



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF SONOMA COUNTY

Volume 22 Issue 7

Visit us at www.lwvsonoma.org

October 2016

League of Women Voters of Sonoma County



Pros and Cons on the State Ballot Initiatives

Come learn what the initiatives will do if passed, who supports and who doesn't, what the legislative analysts say, and where else to gain more information.

***Rohnert Park City Hall
130 Avram Avenue
Wednesday, October 5, 2016
6-7:30 PM***

ELECTION DATES AND PROPOSITIONS AND MEASURES..

Are you trying to stay on schedule for the General Election on November 8th? Here are some helpful dates from Registrar of Voters (ROV) [Election Calendar](#) online at vote.sonoma-county.org:

Sept 29	First day sample ballots may be mailed.
Oct 10	Voting by mail (VBM) opens.
Oct 24	Deadline to Register to Vote.
Nov 1	Deadline to request VBM ballots by mail.
Nov 8	ELECTION DAY (7am to 8pm) VBM ballots must be postmarked no later than today.
Nov 11	Last day to receive VBM ballots postmarked no later than Nov 8.
Dec 8	Deadline to clarify election results.

Two other sections on the ROV website with pertinent and readily accessible information for the voter are [Voter Information Lookup](#) and [General Information](#).

What about all those propositions and measurements on the ballot?

In this election, we are facing 17 Propositions on the state ballot.

Voters are often very interested in the recommendations made by the LWV on the propositions. These recommendations can be found online at lwvc.org/vote/elections/ballot-recommendations.

There are also about 20 local measures throughout Sonoma Co, but not all of these will be on every ballot. Voters will find only those measures specifically associated with their precinct on their ballot. However, four (4) county measures on all ballots, plus one (1) more will be on all ballots in unincorporated areas. These five Measures include J, K, L, M and Y and are described below:

MEASURE J: Sonoma County Regional Parks and Water Quality Improvement

Purpose: To expand, maintain, and restore Sonoma County Parks for future generations; to preserve fish and wildlife habitat, reduce wildfire risk and increase walking, hiking and biking trails.

Main Points:

- One half cent sales tax in unincorporated Sonoma County.
- Will appear on ballots only in unincorporated areas of County.
- Expires in 10 years.
- Requires 2/3 majority of voters to pass.

MEASURE K: Community Separator Protection Ordinance

Purpose: This Ordinance will be adopted to amend the Sonoma County General Plan to require voter approval of changes to the General Plan that could increase the density or intensity of development within Community Separators in order to preserve rural open space and agricultural land, maintain community identities and prevent sprawl. It will repeal Ordinance 5145R.

Main Points:

- Is not a tax.
- Will appear on ballots of all registered voters in County.
- Expires in 20 years or on December 31, 2036
- Requires a simple majority of voters to pass.
- **Note:** LWV of Sonoma County supports Measure K.

MEASURE L: Sonoma County Tourist Tax

Purpose: Increase the transient occupancy tax from the current 9% to 12%, to be paid by ‘guests’ staying overnight at lodging facilities in unincorporated areas of the County. To provide funds for local County services including roads and emergency response.

Main Points:

- Is not a new tax; increases current tax from 9% to 12%.
- Tax paid by guests staying at overnight venues.
- On ballots of all registered voters in Sonoma County.
- Requires a simple majority of voters to pass.

MEASURE M: Sonoma County Transgenic Contamination Prevention Ordinance

Purpose: 1) Prohibit the propagation, cultivation, raising or growing of genetically engineer organisms (GMOs) in unincorporated County areas; 2) require the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner to enforce the ordinance by assessing penalties; 3) provide fines or fees for each violation.

Main Points:

- This is a citizen driven petition measure.
- Is not a tax.
- On ballots for all registered voters in Sonoma County
- Requires a simple majority of voters to pass.

MEASURE Y: Sonoma County Library

Purpose: To restore library hours; maintain, restore and enhance Library services including books and materials, to provide educational services including homework help, computer labs; to expand senior and disabled services; to keep qualified librarians. Increased spending limit to have independent audits and citizen oversight. Requires all funds go to Sonoma County Libraries.

