



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

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Serving the Citizens of Stanislaus County, California

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President's Message

The Holidays are over, things are getting back on track and the LWVSC is ready to roll again. First, however, I would like to thank Lynn Fenderson for opening her lovely home again to the League for a fun and lively Holiday Fling. Everyone was in a festive mood and the event was very well attended.

The League Board is busy working on some Spring events. First is the Lunch & Learn on Jan. 29 featuring a discussion of the ACE Train, which should be included in the vital transportation questions to the Bay Area. Save the Date of March 19th for the Violence in our Schools forum, which the LWVSC is co-sponsoring along with AAUW, SCOE and DKG (How is that for acronyms?). See the notice in *The Voter*. The League will do what it does best – moderate the forum using our format and sort questions.

I hope that you can attend the annual Program Review meeting on Feb. 11th at 6:00pm at my home. (2008 Torrid Ave., Modesto). Refreshments will be served. State and Local positions will be discussed. A possible update to our current water policy will be discussed. Another meeting date to remember and put on your calendar is May 13th, our Annual Meeting, location and speaker to be forthcoming.

Congratulations to the Finance Committee and Chair Michael Fuller for greatly exceeding the financial drive goal in both the General and Education Fund. We are in good financial shape, thanks to their efforts and to all those who contributed this year. Please help Nominating Chair Laurie Carley in filling the needed replacements on the Board for next year. She is looking for bright, enthusiastic people to serve on the Board. I know that this includes YOU.

Seena Rhine, President LWVSC

Ending the Culture of Violence on School and College Campuses

Reports of violence on school campuses, ranging from bullying to school shootings to sexual assault are all too common. The League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women, Delta Kappa Gamma and the Stanislaus County Department of Education are coming together to present a panel discussion and resource fair, *Ending the Culture of Violence on School and College Campuses*, on **Thursday, March 19th at 7PM** in the Martin C. Petersen Education Center, 720 12th Street, Modesto. Panel members ranging from law enforcement to social services to education will discuss factors that lead to the culture of violence and, most importantly, what we can do to change it. In addition, a range of agencies will be present with information on their services. With this program, we hope to open community dialogue and action to ensure our schools are safe places for all students.

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Program Planning Meeting

Do you care about voting? Never miss an election? Then you need to come to the League's Program Planning meeting on February 11th at 6 PM at the home of Seena Rhine, 1508 Torrid Ave, Modesto.

The League sets its agenda through the program planning process. Program planning is a three-part process composed of study of issues, consensus on what action to take, and then advocacy for that action. The League is truly a grass roots organization; its members determine the League's positions on issues and its legislative priorities.

At this meeting, we will be reviewing both State and Local positions. This is your opportunity to make your voice heard. Are there positions that you feel should be revised? Is there an issue we need to study and take a position? Where should the state League focus its energy over the next two years? What would you like to see the local League focus on in the next year?

You joined the League because you care about the political process. Join us for some food, perhaps some wine, and a lively discussion.

Higher Education Study

Public Higher Education in California is at a crossroads. Almost daily, there are news articles about public higher education in areas of funding, affordability, preparedness, equity, and opportunities and barriers for success. Unfortunately because LWVC does not have a position on public higher education in California that includes the CSU and UC systems the League cannot comment on or advocate for or against any legislation. This study was proposed and approved, by a grass roots effort led by two young men at the 2013 state convention, to remedy this situation.

The State Committee Chair, Eleanor Yick, has asked us to form a local committee by mid-February to enable us to have enough time to fully consider the issues. Beginning in mid-February at least two articles related to an aspect of the study will be posted monthly on the web site (<http://lwvc.org/study/education-0>) and sent out to local League presidents and local committee chairs. They would like us to read and discuss these articles in order to develop and enhance our own knowledge base. Then in August 2015 a full study guide with consensus questions will be sent out with consensus due in March 2016 with a vote on the League position statement at the 2016 State Convention.

If you have any interest at all in the public higher education study please let me know (mgiventer@pacbell.net) and I will make sure the articles are sent to you. I am not asking for any time or research commitment at this point, just an expression of interest. Depending on the information sent, we may share e-mail comments, occasionally have a coffee shop discussion, or look to local resources for their perspective. I am looking forward to seeing how this study develops and hope you will join me.

Mary Giventer

Water Summit

Martha Blomquist and Seena Rhine attended the *Stanislaus County Water Summit* held on Jan. 16th 2015. The Summit's focus was the new state law requiring Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) and subsequent Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) to be developed by those agencies. These GSAs are to be formed for each water basin in the state and need to be formed, in general, by 2017 with plans in place by 2020-2022.

Many questions must be answered before the GSAs can develop their respective plans. Among them are:

- How do they get the needed information as to how much water is being used?
- How much water is there in the respective aquifers?
- Should there be a moratorium on well drilling so data can be gathered as to the viability of such wells?
- Which wells?
- What are the ramifications for the future of California agriculture when 80% of all water used in California is for agriculture?
- As the drought is expected to continue and probably get worse, what is an appropriate timeline for making decisions and collecting data to adequately protect our water sources?

Can you answer all these questions? I would hope that the LWVSC will study these issues in depth to arrive at a more complete position on the vital issue of water that is facing our County and State.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!!!

Margery Neder and Arelene Ison

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

Thursday, January 29th 12pm-1:30pm	Lunch & Learn: Jacobs Restaurant \$13 chef's choice Jennifer Renaldo, ACE Train Project
Wednesday, February 11th, 6:00pm	Program Planning Meeting Seena Rhine's house, refreshments provided. Call for directions.
February 26th 12pm-1:30pm	Lunch & Learn: Jacobs Restaurant \$13 chef's choice Mary Selkirk and Lee C. Balance of Citizen's Climate Lobby on Climate Change
Thursday, March 19th 7pm-9:00pm	AAUW, SCOE, DKG and LWVSC present <i>Ending the Culture of Violence on School and College Campuses.</i> Martin G. Petersen Education Center, 720 12th Street, Modesto
Saturday, April 18th	Earth Day, Graceda Park, Modesto Please see Karrie Bullock for volunteer opportunities.

**League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County
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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.