



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

April 2010

Serving the Citizens of Stanislaus County, California

VOL. 59 NO. 17

Call to League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County Members to our Annual Meeting 2010-2011 May 22, 2010

Dear Members,

This *Voter* issue includes the slate of nominees for year 2010-11, proposed budget, and local programs that will be voted on by membership. Also there is a meal selection tear sheet to be mailed in as part of your reservation. **This is the most important event of the year for our League and I strongly urge you to attend.** Though it is a business meeting we do have a good time! As you can see from the slate of nominees, we are still looking for a Vice President. If you are interested please contact Vice President Susan Novak.

Without the Annual Spring Membership Event it may seem a little quiet in League. However we have been busy with Local Action, planning for Candidate Forums in May, and preparing for Annual Meeting as we get things wrapped up for this year and set the stage for a fantastic 2010-2011 year. There will be many opportunities to be active with League and we do need your help. Now more than ever our League must be here for our community, addressing their needs for facts on the issues, keeping them engaged and knowing that their involvement in the community counts!

I would like to thank Nominating Committee, Susan Novak, Laurie Carley, Mildred Kinser and Seena Rhine, for the great job they have done with preparations for the annual meeting. Thanks also go to Joan Goldsmith and Julie Saugstad for volunteering to be on the Budget Review Committee, and to Susan Novak, Michele McNeil and Seena Rhine for their assistance in this process. They did a great job with balancing our needs and our available resources in our proposed budget.

I look forward to seeing you at Lunch and Learn and our Annual meeting!

-Ellen Meyer, President

The League of Women Voters is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

DIVERSITY POLICY:

League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County in both its values and practices affirms its belief and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means that there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

**LWV of STANISLAUS COUNTY
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League Office
720 13th Street, Modesto
209-524-1698
www.lwvstanislaus.org

Board Highlights

March 20, 2010

- Board approved proposed 2010-2011 budget (included in this *Voter*). The budget will be submitted for member approval at Annual Meeting May 22.
- A letter was sent to Modesto City Council supporting the Economic Development Committee recommendation to not include Beckwith-Dakota CPD in the proposed expansion of the Sphere of Influence in the General Plan Review.
- A letter was prepared commending Modesto Police Chief Harden for the state Gang Prevention Grant and for the multi-faceted approach the department is taking to reduce the gang problem in the community.
- LWVSC will not conduct Legislative Interviews this year.

Marie Bairey, Secretary

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

Student Membership \$15 _____
Individual Membership \$60 _____
Household Membership \$90 _____

Please contact me with more information:

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone (for directory): _____

E-mail: _____

MAIL TO
LWVSC
P.O. Box E
Modesto, CA 9535

Elections coming

Election Day is June 8. The offices of Sheriff, Clerk Recorder, and Auditor-Controller, will be on the ballot., as well as County Board of Supervisors, Districts 3 and 4. The Stanislaus County League will hold forums for these offices where there is a competitive race and the candidates agree to participate. We are recruiting volunteers for those forums in May. The exact dates are not set as we go to press. If you are available to help with the forums, please call Ellen Dunbar, 525-9343, or e-mail her at edunbar1@comcast.net

**LWV Recommendations for
June, 2010 CA Propositions**

These recommendations are posted on the LWVSC Website. To Access them go to www.lwv.stanislaus.org. If you do not have internet access and would like us to mail you a printed copy, call the League office at 524-1698

Finance Drive Update

Since the Finance Drive report last month we have received a few more donations. I would like to thank Myrtle Osner and Jill Sousa for their donations to the General Fund, and also thank Julie Saugstad for a donation in memory of Katherine Holmberg and Margie Lipsky for a donation in honor of Myrtle Osner's 90th birthday.

