



The Voter

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®] OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

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President's Message

Election Day has arrived. Based on the number of campaign flyers I get daily, I am sure the mail carriers will be rejoicing on June 6. This is a very long ballot: there are 27 candidates for governor alone. If there is a race or two on which you are still undecided, the LWVC and Maplight website, votersedge.org, may be able to help. Launched in 2016, Voter's Edge is a partnership between LWVC and Maplight to provide a one-stop information site for the voter. When a voter logs into Voter's Edge, he/she is asked to enter a home address and/or ZIP code. This then brings up the voter's exact ballot as well as information on where to vote. The voter can click on any candidate and get the information available on that candidate. Likewise, Voter's Edge publishes propositions and local measures with pros and cons as well as the top three donors to the proposition.

Every candidate from the federal to the county level has been invited to submit a profile. At a minimum, candidates are asked for their profession and their top three priorities if elected. Beyond that they have the option of listing endorsements, linking to position papers, videos and their website, and submitting a photo. In addition, Maplight enters the very important financial piece, listing each candidate's top three campaign donors.

I have been serving as the local coordinator on the county level. This involves primarily inviting, reminding, cajoling candidates to participate. The local coordinator reviews, but never alters, submissions. The review process is to ensure that the candidate has submitted the minimum information required and that the submission follows League guidelines for appropriateness. We ask the candidate to focus on him-/herself, not to attack or draw comparison to other candidates. If a submission does not pass review, the candidate is asked to revise it before it is published, but we do not make any revisions. Not every candidate chooses to participate in Voter's Edge, but those who do are realizing that is an easy, and free, way to reach out to voters, particularly the undecided voter who may not follow politics closely. This is just another way that the League of Women Voters promotes voter education. ■

Mary

Forums

[This was inadvertently left out of the May issue.]



Candidates for Stanislaus County Supervisor District 3 in the County/City chambers on April 11.

Photo provided by Colleen Norby

Part of the mission of the League is to register voters, but just as important is the other part of our mission: to help educate voters. Our League has the reputation for running very informative forums before mail-in ballots go out. This year was no exception. Marsha Blomquest (Voter Service) asked for volunteers to help out at the five forums we held in April, and again, League members rose to the occasion! Special thanks go out to Marie Bairey, George Britton, Ellen Dunbar, Mary Giventer, Ruby Hennessey, Arlene Ison, Barbara Jensen, Ann Krabach, Margie Neder, Laurie Carley, Colleen Norby, Julie Saugstad, Wendy Scott, Ed Tabacco, Karen Tabacco and Marsha Waggoner. Some, in fact, showed up more than once or twice. Candidates and attendees alike expressed their appreciation. ■

1 On the Calendar

June 13 • Board Meeting • 6:30 PM • Call or email Mary for location if you wish to attend.

June 28 • Lunch and Learn • Noon • Lunch and Learn will resume this month at Ridgway’s on Orangeburg. Our speaker will be Dr. Lyn Raible, chief medical officer for Aegis, a drug treatment center. She will be speaking about opioid use in Stanislaus County. (Chef’s choice: \$15; vegetarian available on request.) ■

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Mary Giventer
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Marsha Waggoner
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Michael Fuller
Editor, The Voter

Ruby Hennessey
Hanna Renning
Lunch & Learn

Arlene Ison
Public Relations

Seena Rhine
Action

Wendy Scott
Finance Drive

Others

Richard Jacobs
Webmaster

George Britton, chair
Stella Beratlis
Nominating Committee

It's a pleasure to be welcome another able to new student member: Makena Inghram. She is a student at Pitman High School in Turlock. ■

Annual Report

Somehow between my computer, the printer and my total neglect to doublecheck the document when I picked it up, several pages of the annual report were missing. I sincerely apologize to the directors whose articles summarizing their work this year were omitted. Fortunately we have *The Voter* to rescue me from my ineptitude, and so the missing reports are included on pages 4–7 of this newsletter. I have also have corrected copies of the full annual report for anyone who would like one. ■

Mary

Remember: Democracy is NOT a spectator sport!

