



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SONOMA COUNTY

Volume 12, No. 1

February 2007

THE BIG BANG

A theater party benefiting The League of Women Voters of Sonoma County and the American Association of University Women’s Educational Foundation and Legal Advocacy Fund

**Wednesday, March 7, 2007
6th Street Playhouse
52 West 6th Street
Santa Rosa**

Wine, dessert and socializing begin at 7:15 PM. Curtain is at 8:00 PM.

The Big Bang is a wacky musical with members of the audience cast as potential producers for the ambitious idea of two men who, to piano accompaniment, present the bones of a musical purporting to cover the history of the world. Should an angel be found, the full production would cost \$82 million and demand a cast of over 300. The songs are political, politically incorrect, and filled with puns.

Angels for our event include Edward Keiner, Architect, and Karen Contos, Certified Financial Planner.

League and AAUW have reserved the entire house for this dress rehearsal, which may prove to be even more entertaining than the final production.

Reservations are required and are \$25 each. Send your check to The League Office, 100 E Street, Suite 209, Santa Rosa, CA 95404. For reservations that benefit the League, make your check out to the League of Women Voters Education Fund. For reservations that benefit AAUW, make your check out to The AAUW Educational Foundation.



Argo Thompson from Fully Committed

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of Sonoma County**

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Chlele Gummer, Secretary
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Carol Adams, Voter Outreach

VOTER Team:

Helen Sundergill, VOTER Editor
Marsha Vas Dupre
May Huddleston
Betty Keefauver
Caroline Ramberg
Nancy Richards

BOOK CLUB CORNER

League members and the public are invited to join the book group at 10:30 AM on Thursday, February 15, for a discussion of *Dark Star Safari: Overland from Cairo to Cape Town* by Paul Theroux. The group will meet in the League office, Suite 209, 100 E Street, Santa Rosa.



Theroux is a prolific author of both fiction and non-fiction, particularly travel books. *Dark Star Safari* deals with a trip across Africa by the means Africans might use—train, “chicken bus,” and dugout canoe. Theroux brings to the trip knowledge of some African languages, the experience of having lived and taught in Malawi and in Uganda during the ‘60s, and a keen sense of irony. You can learn more about Theroux and his books at his website <http://www.paultheroux.com>.



Paul Theroux

The book list for the coming months can be downloaded in PDF format from the [calendar page](#) of the LWVSC Web site, www.lwvsonoma.org. Check *The Voter* or the Web site for the place of a particular meeting, since, although the group usually meets in the office, occasionally it meets elsewhere.

If you have questions about the book group, please call or send me a message.

Lynda Hungerford
539-5770
info@lwvsonoma.org

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS STUDY
GROUP**

The International Relations study group will meet on Tuesday, February 13, at 12 NOON in the Santa Rosa League office. It is a brown-bag lunch session.

The topic for discussion will be “**Middle East.**” Although the U.S. will remain engaged in Iraq for at least the next year, other factors have emerged to challenge stability in the region. Iran's nuclear program, the outcome of the conflict in Lebanon, and Israeli-Palestinian negotiations will all play a key role. How will these issues shape the Middle East?

The group meets the second Tuesday of the month. The topics are selected from the *Great Decisions* briefing book published by the Foreign Policy Association in New York City. All members and friends are welcome to join the group discussion, with or without the briefing book. We also refer to the most current news items and articles pertaining to the discussion topic.

The topics for 2007 will be: **Middle East, Climate Change, Mexico, Migration, South Africa, War Crimes, Central Asia, and Children.**

If anyone has a question about the group, please contact me at 769-8826.

Rosalie Gillmore

SPECIAL THANKS

I would like to extend a special thanks to Jack Dupre for all his help in getting the February *VOTER* put together this month. Without his help, it would not have been possible to get the *VOTER* out on schedule.

Helen Sundergill
VOTER Editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our Midwinter Brunch and Silent Auction was a great success! I would like to thank all of you who attended the event. The committee, Phyllis and Bob Clement, Janie Hawker and Olive Horrell worked tirelessly to collect auction items and organize the delicious brunch. Thank you to Sandy Benson for her wonderful hospitality. Her lovely home offered us a beautiful setting for our event.



At the program planning meeting this month, we will be looking for your ideas for the coming year. If you have any special interests, please let me know so we can discuss them at the meeting. Our nominating committee will begin contacting members soon to ask for support for our activities. We have a very diverse and interesting membership and planning for our interests is very important.

Don't forget to make your reservation for the theater party at the Sixth Street Playhouse on March 7th. We are sharing the venue with AAUW, so, we have a pretty good chance to fill the house. The past performances have proven to be very good and this one, *The Big Bang*, promises to follow the pattern. I look forward to seeing you there.

