



## *The Voter*

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

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### ***President's Message***

This has been an extremely busy October/election season for our League. One of the most important things we do in League is provide voter education. Candidate forums, LWVC.org Voter's Edge website and Pros and Cons presentations and publications are some of the means we use to reach the voting public. In October we sponsored candidate forums for eight local elections. Seena Rhine made two public Pros and Cons presentations on the state ballot propositions in addition to four to small groups; Mary Giventer did two in September.

We are grateful to Marsha Blomquist for her passion and unrelenting dedication to voter education. Marsha contacted candidates, arranged for facilities, coordinated dates and recruited volunteers. We are fortunate to have a cadre of equally dedicated volunteers. George Britton and Julie Saugstad moderated most of the forums. Assisting as timers, question sorters and greeters were George Britton, Karrie Bullock, Laurie Carley, Alene Griffin, Ruby Hennessey, Arlene Ison, Sharon Marr, Janie Meily, Margie Neder, Colleen Norby, Dieter Renning, Hanna Renning, Mary Ann Reynolds, Seena Rhine, Julie Saugstad, Judy Schunke, Ed Tabacco, Karen Tabacco and Marsha Waggoner. (I also helped.)

High fives also go to members who have stepped up during our leadership transition. Without a Board meeting in October, we have effectively conducted the business of LWVSC via email. Laurie Carley got out the October newsletter. We have scheduled **Holiday Fling** for November 26. Lynne Fenderson will again host our event. Wendy Scott has arranged for our speaker. Laurie Carley, Julie Saugstad and Ellen Meyer are handling the details. Colleen Norby has agreed to compile our membership directory.

Speaking of which...we are delighted to welcome 21 new members who have joined our League in the past year. Is it the divisive political climate? Is it awareness that participation in government is more important than ever? Is it the need for nonpartisan, unbiased information? Whatever the reason, we are pleased that our new members see League as a way to be informed and engaged. We welcome all of you and look forward to meeting each of you at a coming League event.

See [the flyer in for this Voter details about Holiday Fling](#). This is our annual holiday social. Get into the holiday spirit with League friends on Monday, November 26. ■

*Marie*



If you haven't already voted and are confused by the barrage of mailers and TV ads, go to [LWVC.org](https://lwvc.org) and click on Voter's Edge or use <https://lwvc.org/news/add-voters-edge-your-website>. This site has information about candidates and their supporters as well as Pros and Cons on the ballot measures. Also check LWVC'S recommendations on the propositions. Remind friends and family that **EVERY VOTE COUNTS.** ■

### **KUDOS**

Editor's note: Marsha Blomquist wrote a thank-you to all the volunteers; it included the list of volunteers you'll find in Marie's message on page 1. Marsha received several congratulatory emails on her organization of the League's Pros and Cons and forums. She also wrote this piece about her "team":

The members of the Voter Service team did an outstanding job servicing the voters of Stanislaus County. The members drove many miles in order to create 6 forums so voters could question the candidates. The very difficult job of explaining the propositions to voters was assumed and very well done several times by Seena Rhine.

This is a great organization filled with caring people all trying to provide educational opportunities for the citizens of Stanislaus County. The League members demonstrate that "Keeping a strong democracy is not a spectator sport."

Thank you all for a successful political season. ■

— *Marsha Blomquist*



## Modesto Mayor Ted Brandvold

Mayor Brandvold talked about goals and accomplishments, but mostly he responded to questions from October **Lunch and Learn** attendees. In his first run for public office, Mr. Brandvold was elected in 2016 with a vision for collaboration at City Hall, fiscal stability and citizen involvement in local government.

The 100 Days Review Committee, composed of members from various professions and perspectives, made 36 recommendations. Outcomes included funding for 22 new police officers and review of city purchasing procedures. Maintaining sustainable economic development and creating new jobs is more of a challenge. However, Mr. Brandvold noted that Modesto is becoming a regional center for health care with the addition of California Children's Hospital. UC has established a satellite lab and may be looking for a satellite campus.

Looking ahead, the city will begin its General Plan Update to determine what Modesto will look like in the future. Measure L has generated \$9 million for the city for transportation. The proposed improvement to Highway 132 will facilitate access to and from the Bay Area. The Transit Center is being updated to accommodate the coming of ACE train.

Mr. Brandvold described a meeting he and other officials had with an E-Bay representative who at first saw the ACE train as a way to bring workers to the Bay Area. The Central Valley contingent suggested the opposite: E-Bay could come to the Valley where housing is affordable and land is available for expansion while still being connected to the Bay Area. Those same advantages could attract start-up companies.

Mayor Brandvold expressed concern about the current City Council controversy regarding oversight, transparency and the City Auditor. Why would you not want transparency in government?

Most of the questions focused on the problem of homelessness. Recognizing it is a multifaceted problem, the mayor praised the county's Focus on Prevention initiative: it has long-term goals to assist families but is beginning to look to more immediate results. The County has funds for programs with cities as partners in implementation. Finding a location for a low barrier shelter has been a challenge; Mr. Brandvold is recommending the Finch Road property, formerly the animal control center. It is co-owned by Modesto and Stanislaus County, has space and is accessible by bus. He noted that Modesto is a caring community and that government is not the only solution. Other questions addressed the many vacant buildings, most of which are privately owned. One reason for lack of development might be tax considerations for the owners. Mr. Brandvold admitted that Measure L projects got off to a slow start. Projects are currently in progress or out to bid. ■

— Marie Bairey

**Officers**

Marie Bairey  
*President*

*Vice President*

Laurie Carley  
*Secretary*

Julie Saugstad  
*Treasurer*

**Directors**

Marsha Blomquist  
Nancy Hinton  
*Voter Service*

Karrie Bullock  
*Membership*

Michael Fuller  
*Editor, The Voter*

Ruby Hennessey  
Hanna Renning  
*Lunch & Learn*

Arlene Ison  
*Public Relations*

Seena Rhine  
*Action*

Wendy Scott  
*Finance Drive*

**Others**

Stella Beratlis  
*Webmaster*

George Britton, chair  
Stella Beratlis  
Arlene Ison  
*Nominating Committee*

**New Members**

The League welcomes **Katherine Conrotto, Amanda Duran,** and **Theresa** and **Howard Grieshaber** as new members of LWVSC. Theresa is a retired Stanislaus County librarian who worked at the main library; Howard retired as SELPA director for the Stanislaus County Office of Education. **Dr. Raymond Harter** rejoined as a re-newing member. All have Modesto addresses. **Judy Kropp** (Oakdale) has also joined. Judy is Marsha Blomquist’s AAUW telephone contact for Oakdale, Riverbank and Escalon. Welcome, all! ■

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**1 On the Calendar**

Tuesday, November **6** • 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM • **Election Day!!** • Polling Places, if you haven’t already voted by mail. (We know we’re preaching to the choir.)

Wednesday, November **14** • 6:30 PM • Monthly **Board Meeting** • At Seena’s. For directions, call Seena or Marie.

Monday, November **26** • 6:30 PM • **Holiday Fling** • Opera Modesto Artistic Director Roy Stevens and his wife, An-lisa Winberg, presenting an intro to opera with some musical selections. See pages 5 and 6 for more information. [And please, **please** let Laurie Carley know if you can bring either an appetizer or a dessert to share.] League members might be interested in listening to an interview Roy Stevens had October 24 on Capital Public Radio’s *Insight* with Beth Ruyak: <http://www.capradio.org/124321>.

Thursday, November **29** • Noon • **Lunch & Learn** will be on hiatus during the months of November and December. It will return in January. ■



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