



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

September 2012

Serving the Citizens of Stanislaus County, California

VOL. 61 NO.3

Message from our President, Mary Giventer:

Forty-seven years ago, Lyndon Johnson signed the historic Voting Rights Act into law. This law remains critical to ensuring that every American can cast a ballot and have it counted. In many states, the League is fighting to protect and defend voting rights. In California, we fortunately are not facing state voter suppression laws. Our challenge is to reach out to register new voters and to help all voters be informed. Even in a non-swing state like California, we are seeing attack ads. The job of the League is to help voters focus on the election and issues rather than the sound bites. This is more than a Presidential race. Congress, a third of the Senate, numerous local races and a wide array of initiatives are also on the ballot. The outcome of these races will have as much of an impact on our community, our jobs, our health and our future as the Presidential race. Through our voter service activities, we can give voters opportunities to get the facts on the issues and to hear directly from candidates running for office through forums, voter guides and Smart Voter. We can support our local media in fact checking independent political advertising. At the LWVUS national convention, political pollster Zogby stated that one factor in this year's election will be that many voters, especially young voters, have given up hope. Many of us, young and old, are disappointed and frustrated by the extreme partisanship that results in the negative tone of the campaigns and a deadlocked government. Our League President, Elizabeth McNamara, suggested that as League members we are in a position to help voters turn this frustration into the resolve to "not get mad, get out and vote". When we go to the polls in November the election is not about the day-to-day battles between politicians, it is about every voter standing up for what they believe in and making democracy work.

Mary Giventer, President

Nominating Committee

There are two positions available on the Nominating Committee for non-Board members. Amy Wolfe is chair of the committee. Stella Beratlis and Ann Krabach are the Board members serving on the committee. The committee will meet a couple of times in the spring to recommend next year's Board. This is a great opportunity to serve the League without making a year-long commitment, and you will be serving with three outstanding people. If you are willing to serve, please call Mary Giventer, 632-8996.

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COUNTY OFFICERS**

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National Action:

The LWVUS has responded to the EPA call for public comments to its draft guidelines for the use of diesel in hydraulic fracking. The League's response is based on our long-standing national position on natural resources: Resources should be conserved and protected to assure their future availability. Pollution of these resources should be controlled in order to preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of ecosystems and to protect public health.

Review of the EPA's draft guidance documents prompted the League to respond not with recommendations per se, but with a series of questions that highlight possible problems and contradictions in regulation of this very complicated process and the far reaching consequences of its use. The detailed questions relate to providing consistency, safety and accountability for issuing of permits, regulating contamination and other effects of hydraulic fracking, and addressing the evolving nature of this fuel and the hydraulic fracking process. Reading the League's carefully crafted questions can give you insight into the nature of this energy source and for the expertise required in safe development and regulation of energy. For details, go to:

<http://www.lwv.org/content/league-submits-comments-epa-regarding-use-diesel-fuels-hydraulic-fracking>

State Action:

Vote YES on Proposition 30!

This measure ensures adequate funding for our schools and colleges, and will keep police and firemen on the job in our communities. The revenues cannot be diverted for other purposes, and will go into a special account that cannot be touched by the legislature or used for state bureaucracy.

The effect on most taxpayers will be minimal. The measure will increase the state sales tax rate by one-quarter cent per dollar for four years. The personal income tax will be increased for seven years only on taxpayers with an income exceeding \$250,000 for a single filers, or \$500,000 for couples filing jointly. This tax on personal income will affect only affect about 1% of California taxpayers.

Proposition 30, if approved, will provide additional revenue to help balance our state budget, and help to bring down our rapidly burgeoning debt. Without it, we will suffer devastating damage to our public education system and our local public safety departments.

Vote with the League! Vote Yes on Proposition 30!

*Ann Krabach & Jean C. Tenney,
State & National Action*

Lunch and Learn

Our August 30th speaker Pam Able made history in July when she became Superintendent of Modesto City Schools. She is the first woman superintendent in the 140 year history of the district. Prior to her selection as superintendent of the 29,000-student district, Ms. Able served as Assistant Superintendent in charge of elementary and preschool programs. Her 16-year history with the district also includes experience at the site level as a teacher, as a principal and in human resources and special projects at the district level. Ms. Able spoke on "Modesto City Schools: Facts and Forecast".

Our Lunch and Learn speaker for September 27th will be Larry Giventer, professor in the Department of Politics and Public Administration at CSUS. He is often called on as a political analyst by radio, television, print and Internet media. The League is starting a study on the Initiative and Referendum process in California, and Professor Giventer will start us off with a talk on the background and history of initiatives. Join us for lunch the last Thursday of September at Appetez Restaurant at noon. No reservations are required but vegetarian meal requests should be made directly with the restaurant in advance.