Main Points:

- One-Eighth (1/8) cent sales tax in Sonoma County.
- On ballots of all registered voters in Sonoma County.
- Expires in 10 years.
- Requires 2/3rds majority of voters to pass.
- **Note:** LWV of Sonoma County supports Measure Y.

Voter Service Activities

Chlele Gummer, Co-Chair

This year's election season began with the Santa Rosa City Council Candidate forum scheduled on September 29th at the City Council Chambers featuring five contenders for the four seats needed. In West County two forums of high interest are planned. On October 5th the forum of the Palm Drive Health Care District Board will be held in the Graton Community Club which we co-sponsored, with the Graton Projects Group and the Graton Community Club.. Following that on October 10th is the debate between Noreen Evans and Lynda Hopkins for the district five supervisorial position on the County Board in the Sebastopol Community Center.

Two forums in Petaluma are held back to back on October 4 in the Petaluma City Council Chambers: the School Board and the City Council races. AAUW of Petaluma co-sponsored with us for both debates. On October 10th the Cloverdale City Council Candidate Forum is planned in the Cloverdale Performance Arts Theater, co-sponsored with the Chamber of Commerce.

Your Voter Service committee has also provided a Pros and Cons Presentation for the Public in the Rohnert Park City Council Chambers. It will be broadcast on KRCB on October 30 at 8:00 AM as will the Santa Rosa Candidate Forum on October 23 at 8:00 AM. Other Pros and Cons will be presented to Spring Lake Village, Unitarian Universalist Church, Oakmont, and a local Soroptomist group.

All forums are videotaped and will be broadcast on our new You Tube Channel once they are available. You can view these from our forums page <http://www.lwvsonoma.org/Forums.html>

To produce these forums and presentations takes the many members on the committee. Many thanks to all who have contributed their time and energies this election season.

LWVSC Calendar

Voter Forums

Petaluma School Board (w. AAUW)

Tuesday, October 4, 6-7:00 pm

Petaluma City Council Chambers

Petaluma City Council Candidates (w. AAUW)

Tuesday, October 4, 7:15-8:45 pm

Petaluma City Council Chambers

Ballot Measures Pros and Cons

Wednesday, October 5, 6-7:30 pm

Rohnert Park City Hall

Palm Drive Health Care District Board

Wednesday, October 5, 7:30-9:00 pm

Graton Community Center

SC District 5 Supervisorial Candidates

Monday, October 10, 6:30-7:30 pm

Sebastopol Community Center

Cloverdale City Council Candidate

Monday, October 10, 6-7:30 pm

Cloverdale Performing Arts Center Theater

Standing Meetings

Board Meeting:

1st Wednesday, 10-noon.

Voter Service Committee Meeting:

1st Thursday, 10 am.

Advocacy Committee Meeting:

2nd Wednesday, 10:30 am.

Book Club:

3rd Thursday, 10:30-noon.

See page 4 for details.

LWVSC meetings are held in the third floor Conference Room at the LWVSC office, 555 5th Street, Santa Rosa.

LWVSC Board meetings are open to all LWVSC members, and to the public upon request. All other meetings are open.

Visit our [website](#) for updated calendar information.

President's Message



From
Nancy Burrington
LWVSC President

Why Oppose Proposition 59?

The interplay of two issues that are of importance to the League has caused some members to ask: "Why oppose Proposition 59." (Constitutional Amendment Advisory Measure)

First, since Prop 59 offers a solution to big money in political campaigns and advises an overturn of the Supreme Court ruling on *Citizens United vs FEC*, on the surface one would tend to assume the League's support.

But the secondary issue is the League's evaluation of the long history of constitutional amendments. Proposing and ratifying a constitutional amendment is a long, arduous, divisive and potentially expensive process. To pass, a constitutional amendment must be proposed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote in each house of congress or by a constitutional convention requested by two-thirds (2/3) of the states and in either case must be ratified by three-quarters (3/4) of the states. The length of time allowed to ratify is usually stated in the proposal. Even though the deadline to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment was extended in the 80's, it failed to reach the required number of ratifying states.