Action Report – Local, State and National

This year our League actively worked for the passage of Measure S, which extended the ¼ cent sales tax in Stanislaus County to fund the public library system for another 12 years. Our president signed the ballot proposition. Local action chair, Seena Rhine, served on the campaign committee. Other members wrote letters to the editor, made phone calls, walked door to door and posted signs. We were gratified when the measure passed by nearly 85%.

Member Jane Manley is serving on the Modesto Oversight Committee to help insure proper spending and the direction of spending of road tax funds raised as a result of Measure L.

Both locally and on the state level, the critical issues of water supply continue to be of concern to the League. Seena Rhine serves as a member of the LWVC State Water Committee to support the specific needs concerning water issues in Stanislaus County as well as to help develop and support LWVC water positions.

As part of the annual Legislative Interview we interviewed State Assemblyman Adam Gray on issues of bail reform, CEQA reform, water issues and access to medical care in the Central Valley. We also wrote a letter of support for Assemblyman Gray's bill, AB 2689, which would prohibit a person nominated or renominated by the Governor to an office subject to Senate confirmation from making a gift or contribution to a Senator or controlled committee of a Senator during the period between nomination and confirmation. A Senator would also be prohibited from accepting a gift or donation from a nominee during that time.

On the national level, the emphasis continues to be on voting rights, election reform to make voting more accessible, campaign finance reform and redistricting. At both the Women's March and Earth day in Graceda Park, the LWVSC had tables with information on the League national, state and local issues.

Seena Rhine, Action Chair

Membership Report

As of May 1, we have 85 members. Three of these are Lifetime (50+ year members), and three are student members. Dues are currently \$60 for individuals, \$90 for a family, and \$10 for students.

The December Holiday Fling, once again at the home of Lynne Fenderson, featured Arnold Chavez, Director of the Great Valley Museum, located on the Modesto Junior College West

Campus. The museum is dedicated to providing science and natural history education to adults and children of all ages through classes, programs and exhibits. Director Chavez shared how important the docent program was to the museum.

We have gained new members through personal recruitment as well as through our website. Our Lunch and Learn meetings and voter information forums have provided good venues for involving new prospects.

Colleen Norby, Membership Co-Chair

Voter Service Report

Citizens should register to vote, but they also should learn about the issues and candidates in order to make decisions that will directly affect their lives. Before every election, the League is active in providing candidate forums to enable voters to directly hear from and question candidates. This spring we held candidate forums for the following: Stanislaus County District Attorney, Stanislaus County Sheriff-Coroner, Stanislaus County Judicial Office No.2, Stanislaus County Supervisor District 3, Stanislaus County Supervisor District 4, Superintendent of Stanislaus County Schools. In addition, we held two forums for candidates for U.S. Representative in District 10 – one in Modesto and one in Oakdale.

Thank you to the many League members who made these events possible: Marie Bairey, George Britton, Ellen Dunbar, Mary Giventer, Ruby Hennessey, Arlene Ison, Barbara Jensen, Ann Krabach, Margie Neder, Laurie Carley, Colleen Norby, Julie Saugstad, Wendy Scott, Ed Tabacco, Karen Tabacco and Marsha Waggoner.

Marsha Blomquist, Voter Service Director

The Voter Newsletter Report

The Voter is our major tool for sharing information with both the membership of the League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County and the community at large. Most of our members receive *The Voter* via email, but it is also available by mail. We also post a PDF version on our website for archiving and sharing.

During 2017–18 we will have published thirteen issues of *The Voter*. (The “extra” issue, published in mid-February, focused on highlights of League activity on the national level. The January issue had given a summary of the League’s public policy positions as well as LWVSC’s local positions.) For the first time, *The Voter* has been produced in color with pictures when appropriate. Every regular issue contains a message from our president, a summary of the previous month’s Lunch and Learn, a calendar of events — especially special League events. It also includes a welcome to new members, other news of interest as well as a roster of the officers and the board of directors. Board members have contributed articles or information as requested.

