



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

Campaign billboards are already popping up: a sure sign that election season is upon us. Our hard-working Voter Service Director has been diligently setting up candidate forums. Several are already scheduled, and several more are in the works. It looks like April will be a busy month. Make note of the forum dates and try to be available to help with one or more. If you know of other races that should be covered or opportunities for voter registration, please contact Marsha Blomquist.

On a statewide level, LWV is working with a coalition of groups to place on the November ballot an initiative, "The California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act of 2018," which would close a loophole in Proposition 13 that allows large corporations to avoid billions of dollars in property tax. This proposition would create a "split roll" taxing corporate property at current market value while preserving the protections in Proposition 13 that currently exist for homeowners, renters and farmers. It would also level the playing field for small businesses and will eliminate the tax they currently pay on fixtures and equipment. Hanna and Ruby are planning a program for the next Lunch and Learn on the provisions currently in Proposition 13 and the proposed changes. If anyone is particularly interested in working on this issue, let me know.

This is an important election cycle; the role of the League in informing voters and encouraging voter participation is vital. Please stay involved and stay active! ■

Mary

Interview with a State Legislator • Opportunity!

Every year Leagues schedule an interview with a state legislator to discuss issues of concern to League. This year LWVSC will meet with Adam Gray at his office in Merced. We usually send a delegation of three or four members. If you are interested in participating, contact Mary Giventer at mgiventer@pacbell.net or 632-8996. ■

Lunch and Learn

Collaborative Court

Dr. Larry Giventer, retired CSUS professor of political science and current law school student, described San Joaquin County's Collaborative Court at the February Lunch and Learn. The program is intended to keep minor offenders out of jail. Most of the clients approved for the program are on probation or parole and/or have substance abuse issues. As part of the program, clients are required to participate in treatment programs. Collaborative Court is funded through the San Joaquin County Superior Court and grants.

Two Superior Court judges oversee the program, which also includes law enforcement, probation, treatment providers (public, private and faith based), case managers and compliance officers to monitor the clients and volunteer law students who, under the supervision of an attorney, are certified by the California State Bar to advise the clients in court.

Many of the clients are quite articulate, know they have problems but don't know how to overcome them. The program sets rigid expectations for compliance; failure to comply with treatment, appearance in court or other requirement leads to immediate remand to jail. All treatment programs are evidence based. Interestingly, according to research, a short-term return to jail is more effective than long term remand.

A typical court session starts with a pre-meeting among staff to review the 20–40 cases to be heard. A-Team clients — those who are compliant and doing well — are heard first. They are praised and rewarded for their effort. The judge leaves his bench to talk to them individually. These are followed by the Regulars – clients who have experienced a “hiccup” or set-back. Efforts are made to address the issue and get the client back on track. The last group includes those with problems. The law students spend several minutes talking with them to identify the problem to present the case to the judge and make appropriate recommendations. This may include return to jail. Larry described a “tough guy” potential client with an attitude. Rather than returning him to jail immediately, he was allowed to observe the A-Team — to learn about the program successes and rewards. He is currently an A-Team client. Some clients successfully reenter society sober, employed and contributing to the community. Case managers and compliance officers have criminal or substance abuse histories — Been there: done that. They take no slack from the clients while setting an example of what can be ahead for them.

Currently the program is being evaluated to document that it is cost effective, reduces recidivism, increases public safety and turns lives around. ■

— Marie Bairey

New Members.

LWVSC would like to welcome a new member, Myrna Gervasoni, Modesto. In addition, Margie Neder has rejoined the League. Welcome back! ■

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The League would like to thank all of you for helping us maintain the programs we have in place and increase our presence in the communities we serve. If you've contributed and don't find your name on our list, please let Wendy Scott (wscott1995@aol.com) know. If you haven't made a contribution to this year's Finance Drive, it's still not too late. Simply send a check to LWVSC, P.O. Box E, Modesto, CA 95352-3669. Donations can be made to either the general fund or the educational fund. If you wish to donate to both, please use two checks because the accounts are separate. (You can find out if you've renewed your membership by contacting Colleen Norby at colleen.norby@gmail.com.) ■

On the Calendar

Lunch and Learn Location to be announced.

Thursday, March 29 • Noon • Board members of the League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County will lead a discussion of the major features of Prop 13 and its proposed reforms. Please come and participate! (See page 4 for more details.)

Forums

April 11. Candidates for County Board of Supervisors, districts 3 and 4. Council Chambers, Tenth Street, Modesto. Starts at 6:00 p.m.

April 17. Candidates for County Superintendent of Schools. Board Room, Peterson Center, 1100 H Street, Modesto. 6:00 to 7:30. (Entry to the building will be through the G Street parking lot doors or through the 12th Street side entrance.)



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April 18. Candidates for US Congress, District 10. Council Chambers, Tenth Street, Modesto. Starts at 6:00.

April 25. Candidates for US Congress, District 10. Bianchi Center, Oakdale. Begins at 7:00.

At least one additional forum is in the works but hasn't been scheduled yet. Marsha really does need help for these events and "would be delighted if folks began volunteering to work at specific forums." She will put out requests after March 9 after the County Clerk declares the official candidates. ■

Membership Directories

If you would like a Membership Directory, email Mary (mgiventer@pacbell.net), who can send you an electronic version. If you would like a hard copy, email Marie (gbandmb@sbcglobal.net). If you find any errors, please let Mary know: it's a work in progress, after all. ■

Proposition 13 Reform

After almost 40 years, voters will finally have the opportunity this November to reform Prop 13, closing the corporate loophole that has allowed big business to pocket billions of dollars annually and restoring that funding to our local communities. To realize this goal the League of Women Voters of California is urging its local branches to join in supporting passage of the California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act of 2018. ■



League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County
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