



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

January/February 2013

Serving the Citizens of Stanislaus County, California

VOL. 61 NO.6

Message from our Vice-President, Stella Beratlis:

INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM STUDY: CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

Our local League's Initiative and Referendum Study Committee will commence a series of meetings **January 25th at the home of Ellen Dunbar at 1:00 pm**. If interested in participating, please contact Stella Beratlis (vp@lwvstanislaus.org).

To help you prepare for the planning process, please review the following:

- LWVC positions: <http://archive.lwvc.org/lwvonly/docs/2013-15-program-planning-handout.pdf>
- Local Program: http://www.lwvstanislaus.org/local_action.html

Here are the links to the study material:

Consensus questions: <http://archive.lwvc.org/lwvonly/studies/2011-initiative-and-referendum/Consensus%20Questions%20May%2031%202012.pdf>

Study Guide: <http://archive.lwvc.org/lwvonly/studies/2011-initiative-and-referendum/study-guide-12-07-2012.pdf>

Leaders Guide: <http://archive.lwvc.org/lwvonly/studies/2011-initiative-and-referendum/leaders-guide-12-07-2012.pdf>

Public page for the I&R Study on LWVC's website:

<http://archive.lwvc.org/lwvc/issues/initiative-and-referendum.html>

Facebook group page for the I&R study: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/141836292577638/>

PROGRAM PLANNING FOR 2013-2015

Do you care about voting? Never miss an election? Then you need to come to the League's program planning meeting on Wednesday Feb. 13 at 6:30 PM at Dale Commons (3900 Dale Road, Modesto). At the meeting, we will review our Local Program as well as State Program.

The League sets its agenda through the Program Planning process. You voted in November because you care about who will be setting our political future; you need to come make your voice heard about what you want California's and the League's future to be.

We will be discussing League policy and positions at the state level, including where the League should focus its energy over the next two years. Do we think there should be a new study? Should we focus on community education? What are the areas of concern to us here in 2013-2015?

Please see the State's Program Planning Kit for an overview of this process:

<http://archive.lwvc.org/lwvonly/docs/2013-15-Program-Planning-Kit.pdf>

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Message from our President, Mary Giventer:

I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and you are looking forward to 2013 with enthusiasm. After an extremely busy election season, we can slow our pace a little and remember some of the other reasons the League of Women Voters is a valuable organization.

The League takes the time to study and carefully consider issues. Stella Beratlis is leading our part of a study on the California initiative process. LWVC is providing a lot of information and resources. Now that it is a little quieter, I am looking forward to having a chance to read and digest this information. Call Stella if you wish to participate in the study. At the conclusion of the study, the group will present its recommendations to the entire membership for consensus at a meeting in early March, and our consensus will be submitted to the LWVC by March 31.

Ann Krabach is starting to set up legislative interviews with local legislators. It is a good time to find out more about their positions and acquaint them with our positions. If you are interested in participating in these interviews, call Ann.

Marie Bairey and I were invited to participate in the Mayor's Forum on Public Safety. See Marie's article. It is good to see that the League is a respected voice in the community, and our input is sought on community issues.

Lunch and Learn has a great line up of speakers in the coming months, beginning with Garrad Marsh, the Mayor of Modesto.

While we may not be in election mode overdrive, the League is still active, vital and interesting. Hope to see you soon.

Mary Giventer, President

Attention!! Attention!! Attention!!

***League needs your help!
See page one for important information
regarding upcoming study
and local program planning!***

State and National Action:

STATE: The LWVC has consistently supported disclosure of campaign financing. In the past, usually only one bill calling for campaign financing reform disclosure was placed before the Legislature during a session. Now, the opportunity for significant reform has arisen. As a result of unprecedented money laundering in the November election, a number of bills calling for stronger regulation of money in politics, including disclosure requirements, have been introduced. After carefully reviewing these bills and coordinating with other organizations, the League will put together a comprehensive package of the best proposals and work for their passage. In the meantime, local Leagues are advised to withhold action on these individual bills and to refer inquiries from other organizations to the State League.