Publishing a newsletter involves the work of many people, and I would like to thank all who contributed but especially those who submitted articles, who helped with proofreading, who shared

photos and who sent out the newsletter each month. All the moral support was also greatly appreciated.

Michael Fuller, The Voter Editor

Public Relations Report

News releases of all the Lunch and Learn programs were sent to the *Modesto Bee* and *Turlock Journal*, which published these announcements in a timely fashion. The press release announcing the candidate forums being hosted by the League for the June 5 primary elections was sent to the following organizations: *The Modesto Bee*, *The Turlock Journal*, *The Oakdale Leader*, *The Signal* at CSU Stanislaus, Modesto Junior College's *Freedom Forum* and three local radio stations. Lunch and Learn programs were well attended. Attendance exceeded expectations at several of the forums.

Arlene Ison, Public Relations Director

Webmaster Report

The League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County website (lwwstanislaus.org) is in its seventeenth year of offering online information to residents of our county. We provide information about local and state elections and League events such as Lunch and Learn, and a PDF version of *The Voter*. The League's website is a stand-alone site made possible through the technical support and infrastructure of the League Easy Web, a project of the LWVC.

As I complete my term as webmaster, I am anticipating changes in Easy Web design and functionality. Those changes have not been realized, as there are details apparently still under development at the state level. I hope those changes can be completed during the coming year in order to make website maintenance more user friendly for my successor.

Dick Jacobs, Webmaster

Finance Drive Report

The annual Finance Drive provides funds needed to carry out the League's educational and voter service programs and to fund ongoing activities. The Finance Committee, normally with the valuable assistance of our Finance Advisors, organizes and oversees the drive. This year, however, we simplified the process and sent the appeal directly.

Our appeal includes highlights of the League's work during the past year. We strive to show our current and prospective donors the accomplishments of our organization. The inclusion of the year's activities serves as evidence of how we responsibly steward the donations we receive.

Donors can indicate whether they want their donation to go to the Educational Fund or the General Fund. All Educational Fund donations are tax deductible and are used to gather and provide information to the community about current issues at the local, state and national levels, as well

as voter service activities. The General Fund is used to maintain local League operations. Contributions to the Finance Drive support the candidate forums.

Our members and other donors responded favorably to our appeal. We received a total of \$5109.89 to date: \$2924.89 for the General Fund and \$2185.00 for the Education Fund. We exceeded our overall goal for the Finance Drive. We cannot thank our members and donors enough for their continued dedication and commitment to the League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County.

Wendy Scott, Finance Drive Director

Lunch and Learn Annual Report

The lunch meetings were held on the last Thursday of the month at Ridgway's Restaurant in Modesto. The meetings are open to the general public as well as League members. Speakers are chosen to address local or state issues and concerns. Program speaker recommendations from members are always welcome.

6/2017 • Carolyn Bowden representing the Healthy California Campaign and California Nurses Association spoke on The Healthy California Act (SB 562).

7/2017 • Dr. Don Ahrens, textbook author and retired MJC instructor of earth science and meteorology discussed Climate Change: Fact or Fiction.

8/2017 • Nicole Meyer-Morse and Millie Levin, policy advisors from the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services presented on Climate Change and Emergency Management.

9/2017 • Jim Stokes, site manager of the Turlock office of International Rescue Committee, spoke about the various programs available through the organization to provide assistance to refugees.

10/2017 • Rhonda Allen, Linda Mayo and Jo Lambert of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) presented on Laura's Law.

1/2018 • Wayne Zipser and Tom Orvis of the Stanislaus County Farm Bureau talked about Promoting and Preserving Agriculture in California.

2/2018 • Larry Giventer, Retired CSUS professor of political science and current law student gave a presentation on San Joaquin County's Collaborative Court.

3/2018 • Mary Giventer, Hanna Renning and Ruby Hennessey, LWV members, presented on Proposition 13: Then and Now and the California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act of 2018 initiative.

4/2018 • Dr. Rick Wentworth, Retired San Joaquin County Superintendent of Schools discussed the roles and responsibilities of a County Superintendent of Schools.

League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County
P.O. Box E
Modesto, CA 95352-3669