



# *THE VOTER*

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

November 2006

Serving the Citizens of Stanislaus County, California

VOL. 57 NO.18

## **Calendar of Events**

**Nov. 7<sup>th</sup>**  
Election Day  
**VOTE!**

**Nov. 8th**  
Wednesday, 6:30PM  
Board Meeting

**Dec. 4th**  
Monday, 7PM  
Holiday Fling

**Jan 10, 2007**  
Wednesday, 6:30PM  
Board Meeting

**Wishing you  
and yours  
a Happy  
Thanksgiving**



## ***PUBLIC RELATIONS***

### **League Goes Live on Local Talk Show!**

This October Amy Christensen and Julie Saugstad represented the League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County on Andy Mendlin's Show "On the Docket", a local talk show that airs on Local Radio Station KFIV.

Our League was asked to be on the show and we jumped at the chance. Not only was October the perfect time to be able to promote our League's Local Candidate Forums and registration dates, but also we were talking on a radio station that is known to have a conservative audience- predominately 45+ age, male listener, and conservative. We were able to reach an audience that has often perceived the League as having a liberal agenda.

Amy and Julie were also able to inform the public of our name change, the reasons why we did this and how it will help our County. Andy Mendlin asked some good questions to create interest and excitement, and Julie and Amy handled them beautifully. In fact, our League members took the bull by the horns. Andy was promoting good, old fashioned debates that would be livelier than forums. We, however, promote venues that give candidates equal time to answer questions from their constituents. We explained that the League used to do national forums, but they have been taken over by the two major parties!

Two phone-in callers wanted to know why we have not changed our name to include men. We have had male members since the early seventies; we have a solid reputation with our current name and want to keep our history.

One caller had the belief that the League was all liberals or Democrats. We are non-partisan and have membership from all political parties. We promote being informed voters, whatever your party affiliation. Julie and Amy were able to inform the listening audience that the League studies issues and only takes positions on areas that we have studied thoroughly. We were able to discuss Measure K and how our Local Action committee studied the measure. We also promoted our Pros and Cons publication, lwvstanislaus and smartvoter web sites.

*-Continued on page 4*

## **LWV of STANISLAUS COUNTY OFFICERS**

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## **DIRECTORS**

### *Membership*

**Cynthia Van Empel**

**Jennie Sweeney**

### *Voter Service*

**Linda Walden**

**Susan Cassidy**

### *Finance Drive*

**Joan Goldsmith**

### *Local Action*

**Marie Bairey**

### *State and National Action*

**Betty Ann Vencill**

### *Nominating Committee*

**Margie Lipsky**

### *Public Relations &*

### *Voter Editor*

**Ellen Meyer**

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## **OFF-BOARD**

### *Gang Study*

**Maria Arevalo**

### *Lunch and Learn*

**Doug Chadwick**

### *Web Master*

**Stella Beratlis**

### *Office Manager*

**Myrtle Osner**

### **League Office**

**720 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Modesto**

**209-524-1698**

**www.lwvstanislaus.org**

## **President's Message:**

With the election season coming to a close and the holidays looming ahead, it is time to show our thanks to the many people who have contributed during recent months:

- ❖ We thank all the board members who have volunteered the many hours it takes to be an effective and active League.
- ❖ We thank those present at the Turlock forums; it is so refreshing to have an active audience who remind us of democracy in action! Managing the questions for 11 candidates for city council was quite an accomplishment, the camaraderie and enthusiasm among the candidates was both refreshing and encouraging. Way to go, Turlock!
- ❖ We thank Ellen Meyer who has kept all the newspapers in Stanislaus County informed in a very timely manner!
- ❖ We thank all the volunteers who have helped with the voter registration drives in Modesto, Oakdale, Salida and Turlock.
- ❖ We thank all the volunteers who have helped with the forums in Modesto, Riverbank and Turlock.
- ❖ We thank all the volunteers who have assisted with the presentations of the Pros and Cons throughout our community. With 13 propositions, there was a lot of reading and planning for those!
- ❖ And a very special thanks to Julie Saugstad, Ellen Meyer and Amy Christensen who all did an outstanding job on Andy Mendlin's "On the Docket" radio show!
- ❖ We thank the dedication of Linda Walden and Susan Cassidy. Without their diligence we could not have offered so many voter service activities this election season.
- ❖ We are thankful that we live in a country where democracy still prevails, though that democracy is a struggle and can seem muddled at times.
- ❖ Happy Thanksgiving! Please plan to attend the Holiday Fling at the home of the Fenderson's on December 4th – we will see you there!

With thanks, ***Patty Lundy***

***President, League of Women Voters of STANISLAUS COUNTY***

## **DIVERSITY POLICY:**

League of Women Voters of Modesto 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.

# STATE & NATIONAL

## POLLING PLACE INNOVATIONS

### *League of Women Voters Points to Election Modernization*

WASHINGTON, DC — The League of Women Voters today issued a report on innovative polling place practices. The League's report, entitled [Thinking Outside the Ballot Box: Innovations at the Polling Place](#), highlights some of the ways that elections officials are making it easier for voters to cast their ballots this year.

Across the country, elections officials are changing the way Americans vote. Some of the changes — such as early voting and the use of vote centers — are dramatic and obvious. Others are more subtle, involving new technologies and changes in the procedures used to get voters in and out of the polling place.

“Innovations in polling place management are among the most critical reforms,” according to Mary G. Wilson, national League president. “We hope that these stories about polling place innovations will spur all elections officials to think creatively about how to make voting easier for the American voter,” Wilson said.