Ruby Hennessey, Lunch and Learn

Welcome new members:

Anne and George Britton



Voter Service Fall Schedule

League is going to be very busy serving our communities this fall. Our Voter Service schedule is filling up with voter registration, pro and cons presentations, and forums. Please review the list of events that have been booked and in the works to see where you can assist. Please contact Ellen Meyer or Marsha Waggoner. Thank you.

September 14 Voter Registration -Modesto Rotary Senior Stride Event 7 am - 12 noon, East La Loma Park; 2 volunteers needed at each shift. Shifts 7 - 9:30 and 9:30 - 12

September 25 Voter Registration- CSUS Campus, Turlock, Time TBD and shifts to be determined

October 2 Oakdale Forum- 6 - 8 pm, Oakdale City Hall; 2 volunteers needed to time the forum, one moderator, and 2 volunteers to take questions from the audience

October 3 Turlock Forum- 6:30 pm, Turlock Council Chambers; 2 volunteers needed to time the forum, one moderator, and 2 volunteers to take questions from the audience

October 9 Pro and Cons- Modesto Rotary 12 noon, Modesto Convention Center (Doubletree); 2 volunteers needed to time the forum, one moderator, and 2 volunteers to take questions from the audience

October 11 Riverbank Forum- 6 - 8 pm Riverbank Community Hall; 2 volunteers needed to time the forum, one moderator, and 2 volunteers to take questions from the audience

Waiting Confirmation: October 20- Voter Registration, Stanislaus County Library, Modesto; 2 volunteers needed per shift. 10 am-12 noon, 12 noon to 2 pm

*Ellen Meyer & Marsha Waggoner,
Voter Service*

Board Highlights:

- V.P. Stella Beratlis reported that the consensus questions for the Initiative & Referendum Update Study are available on-line
- Mary Giventer reported that the State LWV has formed a task force regarding the conversion to 501C3 (nonprofit status for Leagues) and hope to have a report for the November State Board Meeting. They have filed conditionally at this time to pave the way for Leagues who wish to pursue this option
- Consensus of the Board is to come up with our own pros/cons and then wait for the State Task Force recommendation
- Apparently this issue is not time sensitive as LWVC is going in the direction of having Leagues vote on it at the next convention
- Ellen Dunbar reported that the Finance Drive Committee is in the planning stages and is seeking advisors.
- Lynn Kelso reported that we still have many members who have not renewed.

Laurie Carley, Secretary

Membership

Dues are considered delinquent September 30, 2012! Avoid extra postal costs and reminders by sending your dues today!

Thank you!

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

- ___ Student Membership \$25
- ___ 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

Modesto City Schools Facts and Forecasts

Pam Able, Modesto City Schools Superintendent, spoke to August Lunch and Learn attendees. She highlighted numbers that describe the district:

- 31,000 students (included 3,000 receiving special education services).
- 3rd largest employer in the county
- 7,800 students speak 40 languages (90% Spanish)
- 57% of students are Hispanic and 25% white
- 85% of K-6 students qualify for free or reduced lunch
- 2011 graduation rate of 76.1%
- 6,000 students are transported to and from school
- 24,000 meals served daily

To meet the challenges this diversity presents, the district has adopted the three Cs: Communicate – with the community and within the district, Collaborate to get the work done and Celebrate achievements, then get back to work! Specific programs to create a positive learning environment and engage students include the various high school academies, a grant which funds a Community Outreach Coordinator to bring volunteers to the schools and parent training to encourage parents to become involved in their child’s school.

Forecasts are directly related to the state budget. California is 47th in the nation for per pupil funding. MCS has not received more that \$175 million owed over the last five years and is looking to additional cuts if trigger cuts become necessary for 2013-2104. She discussed Props. 30 and 38. (League supports Prop. 30). Implications of reduced funding include fewer instructional days, layoffs and the “trickle down” effect on the community’s economy. Supt. Able emphasized the need for an educated community so that individuals and the community can compete in the larger economy.

Marie Bairey, Local Action

From the Desk of the Vice-President:

LWVC Initiative and Referendum Update Study

As of March 2012, the number of initiatives targeted for the November 2012 ballot is huge: four have qualified, 67 have been cleared for circulation, and five are pending at the Attorney General's office. On average, 21 percent of proposed measures actually make it to the ballot, predicting 20 measures will be decided in November.

Had enough? During the May 2011 LWVC Convention, delegates adopted an update of LWVC's study of California's initiative and referendum process. The study committee is working to develop the material that all local Leagues in California will use to come to consensus at meetings later this year or early 2013—after the 2012 presidential election.