NATIONAL: In a letter to Vice President Joseph Biden, Elizabeth MacNamara, President of the LWVUS, addressed gun control. After summarizing the long-standing LWVUS position on gun control and our history of advocacy, Macintire wrote: "On behalf of our 140,000 members and supporters, we urge you to propose common sense solutions to the gun violence that is plaguing our nation. It is time to advocate for measures that will ban assault weapons, place limits on magazine size, close the gun show loophole and mandate annual reporting on gun violence in America. Gun control is a matter of public safety and public health." To read the complete LWVUS stand on gun control, go to the LWVUS web site.

The LWVUS sent a letter to President Obama asking him to lead the fight on climate change. The letter acknowledged that addressing climate change through legislative action seemed impossible, but urged the President to take the lead by acting on his authority to place controls on new and existing power plants. The letter pointed out that according to the Supreme Court, the Clean Air Act gives the President the power to "cut this life-threatening pollution" without Congressional approval. The request was reiterated on January 5 in a full-page ad in the Honolulu Star-Advertiser. At that time, President Obama and his family were vacationing in Hawaii, where the recent US Department of the Interior *Pacific Islands Regional Climate Assessment* indicates rising sea levels and higher air temperatures already have begun to impact the area and pose serious threats for the future.

The LWVUS joined over 100 organizations in sending a letter to the U.S. Senate urging ratification of the convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). CEDAW is a landmark international agreement affirming fundamental human rights and equality for women around the world. A practical blueprint for each country to achieve progress for women and girls, it is already making a difference for women and girls worldwide in areas of sex trafficking, domestic violence, access to education and vocational training, voting rights, forced and child marriages, inheritance rights, right to work, and business ownership without discrimination. To date, the United States is one of only seven countries that have not yet ratified CEDAW.

Ann Krabach, State and National Action

***Our Voter editor, Patricia Beyer, has relocated out of state.
Please contact Mary Giventer, President, if you are able to fill this position for the
remainder of the 2012-13 year. A template will be provided!***

Lunch and Learn

Modesto Mayor Garrad Marsh will be our featured speaker at the January Lunch and Learn Program. He will be speaking on the current state of the city and his plans and expectations as he looks ahead to the next few years. The program provides the perfect opportunity to ask Mayor Marsh any question you may have regarding current issues, the direction of the city or opportunities for involvement in your community.

The meeting will take place at 12 pm on Thursday, January 31 at Appetez Restaurant in the Roseburg Square shopping center, Modesto. The cost of lunch is \$11 and is open to the community as well as League members. Reservations are not required. The speaker for February will be Jean Okuye, President of the Merced County Farm Bureau. She is the first woman to hold that position.

Ruby Hennessey, Lunch and Learn

Welcome new member:

Carrie Bullock

Local Action

Modesto Public Safety Forum

In December, Modesto Mayor Garrad Marsh invited community leaders and interested citizens to participate in a forum focused on public safety issues. Attendees represented, among others, police and fire departments, education, youth services and civic organizations (including League). Fire and police chiefs presented information about historical and current levels of service and the impact of the weak economy on staffing and spending. In small groups, participants brainstormed to 1) develop ideas or service priorities that would assist in reducing crime or enhancing police or fire service, and 2) develop a list of ideas or resources to achieve the crime reduction or service enhancement priorities. Volunteers formed a subcommittee to review these ideas and present them to a follow-up meeting on February 1. For more details, the forum was covered in the *Modesto Bee* Saturday, December 8, 2012.

Marie Bairey, Local Action

**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

**We have a new Facebook
page!**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/League-of-Women-Voters-of-Stanislaus-County/180284172095948>.