Mary Giventer
Finance Drive Director

LUNCH AND LEARN

February 23 Lunch and Learn

**Jorge (“Lil Pup”) Perez, Outreach Coordinator
Modesto City Schools**

On February 23, the Lunch & Learn speaker was “Lil Pup”, a gang member who came dressed in full gang regalia—a Raiders shirt, baggy pants and tennis shoes. “Lil Pup” was accompanied by his “parole officer, Josh Ramos” and he said he was glad to have a chance to make this presentation “to get an hour of community service toward his sentence”. He presented a Power-Point program detailing his gang life which began when he was 12-years old, living in Salinas. He used to watch the gang members meet across the street from the “ghetto” home he shared with his parents who worked from sun-up to sun-down in the lettuce fields. One day the gang leader called “Lil Pup” over and, when “Lil Pup” said he wanted to join the gang, told him that he had to pay his dues—commit crimes, sell drugs, and serve time in juvenile hall, county jail and prison. “Lil Pup” was game and began to work his way into the gang. When he reached the 12th grade fresh from Juvenile Hall, he was put into Mr. Smith’s English class, where he found a teacher unlike any other he had ever had. Mr. Smith would meet “Lil Pup” at the door of the class each morning, shake his hand and ask how he was doing. Mr. Smith began to take “Lil Pup” out to lunch and to encourage him to become something better. He helped him apply to Stanislaus State and get financial aid to attend college there. It was at this point in “Lil Pup’s” presentation that another person began to emerge. Beneath that gang façade and under that gang clothing a new person became visible to the lunchtime attendees. Soon, we were looking at Mr. Jorge Perez, in a white shirt, tie and business suit—a man who works as the Outreach Coordinator for Modesto City Schools in a program to try to keep Modesto’s children from traveling down the path that “Lil Pup” had taken; and, surprise, surprise, Mr. Josh Ramos—not a parole officer at all, but rather an intern in Mr. Perez’s program. Mr. Perez went on to tell how the program targets children in the elementary schools who are at risk for becoming a Modesto version of “Lil

Pup”. He told of going to the homes of these children, speaking and offering to the parents strategies to empower them to take control of their children and their behavior and to channel them into positive actions. He and his staff meet with groups of children at school assemblies and individually to tell them that you don’t always get a second chance in life. The membership very much enjoyed his presentation which was informative, challenging, humorous and touching.

April 27 Lunch and Learn

**Ryan Swehla, CCIM
CommonWealth Modesto**

The Modesto area is often in the headlines around the nation, but not necessarily for things that we, as citizens, want to be known for. We have suffered through high-profile murders; being known as an area of high Meth production and use; we are “the auto-theft capital of the US”; and even finished dead last on the 2007 Cities Ranked and Rated list. But all of that may be soon changed. There is a group which has been formed to polish our tarnished image—a grassroots group of young professionals focused on improving our community...CommonWealth Modesto. “The purpose of CommonWealth Modesto is to improve our community and improve ourselves as community members and business leaders.” According to a fall issue of Stanislaus Magazine, CWM is working on two major projects—an effort to create a positive brand for Modesto and the creation of a business innovation center to help incubate local ideas into successful businesses. On April 27, our Lunch & Learn speaker will be Mr. Ryan Swehla, CCIM. Mr. Swehla currently serves as a member of Modesto’s Board of Zoning Adjustment and has his BS in Engineering from Columbia University. He will speak to us specifically about the project in which he is most actively involved—improving Modesto’s image. He will inform the membership what has been accomplished and what the next steps are. This promises to be an informative and interesting program. We hope to see you there.

Lee DeLaMare, Lunch and Learn ‘Director

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan 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.

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League of Women Voters of
Stanislaus County
LWV Modesto
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Modesto, CA 95352
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS
(Check Website for Updates)

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| Wednesday, April 14 | 6:00 p.m. Board Meeting
League Office, 720 13th Street, Modesto |
| Tuesday, April 27 | 12:00 noon Lunch and Learn
Speaker: Ryan Swehla, CCIM
CommonWealth Modesto
Appetiz Restaurant, Roseburg Square. Modesto
\$11.00. For special dietary needs call one day ahead |
| Saturday, May 22 | 10:00 a.m. Annual Meeting
Appetiz Restaurant, Roseburg Square
Speaker: Vito Chiesa, Stanislaus County Supervisor |