



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

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Serving the Citizens of Stanislaus County, California

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Message from our President, Mary Giventer:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to attend the League of Women Voters California convention in San Jose last month. It is always exciting to be in a roomful of women, and some men, who are passionate about civic engagement and willing to factually study and have a civil discourse on public policy issues. Delegates were certainly not all of the same mind on issues but they were always willing to listen respectfully, consider other points of view and look for common ground. If only our government could follow this model.



2013 LW- Stanislaus County Sustaining Member Colleen Norby

The convention also demonstrated the power of the single vote. The state board had not recommended any new studies for the coming year. However, two young men stood up and pointed out that the state League has no position on higher education beyond the community college level. With the many issues facing the CSU and UC systems it was suggested that the League needed to conduct a study on the public higher education system and adopt a position so we can participate in the discussion on the accessibility and financing of higher education. Most people opposing the proposal were against it because of the costs and staff time required to conduct a study and, pointing out that this had not been anticipated in the budget, they felt a new study would limit our ability to act as effectively in areas we had already decided were priorities for the coming year. Since this was a study proposed from the floor rather than by the board, it required a super majority to pass. The proposal to adopt the study required 98.5 votes to pass and received 98 votes. The proponents quickly regrouped and requested a revote. This could be done only by having the request come from someone who had voted against the proposal. They managed to find an opponent who was willing to ask for a revote and on the second vote the measure passed 100 votes to 65. LWVC is now forming a committee and in the beginning phases of a study of public higher education in California, which includes the Community College system, California State University system, and University of California system. Our local League will have an opportunity to give our input in the near future. You can follow the development of this study on the LWVC website and, if interested, can sign up to be part on an online discussion group.

It was a fulfilling and stimulating weekend which renewed my admiration for the work the League does.

Mary Giventer, Elected President

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Senator Cannella Discusses Issues at Annual Meeting

State Senator Anthony Cannella was guest speaker at the LWVSC Annual Meeting in May. Elected in 2010, 12th District Senator Cannella is a member of several committees that affect the Central Valley including Agriculture, Natural Resources and Water, Transportation and Housing and the Joint Audit Committee.

He described himself as not a political thinker, but as a trained engineer who identifies a problem and seeks a solution. Because he does not see himself as a career politician, he said he sometimes takes risky stands in an effort to educate his constituents and colleagues. In his freshman year, he participated in budget discussions with the Governor Brown. He sees the current immigration system as unfair and broken and sending a mixed message to immigrants, i.e., help wanted/no trespassing. He views reform is a humanitarian issue. Senator Cannella said he tries to keep issues on the front burner that will educate his Sacramento colleagues on needs of our area. These include:

- **Stanislaus is a donor county.** The county receives 11 cents in service for each \$1 paid in state taxes. He continues efforts of his predecessors to right this disparity. Updating the current allocation formula could mean an additional \$3 million annually to our county.
- **CEQA** (California Environmental Quality Act) reform could benefit business. The current low threshold for litigation makes it easy to oppose/delay/stop a project.
- **Regulatory procedures** should be reformed by clearly identifying goals and selecting the least intrusive regulations needed to accomplish those goals.
- **Higher education** costs limit options for middle class families. The Joint Audit Committee reviewed the UC budget and uncovered a \$1 billion “miscellaneous” fund while tuition rises for students. Proposition 30 was promoted as an education bill; Senator Cannella introduced SB 58 to put a two-year freeze on tuition increases while the bill takes effect.

Senator Cannella responded to questions from the audience:

- **“Revenge” cyber bullying** (when a person makes public material that should be considered private): Senator Cannella has introduced a bill to make these acts a misdemeanor with a fine.
- **Proposition 13** (the discrepancy between reassessment requirements for large corporations and residences when property is sold): As a constitutional amendment, a vote of the people is required to change.
- **Sales taxes on Internet purchases:** Sen. Cannella supported the “Amazon” bill which sets a one-year grace period before Internet companies start to collect sales taxes. A comparable federal bill is pending.
- **Prisoner realignment:** There was an effort that was defeated which would have enabled counties to recoup county expenses from the state by redefining the allocation formula to pay on a per prisoner basis.
- **Undocumented prisoners:** They used to be deported but they quickly returned to the U.S. A better public safety solution is incarceration.
- **“Fracking”:** He basically supports it, recognizing that regulation will be needed. Hearings are in progress.
- **Delta pipeline:** Senator Cannella supports it in concept to move water from north to south. Whatever is done needs to protect the Delta and provide for equitable water distribution costs.
- **Healthy Families program:** He recently wrote a newspaper opinion piece supporting the program. It worked while Medicare does not meet the need of providing health care for some low income families. He feels that those who voted against it may have “voters’ remorse”.

Marie Bairey, Secretary



Ann Krabach and Jean Tenney at the League of Women Voters booth, Earth Day 2013, Graceda Park, Modesto.

Welcome New Member: Michael Fuller

Voter Services

No Summer Break for Voter Service!

Voter Service was asked to moderate the June City Council election for the City of Riverbank. The forum was enthusiastically attended by the community and went very smoothly. Many thanks go to Diane Bartlett for moderating and Marie Bairey, Ellen Dunbar, Stella Beratlis, Ann Krabach, Marsha Waggoner and President Mary Giventer for assisting at the forum.

In July, President Mary Giventer will be a presenter at a free workshop for any citizen thinking about running for elective office in November 2013 or beyond. President Mary will be presenting information on our free Smartvoter website. If you are thinking of running for elective office any time in the future, this would be a presentation you would not want to miss. The workshop is being held Wednesday, March 13, 2013, 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Modesto Chamber of Commerce, 1114 J St., Modesto.