Only one amendment has ever been overturned by convention—the prohibition on the sale of alcohol (overturned by Amendment XXI).

Since the *Citizens United* ruling, 14 resolutions to amend have been introduced in congress, which have varied considerably in their wording and intent. All have had an overriding interest in countering the negative effects of unlimited independent political expenditures (those not given directly to candidates or campaigns).

The League has considered in depth the wording of Proposition 59 and finds uncertainty and concern with its wording that any amendment should "Make clear that corporations should not have the same constitutional rights as people." This wording, which removes "personhood" from all corporations, invites many legal challenges to its interpretation. Many non-profit organizations are corporations including the League of Women Voters. Also newspapers, twitter and other social media outlets are corporations. This wording may remove their fourth amendment rights to the freedom of speech.

After consideration, the position of the League is based on its own study and the belief that legislative action will result in more success. There is also the possibility that reexamination of the issues embedded in the *Citizens United* ruling could be reinterpreted in future cases presented to a full or changed Supreme Court.

It is also worth considering the other argument made by opponents of Prop 59 that allowing an advisory measure on the ballot that requires no action is a bad precedent. Will it not open the door to a flood of other "advisory measures" in the future? Governor Jerry Brown, while commending the legislature for its commitment to controlling campaign spending, also spoke against "ballot clutter" and allowed the proposal to go on the ballot without his signature.



Board Briefs-September, 2016

Rebecca Jones

LWVSC Secretary

- Treasurers report: National and California dues have increased. It will be decided next Spring whether to increase our local dues.
- The VP of Administration position is still unfilled. An effort will be made to fill this position soon.
- Executive Committee and Nominating Committee members were finalized.
- There was a discussion on increasing the participation on the Advocacy Committee. Specifics will be discussed once the election is over.
- It was decided that the League was in support of the Sonoma County pension reform efforts under the position of open government. A editorial letter to the Press Democrat will be submitted.
- The Board approved the support of Measure Y, the library tax measure. An Action Alert will be sent out.
- There will be a presentation at the next Advocacy meeting on the Measure K, Open Space. At that time, it will be decided if the League will support the Measure.
- Voter Service: There are a number of forums and Pros and Cons meetings

scheduled for September and October. Publicity for the public Pros and Cons in Rohnert Park was discussed.

- Membership renewals have gone well. The new roster will be published this month.
- There is a lot of effort being made to get information and recommendations put together for the many
- state and local initiatives and measures on the ballot.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rebecca Jones

Advocacy Notes

Gene Zingarelli

Advocacy Committee Chair

action@lwvsonoma.org

From the meeting of Sept.14. Teri Shore of the Greenbelt Alliance presented the Community Separators Measure K. Given its extension of currently-approved separators and additional farm and hilly acreage, the committee advised the league board to endorse the measure. DeeDee Bridges, member of the S.R. Mayor's Open Government Task Force reported that the newly-appointed Community Engagement Director has resigned and must be replaced with someone who knows the community well. DeeDee, also a member of the Homelessness Task Force, is asking to be replaced on the Task Force. If you are interested in hearing more about the Homeless Task Force position, she may be contacted at ddbhere@gmail.com.

“Encouraging the Informed and Active Participation of Citizens”



Lee Lipinski helping to register a new voter.

On Friday, September 23rd, the League of Women Voters set up a voter registration table at the Sonoma County Head Start Program’s registration festival. There was a mostly Latino crowd with adults and their children enjoying food, games and other activities. Many were already registered and some were not eligible. Occasionally, folks stayed by our table just to talk politics of this election period, especially the presidential election. Most were very concerned and the organizers want us to return next year.



Fran Devoto Dixon on Nation Voter Registration Day

September 27, National Voter Registration Day, Fran Devoto Dixon and Lee Lipinski set up a table at a shopping mall in Roseland, reaching out to a mainly Latino population of Santa Rosa. It was a busy shopping day. Many people proudly said they were already registered. Others stopped to have a conversation about national politics. It was great fun and the time flew by.