The Committee is examining history, process (including the practices of other states), and key concerns, sifting through dozens of ideas to reform California's process. They are seeking to identify the deeper policy-based issues that will help shape the League's position on California's initiative and referendum process in the future. The reform ideas being examined cover a wide range of possibilities, from throwing out the whole process as suggested by Peter Schrag in *Paradise Lost* to embracing the growth trend of direct democracy. Here are some of the more popular themes:

- Level the Imbalance of Money Interests
- Increase Transparency
- Engage Citizens
- Think Slowly; Work Together
- Technology Impacts

There are multiple ways to find out more about the study, and join in the ongoing discussion:

- Facebook group (League of Women Voters of California Initiative and Referendum Study),
- Yahoo Group that you can link to via the LWVC members-only page (contact your local League leadership if you need information about how to find this),
- Page on the League's website where the study committee will provide a continually updated lists of articles and reading materials: <http://ca.lwv.org/lwvc/issues/initiativeand-referendum.html>

The consensus questions and study guide have been posted and are ready to be used by local Leagues. If you are interested in participating in this study at the local level, please contact Stella Beratlis at vp@lwwstanislaus.org.

Stella Beratlis, Vice-President

FINAL BUDGET REPORT

2011-2012

League of Women Voters Stanislaus County
July 1, 2011- June 30,2012

	Budget 2011-12	Actual 2011-12	Difference	Explanation
Beginning Balance	20747.3			
Income:				
Dues	6675	5760	915	
Finance Drive	3500	3940	440	(unrestricted)
Fin Drive Desig. Education	3100	3180	80	(tax deductible)
Interest Income	20	16	4	(not shown in budget)
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	
Voter Service Income	0	0	0	
Total Income	13295	12896	1439	
Expenses:				
Office Expenses:				
Equipment	0	0	0	(No Request made)
General Postage	250	110	140	(PO Box, board mailings, permit)
Insurance	325	253	72	(general liability thru LWVC)
Rent	2400	807	1593	(dropped office to DocuStor)
Supplies	300	0	0	(stationary, envelopes)
Telephone	325	428	-103	
Voter Newsletter	800	431	369	(more electronic)
Website	160	160	0	(LWVC yearly rate)
Total Office Expenses	4560	2189	2071	
Dues Expenses:				
State PMP	2576	2565	11	
National PMP	3360	3345	15	
Total Dues Expenses	5936	5910	26	
Membership Expenses:				
Action	50	21	29	
Publications	150	18	132	not separated in budget
Board Tools	0	102	-102	uncategorized
Child Care	0	0	0	
Convention	1200	2400	-1200	(sent 2 delegates to convention)
Finance Drive	600	294	306	(postage & printing)
Supplies	300	23	277	
Postage	60	156	-96	not separated in budget
Organizational memberships	20	20	0	not separated in budget
Meetings				(see below)
Annual Meeting	200	103	97	(net cost includes Annual Report)
Lunch and Learn	150	77	73	
Co-sponsor an Event	50	150	-100	
Other Meetings/Events	150	150	0	(includes Holiday Fling)
Workshops	75	0	75	
Total Membership Expenses	3005	3514	-509	(extra delegate to convention)
Voter Service Expenses:				
Candidate Forums	1000	350	650	
Lunch and Learn	0	0	0	
Public Relations		0	0	

Publications	0	0	0
Smart Voter - State charge	0	0	0
Total Voter Service Expenses	1000	350	650

Total Expenses	14501	11963	2538
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Income less expenses 2538

Restricted Reserve (do not use)	6500	6500
Assets EOY 2011-2012	21496.89	
Checking	8,348.79	
LWVEdFund	2,443	
Savings	10,705	

Net Worth as of 7/1/2012

ASSETS

Cash and Bank Accounts

Checking	\$8,348.79
LWVED National	\$2,443.37
Savings	\$10,704.73

Total Cash and Bank Accounts \$21,496.80

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

[\(Check Website for Updates\)](#) – see *Voter Service Article* – *volunteers needed!!*

Friday, September 14	Voter Registration - Modesto Rotary Senior Stride Event 7 am - 12 noon, East La Loma Park;
Tuesday, September 25	Voter Registration, CSUS Turlock
Thursday, September 27	Lunch and Learn: Larry Giventer, Professor Emeritus CSUS Location: Appetez Restaurant
Tuesday, October 2	Oakdale Forum, 5:30 - 8:30 pm
Wednesday, October 3	Turlock Forum, 6:30 pm, Council Chambers
Tuesday, October 9	Modesto Rotary Pros and Cons 12 noon
Wednesday, October 10	No Board Meeting – see you at the forums!
Thursday, October 11	Riverbank Forum- Riverbank Community Forum 6-8 pm