This upcoming fall will be registering voters and holding forums. More information will be available in upcoming Voter issues.

Ellen Meyer and Marsha Waggoner, Voter Service

Board Highlights:

The highlights from the Annual meeting and June Board meeting:

Annual Meeting:

- Members present voted to support proposed amendment to Modesto City Council Tin Cup amendment, which would decrease the amount of campaign contributions that would require a member to step down from a issue that might benefit the donor.

June Board Meeting:

- Appointed President, Vice-president, Secretary and Treasurer as Executive Committee.
- LWVC approved a study on higher education in California; LWVUS is preparing for a study on agriculture.
- Webmaster position vacancy.
- Ellen Dunbar is looking for volunteers for the Finance Drive Committee.

Marie Bairey, Secretary

National Action:

NATIONAL: This week, the US Senate voted to move forward with S.744, the Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act. This bill will begin to address problems with the US immigration system. Expectations are the debate will last two weeks, allowing for hundreds of amendments to be considered. The LWVUS urges you to write Senators Boxer and Feinstein, thanking them for addressing immigration reform and urging them to “allow immigrants to contribute to the U.S. economy and society by providing them with a clear pathway to citizenship.” Effective immigration reform would: Designate a path to citizenship for undocumented persons; Promote reunification of families; Meet economic business and employment needs of the U.S’; Improve safeguards against illegal immigration; and Provide due process for all persons including the right to a fair hearing.

STATE: All four campaign disclosure laws supported by the LWVC have been passed by the California Senate and have been sent to the Assembly, where they await hearings. Leagues and their members contacted their senators in support of SB 2 (Lieu) and SB 3 (Yee), the Sunshine in Campaigns Act bills cosponsored by the LWVC and California Common Cause, as well as SB 27 (Correa) and SB 52 (Leno), the California DISCLOSE Act. SB 2, SB 3, and SB 27 will: Close the loophole that allows campaigns to receive millions from out-of-state interests or other donors without having to disclose the sources; Require candidates to “stand by their ad” and toughen slate mailer disclosure; Lay the groundwork for a new online reporting system to replace the antiquated, unreliable current one; Strengthen enforcement and increase fines for violations. SB 52 (Leno) will require the three largest funders of political ads to be clearly and legibly identified on the ads themselves.

Ann Krabach, State & National 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) _____

League of Women Voters—Convention Recap and Highlights: Initiative and Referendum Process Position

At the state convention the updated Initiative and Referendum Process position was adopted. The updated position was based on the study local Leagues, including ours, had conducted during the past year. The things our local study had concluded were important were also considered important by leagues throughout the state and the final position very closely mirrors our consensus report. Some of the key items included were:

Drafting

1. Sponsors should be required to submit draft proposals to an impartial and nonpartisan official authority, such as the Legislative Analyst's Office for a precirculation review of clarity/language, constitutionality/legality, and single subject.
2. The opinion resulting from the precirculation study should be made public.
3. Initiative proposals should be limited to a single subject.
4. Initiative proposals should be written in language that is precise, clear, and understandable and meets standards of readability.
5. Initiatives should include a provision providing for an automatic review or expiration of the measure, as appropriate.
6. Initiatives with provisions that would require funding should specify the sources or method(s) of providing the funding.

Title and Summary: The title and summary should be written by an impartial and nonpartisan official authority, such as the Legislative Analyst's Office.

Campaign

1. Realistic limits should be imposed on contributions by individuals and groups to initiative and referendum campaigns.
2. Realistic limits should be imposed on expenditures by individuals and groups in initiative and referendum campaigns.
3. There should be provision for free time for radio and TV information programs for initiative campaigns,
4. Ballot pamphlet analyses of initiative and referendum measures should be written for the reading level of the average citizen.
5. The ballot label and ballot pamphlet should clearly indicate the effect of a yes and a no vote.

Disclosure

1. Sponsors of an initiative or referendum and organizations that form a committee to support or oppose a measure should be required to be listed by name in the ballot pamphlet, in mailings, and in advertisements.
2. Principal contributors to an initiative or referendum campaign should be required to be listed by name in the ballot pamphlet, in mailings, and in advertisements.
3. Initiative and referendum committees should be required to use names that reflect their true economic or special interest.

The full position is available on the LWVC website.

Next Generation Smart Voter

LWVC is working on developing a next generation for the Smart Voter. The new Smart Voter will be designed for utilization on mobile devices, such as smart phones and tablets. The site will be designed to be more easily navigated on the smaller screens and to easily link to other sites. We will also be able to upload videos of candidates' forums and Pros and Cons presentations. It is anticipated that the Next Generation Smart Voter will be ready for the 2014 elections.

Mary Giventer, President

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

Thursday, June 27	Lunch & Learn Location: Appetez Restaurant, Modesto at 12pm Speaker Carlos Yamzon, StanCOG Executive Director
Friday, June 28	Diane will be offering a tutorial for the Vacant Website Position, open to any computer savvy members interested. For details, please contact Mary Giventer.
Wednesday, July 10	Board Meeting 6:00pm Dale Commons, 3900 Dale Road, Modesto
Saturday, July 13	LWV presentation at Prospective Candidates Forum Sponsored by Modesto Bee, Saturday July 13 @ 8:45 am to noon at the Modesto Chamber of Commerce, 1114 J St, Modesto.
Thursday, July 25	Lunch and Learn: Location: Appetez Restaurant at 12pm Speaker Tom Ciccarelli, Executive Director, Stanislaus Family Justice Center

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
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