Alice Richardson moderates the forum for Santa Rosa City Council candidates Jack Tibbets, Ernesto Oliveres, Chris Rogers, Brandi Asker, Julie Combs, and Don Taylor, carefully timed by Anita Lytle and Chlele Gummer.

On the World Wide Web

For Every 10 U.S. Adults, Six Vote and Four Don't. What Separates Them? [Click here to find out.](#)
A mere 8% of California youths voted in the last election; CSU will try to change that. [Click here to find out how.](#)

You will find these links and many other interesting things if you follow the League on Facebook. Learn about upcoming Forums, other events, and LWV issues.



Like us on Facebook! We'd be glad to be one of your friends!



And for election information, go to Voters' Edge.

Book Club Reads

October 20: Moderated by Sukey Robb-Wilder.

The Girls of Atomic City by Denise Kiernan,
416 pages, 2014

At the height of World War II, Oak Ridge, Tennessee, was home to 75,000 residents, and consumed more electricity than New York City, yet it was shrouded in such secrecy that it did not appear on any map. What were they actually *doing* there? Very few knew. The purpose of this mysterious government project was kept a secret from the outside world and from the majority of the residents themselves. The women who kept this town running would find out at the end of the war, when Oak Ridge's secret was revealed and changed the world forever. "A phenomenal story," and *Publishers Weekly* called it an "intimate and revealing glimpse into one of the most important scientific developments in history."

Note: This is a change from the original list.

LWVSC Board of Directors

Nancy Burrington, **President**

Open, **VP Administration**

Gene Zingarelli, **VP Advocacy**

Rebecca Jones, **Secretary**

Terry Wall, **Treasurer**

Carrie Anabo, **Membership Chair**

DeeDee Bridges and Nancy Richards,

Media Outreach

Chlele Gummer and Lee Lipinski,

Voter Service

Anita Lytle, **Program**

Susan Rouder, **Member-at-large**

Juanita Roland, **Editor**

Because of privacy concerns, we do not include email addresses for the Board in the Voter. Readers can find email addresses in the directory or they can send email to Board Members from the contact us page of the LWVSC website.

www.lwvsonoma.org

Connect with the League



LWVSC

www.lwvsonoma.org

www.facebook.com/lwvsonomacounty

LWV of Bay Area

<http://www.lwvbayarea.org>

LWV of California

www.ca.lwv.org

LWV of the United States

www.lwv.org

<https://www.facebook.com/leagueofwomenvoters>

Voter's Edge

<http://votersedge.org/en/ca>

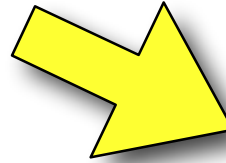
Addresses of Members Only websites are in the front of the LWVSC directory.

Remember to sign up for email alerts and newsletters when you visit these websites.

Tell us what you think!
Send in your comments,
questions, and
suggestions.
Email, snail-mail, or call!

We want to hear from you!

Become a Member of the LWV of Sonoma County



Make a DONATION

or

Fill out the form below and mail it to us at:

League of Women Voters Sonoma County
555 5th Street, Suite 300 O
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SONOMA COUNTY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

Name _____
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Memberships Levels

<i>Susan B. Anthony</i> Individual Membership	\$60
<i>Student/ Limited Income</i> Individual Membership	\$40
<i>Amelia Bloomer</i> Household Membership	\$90
<i>Elizabeth Cady Stanton</i> Membership	\$100
<i>Carrie Chapman Catt</i> Membership	\$200 or more

**Membership dues and donations
are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law**

I am interested in the following areas:

Program	Membership	Speakers Bureau
Social Policy	Natural Resources	Voter Service
Newsletter	Fundraising	Cable TV
Smart Voter	Community Outreach	Website

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We do not support or oppose any political party or any candidate. We do, however, take action on selected government issues in the public interest.

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