



The Voter

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®] OF STANISLAUS COUNTY

October 2019

Serving the Citizens of Stanislaus County, California

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President's Message

As we enter into the fall season, we are invigorated by the change in the weather and, at least for myself, gain a renewal of energy. This fall is the time to reflect on what this country has given to you and how you can become an active participant in the community in which we live. No community is perfect, but with the coming together of various ideas and the consensus as to what is important for the place we call home, we can make a good place even better. I encourage you to take a look around you and see just what interests you and then decide to find out more about how you can make a difference by becoming involved. There are many ways that we can spend our valuable time and there is none more important than making a difference.

If you think that as an individual you do not matter, pause and look at how people come together in times of need. There certainly has been a large number of instances recently where just one person stepping forward has made a difference. I write this on the anniversary of 9/11. Our lives were forever changed that day, but the common good was what came of it also. NEVER FORGET: YOU can make a difference. Our League is looking for you to take an active role in whatever small way you can —and then join with friends and show our diverse community how we can take on a project and change for the better this place we call home.

Marsha

Training for Candidate Forums Coming Soon

League-sponsored candidate forums are among the most popular and appreciated things we do at election time. With the 2020 elections soon upon us, we expect to be very busy coordinating forums for the various electoral races. To meet demand, we have to increase the number of League members prepared to serve as moderators and/or question sorters. (We currently have just three moderators!)

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WHAT • Moderator and Question Sorter Training

WHEN • Saturday, November 2, 2019

Moderator Training – 10 to 11 AM

Question Sorter Training – 11 to 11:30 AM

WHERE • 3212 Justinpaul Lane, Modesto

PRESENTERS • Marie Bairey and George Britton (materials will be provided)

QUESTIONS or RSVP • Marie (baireymar@gmail.com, 209-523-0663) or

George (gwbritton@gmail.com, 209-551-8633)

If you are interested in being actively involved in LWV Stanislaus County voter service activities in the 2020 election season, please consider becoming a forum moderator and/or question sorter.

Notes from the September Lunch and Learn

Our September 26 Lunch and Learn speaker was Ryan Kegley, Veterans Services Officer, Manager of the Stanislaus County Veterans Services Office. Kegley shared a list of services their office provides and gave details on some of those services. He also clarified an area that I, personally, needed cleared up: their office is not a part of the federal Department of Veterans Affairs — it's a county office that advocates with the federal offices for our local veterans, surviving spouses and dependents to be sure they receive the benefits they are entitled to receive.

About 50 percent of their work is helping veterans access compensation for disability incurred as a result of military duty. They assist in preparing claims, and the most challenging part of that is finding evidence. Sometimes it has been lost or destroyed, has disappeared, or was never documented.

A long-term care benefit for in-home and assisted living is available for veterans who served in wartime and their dependents. Reimbursement is needs based, but the cost of care reduces the income calculation, so folks may be eligible who would not expect they would get that benefit. In addition to the work they do with the Veterans Benefits Administration, they can help vets connect to the Veterans Health Administration and even the Veterans Cemetery Administration. (Who knew these are actually each separate agencies?)

Kegley says walk-in appointments are available daily 9:00-3:30 with scheduled appointments on Friday afternoons. One of our members testified to the great service he's received from this office and mentioned the remarkably short wait time for a walk-in visit. Their phone is 209-558-7380, and their website is www.veteranservices.info.

Veterans Services shares a building at 3500 Coffee Road with the Area Agency on Aging and is often able to connect veterans with additional services from that agency. Kegley mentioned that the Hi-CAP (Health Insurance: Counseling and Advocacy Program³) office is very helpful in assisting Medicare recipients to select the most suitable supplemental plan.

Julie Saugstad

Mary Giventer Memorial Essay Contest

Thanks to generous contributions to honor the memory of long-time League member and former president Mary Giventer, LWVSC has created a student essay contest with an award of \$1000 each year for the next three years. The contest is open to upper-class students at CSUS with a GPA of 2.5 or above and prior civic engagement experience. Entrants will submit an essay on a topic related to the League's values and positions. The 2019 topic is the Electoral College. The deadline for applicants is October 31. The LWVSC Essay Contest Committee will select the winner. In developing this project, the League committee worked with Larry Giventer and considered Mary's passions and community contributions.

Visit our **NEW** website: <http://www.lwvstanislaus.org/>

and let us know what you think of it.



On the Calendar

Sunday, October 13 • Modesto Social Justice Block Party in partnership with several community organizations including LWVSC. It begins at 11:00 AM at Mancini Bowl, Graceada Park in Modesto and ends at 4:30 PM. LWVSC will have an information table at the event. If you can help out for an hour or so, contact Colleen Norby at colleen_norby@gmail.com.

Thursday, October 31 • MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL!! The deadline to be included in the 2019–2020 LWVSC membership directory and to continue to receive email notices and *The Voter* online is the 31st. An individual memberships is \$60; a family membership, \$90, and a student membership, \$10. Bring a check to L&L today — or send your renewal to LWVSC, P.O. Box E, Modesto 95352.

Thursday, October 31 • Lunch & Learn — At noon at Ridgway's Restaurant and Lounge, Century Center, 2401 E. Orangeburg in Modesto Heath Flora, California State Assembly member representing the 12th District, will speak about pending legislation and other matters of concern to Stanislaus County residents. He will also answer questions from the audience. The public is invited to this free event. Lunch, chef's choice, is available at \$16. (We appreciate exact change.)

Saturday, November 2 • Forum Training From 10 AM to 11:30 AM at 3212 Justinpaul Lane in Modesto. See full details at the top of page 2.

Wednesday, November 13 • LWVSC Board Meeting. 6:30 PM at Marsha's. Call if you need directions.

First Week of December • Winter Fling. Details will be forthcoming.

Thursday, January 30, 2020 • REMINDER: Lunch and Learn goes on hiatus during the months of November and December. It will resume in January.

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Meet Member Michael Fuller

When Michael Fuller, professor emeritus of French and English at Stan State, moved to Stanislaus County and got a subscription to *The Modesto Bee* (it was an afternoon paper then), he noticed the opinion pieces from the League of Women Voters and thought, "Let's see how they line up with my leanings." As it turned out, they usually agreed, and he still always consults their opinions before voting.

Many years later a friend literally dragged him to one of the annual meetings, and he discovered that many men were members of League! He's been writing checks ever since: dues and donations. "Alas," he says, "they immediately put me to work," first as chair of the annual finance drive and later as editor of *The Voter*, but he's enjoyed every moment of it.

He has been active in various Turlock organizations such as Friends of the Turlock Public Library, the Turlock Concert Association and the Carnegie Art Center. He became a first-time grandfather at the end of July.



Ramping up for the March primary:

Visit Voter's Edge

<http://votersedge.org/ca>

League of Women Voters of Stanislaus County
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