“We are still voting the same way we did 150 years ago, and we don't live that way any more,” said Scott Doyle, who manages elections in Larimer County, Colorado. After analyzing voting patterns and the needs of voters in his county, Doyle developed “**vote centers**” for his county. Larimer County replaced its 143 polling places with 31 full-service vote centers where anyone in the county can vote.

“Modernization is essential,” according to Wilson. “We need these new approaches to bring more convenience to the voting process and to help boost voter participation,” she said. “Long lines and confusion at the polls must become relics of the past,” she said.

Additional examples in the League report include 1) “**early voting**” in Clark County, Nevada, where more than 40,000 residents cast their ballots before Election Day at a popular shopping center; 2) “**electronic poll books**” in Seminole County, Florida, which eliminated the use of paper poll books and connected polling places to the voter registration database; and 3) “**uniformity and statewide standards**” in Georgia, which looked to Kennesaw State University for assistance in technology testing and elections official certification.

“Elections officials are taking a fresh look at how they do their work,” said Wilson, “and that should pay off for voters and poll workers alike.” The League's report, entitled *Thinking Outside the Ballot Box: Innovations at the Polling Place*, can be found on the League's Web site at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org).

*-press release, LWV October 12, 2006*

☆☆☆☆☆ VOTE ☆☆☆☆☆ VOTE ☆☆☆☆☆ VOTE ☆☆☆☆☆

Always vote for principle, though you may vote alone, and you may cherish the sweetest reflection that your vote is never lost.

*- John Quincy Adams*

# **LUNCH AND LEARN**

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## **REPORT**

### **NEW DISTRICT ATTORNEY SEES CHALLENGES TO BE MET**

When Birgit Fladager was elected this year she had already faced the challenge of the Scott Peterson case. From that, she says, she learned the value of bringing a team together. She has been in the Stanislaus County D.A.'s Office for many years, working with the 50 attorneys allocated to them. Currently both the District Attorney's office and the courts are understaffed and constantly recruiting staff. We are authorized for three more courts, but there is no place to put them. There have been numerous changes in laws during these years. It is a far cry from her first days, pre-computer. Now everything is computerized.

This department is the only governmental prosecution authority in the county; city attorneys do not do criminal prosecution. She emphasized that the D.A.'s office does not file every case that comes to them, only those that they believe they can win. Many of the cases are gang-related. There is a victim service unit that deals with victims of violent crime that offers services including safety escorts for victims. There are special services for domestic violence victims. The child abuse unit has medical facilities on site.

The greatest challenges are the growing crime rate in Stanislaus County and the need to hire and retain attorneys to meet the needs.

The weekend after our meeting, the entire District Attorney's office moved to new quarters in the new building at 12th and I Street, replacing the inadequate present location. We wish them well.

**-Myrtle Osner, Office Manager**

Note: Our next Lunch and Learn will be in January. Until then, Happy Holidays.

# **FINANCE DRIVE**

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### **NEAR OUR GOAL, 2006 - 2007 FINANCE DRIVE**

We are \$1300 from our goal for finance drive this year. Members have been very generous in giving. If you are still considering sending a check, don't forget to designate it to the education fund if you want to take a tax deduction. Also remember that what you give will be greatly appreciated as we spread our service efforts to cover the county for the first time.

**- Joan Goldsmith, Finance Drive Director**



### **Public Relations Continued:**

Andy Mandolin was a great host, and Julie and Amy were perfect to properly represent our Local League. Hopefully we can go on the show again and continue to let our county know that we are here to support and help voters with information on the issues and that League is a great organization to join.

**-Ellen Meyer, Public Relations-Voter Editor**

## **MEMBERSHIP**

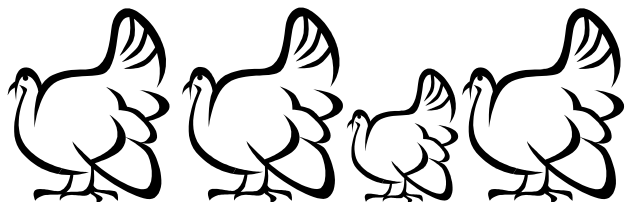
## **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

If you have not paid your dues, please do so by November 15<sup>th</sup> so to be included in our Membership Directory. The Directory will be available at our Holiday Fling, so we want all members to be listed. Thank you.

### **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**

This last month we had a new member join!  
Monica Garcia  
Welcome, we look forward to seeing you!

*- Cindy Van Empel and  
Jennie Sweeney, Membership*



### **OCTOBER BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

- Very encouraging response to Finance Drive so far
- Holiday Fling date set for Dec. 4th, 7:00 pm at the home of Lynn Fenderson
- Election Forums and Voter Registration dates arranged
- Pros & Cons distributed
- Measure K support by LWV publicized
- Approved use of new designation LWV Stanislaus County now
- New Web Site set up... [www.lwvstanislaus.org](http://www.lwvstanislaus.org)

*-Joan Patterson, Secretary*

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

☐ Student Membership \$15      ☐ Individual Membership \$50  
☐ Household Membership \$75      ☐ Please contact me with more information

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (for directory) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO:      LWVSC P.O. Box E, Modesto, CA 95352



The League of Women Voters®, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

League of Women Voters of Modesto  
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P.O. Box E  
Modesto, CA 95352  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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U.S. Postage  
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Modesto, CA  
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## ***HOLIDAY FLING***

***Monday, December 4, 2006  
7:00 PM.***

***At the Home of  
Lynn and Albion Fenderson***

***Guest Speaker:  
Margaret Randazzo, Publisher,  
The Modesto Bee***

**SEE US ON LINE! VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE!**  
**[www.lwvstanislaus.org](http://www.lwvstanislaus.org)**