9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.

“League in the 21st
Century”

(Registration Form Inside)