Local Program (2011-12) League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County

Housing (Adopted 1975, updated 1982 and 2003)

We recognize that the need for shelter is fundamental, and that a diverse population will desire a wide selection of housing options. Therefore, we:

- A. Support equal opportunity in housing options in Stanislaus County.
- B. Support local measures to increase the supply of a diverse range of housing types to serve a diverse population.
- C. Support local measures to increase the supply of safe and affordable housing for everyone.

Land Use (Adopted 1976, updated 1988 and 2003)

We recognize that land use decisions have an impact on many areas, notably on the quality of life and on the economy; and we recognize that land itself is an irreplaceable resource that needs to be preserved and protected. We support land use planning that:

- A. Protects farmland outside clearly defined urban boundaries to avoid unnecessary conversion of farmlands.
- B. Protects the overall quality of environment (soil, air, and water).
- C. Provides urban development contiguous with existing development where urban services can be provided.
- D. Provides adequate funding for infrastructure needs (transportation, schools, parks, government services and public utilities.)

Land use planning should involve cooperation between and among the various local regional government bodies.

Adult Criminal Justice (Adopted 1980, 1982 and 1984) We support:

- A. The funding in Stanislaus County of a wide range of alternatives to incarceration for all but the physically dangerous offender.
- B. Efforts to further the expansion of rehabilitative programs and facilities for persons convicted of drug and alcohol abuse.
- C. A greater allocation of funds within the criminal justice budget for crime prevention, crime detection and rehabilitation

Child Abuse and Neglect (Adopted 1985, updated 1987)

A. We recognize child abuse as a societal problem; therefore, we support: Legislation, which addresses the jurisdictional, organizational and procedural problems in the prosecution of

child abuse cases.

- B. Modification of the courtroom process to accommodate child victims.
- C. Consistent reporting and recording of child abuse and neglect cases and development of comprehensive statistics.
- D. Broad-based prevention programs that are accessible to all family members and take into consideration the ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity of those being served.
- E. Efforts of public and private agencies to continually focus public attention on the problems of child abuse and neglect.

Local Library Finance (Adopted 1994, updated 1997 and 2003)

We support long-term, consistent funding of the Stanislaus County Free Library.

- A. We strongly support a dedicated source of funds which could be used only for the Library
- B. Basic library services should remain free and become more accessible to all Stanislaus County residents in a nondiscriminatory manner.
- C. We support a long-range goal of maintaining a library system of excellence.

Gang Violence (Adopted 2007)

In order to address the problem of criminal gang activity within our community, we support the development of culturally diverse intervention and enrichment programs at the elementary school level and beyond.

- A. Such programs may include recreational, athletic, academic, creative and/or social activities.
- B. We encourage allocation of resources to fund these programs through public, private and/or nonprofit organizations.

Municipal Government (Adopted 2008)

To assure that municipal government is open, accountable, and responsive to residents and to promote full participation by citizens, we support:

- A system that balances neighborhood needs with citywide perspective
- A system that encourages and offers opportunity for increased voter and candidate participation (Should districts be part of a proposal, criteria for establishing districts are addressed by LWVC. Also, LWVC has a position favoring majority decisions for elections officials.)

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

[\(Check Website for Updates\)](#)

Friday, January 25, 2013	Initiative and Program Study Committee, 1:00 pm, home of Ellen Dunbar
Thursday, January 31, 2013	Lunch and Learn, 12:00 pm, Appetez Restaurant, Garrad Marsh, Modesto Mayor
Wednesday, February 13, 2013	Program Planning, 6:30 pm, Dale Commons, 3900 Dale Road, Modesto. Board Meeting will follow.
Thursday, February 28, 2013	Lunch and Learn, 12:00 pm, Appetez Restaurant, Jean Okuye, President Merced County Farm Bureau (first woman president).
Wednesday, March 13, 2013	Board Meeting, 6:30 pm, Dale Commons, 3900 Dale Road, Modesto
Thursday, March 28, 2013	Lunch and Learn 12:00 pm, Appetez Restaurant, Carlos Yamzon, Stanislaus Council of Governments