Carol Ann Fontana-Cary

STATE AND LOCAL PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING

February 10, Saturday

10 AM to 12:00 NOON

Oakmont Berger Center, Room G

(Directions below)

Every two years, all members are invited to help set the agenda for the LWVC for the upcoming biennium. Each League member has the opportunity to influence the selection of the issues upon which the State League will focus its time, talent and money.

Our meeting will be divided into three parts: a review of existing LWVC positions to see if changes are needed; the selection of our League's recommendations for priorities in the coming biennium; and formation of our own local program. Our recommendations may be for a new state study or update; community education on important issues; and/or advocacy based on existing LWVC or LWVUS positions.

Part I: Review Current State Positions

It is helpful to be familiar with some definitions:

RETAIN: Members decide to keep a position because it is still relevant.

DROP: Position is no longer useful in its present form or is not supported by most members. Action on this position will end. Any future action at state or local levels of League using this position would require a new study.

STUDY: The process of gathering information for discussion by members with the aim of reaching consensus and establishing a position.

UPDATE: A study of limited scope to reevaluate an existing position in light of new information, changed circumstances, and/or conflict with another League position. The goal is consideration of a change in position.

PART II: Planning the 2007-2009 State Program Emphasis

As we consider program emphasis, we look at two components: *State Study* and *Issues for Education and Advocacy*.

If we wish to have an issue from our League selected for a **new study** or for **concurrence** at the 2007 Convention, we will need to review some new procedures and follow them carefully.

An **Issue for Education and Advocacy** adopted by convention delegates is the recommendation to the incoming LWVC board as to the League's focus for its state agenda for the coming two years.

We will record our comments and send them to LWVC.

PART III: Local Program Planning

There are some very interesting ideas being followed by our members. This meeting gives all of us an opportunity to set our program for the coming year. We will consider LWVUS and LWVC proposed programs and decide how we wish to balance our resources in terms of time and energy.

After reviewing our local positions, we will need to decide how we want to allocate our efforts. Do we want to launch a new local study? Do we want to emphasize education and advocacy for our current positions? I would like us to organize our efforts in such a way as to encourage more member participation at the committee level so that we will have a vibrant and attractive program next year.

Please join us at this meeting. Your input is necessary.

Thank you.

Carol Ann Fontana-Cary

Directions to Oakmont Berger Center:

- Take Highway 12 east to Oakmont Drive.
- Turn right on Oakmont Drive, go to the 2nd stop sign and turn left on White Oak Drive.
- The Center is on this corner. The first driveway on the right is to the parking lot.

WATER POLICY

Heads Up!

Recent articles on water in the press make it pertinent to review the League positions on water.

Briefly, some of our updated positions are to **support measures which:**

- Set and enforce standards for groundwater management with local, basin, or regional development and implementation of plans tailored to the carrying capacity and characteristics of each basin.
- Promote the management and development of water resources in ways that are beneficial to the environment with emphasis on conservation and high standards of water quality that are appropriate for the intended use.
- Coordinate water resource planning with land use planning and provide for future needs without encouraging growth.
- Provide for assessment of economic, social and environmental costs and benefits of water projects.
- Develop and maintain a statewide inventory of ground and surface water supplies and a centralized database to evaluate current and potential needs, demands and uses.



Phyllis Stanley

LWV Representative to the Sonoma County Water Coalition

APRIL PROGRAM FEATURES TRUDY SCHAFER

Trudy Schafer, Program Director of LWV California, is coming to Sonoma County!

Please reserve Saturday, April 21, for this very informative program. The tentative time is 10 AM to 12 NOON.

She will bring us up to date on the happenings in Sacramento.

Liz Hawthorne

Co-chair, Program

SANTA ROSA DOWNTOWN STATION AREA SPECIFIC PLAN

Over a year ago, the City of Santa Rosa received a half-million dollar grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to prepare a Specific Plan for the area surrounding the proposed SMART station in Railroad Square. The draft of the specific plan is now available for public comment on the website www.stationareaplan.net under Project Documents.



Conceptual Illustration of Performing Arts Center and New City Hall along Santa Rosa Creek

This Specific Plan is a significant event in planning for the future of Santa Rosa. League members interested in this topic are encouraged to read this plan and attend a public meeting at 6:30 PM on January 31 at the Hyatt Vineyard Creek Hotel and Conference Center. The EIR for this plan is scheduled for release in late January.

A forum entitled "Creating Great Communities Near Transit" took place January 18 to help educate the public about this planning process. Former LWVSC President and City Councilmember Susan Gorin moderated, and the speakers were Jeffrey Tumlin - Nelson-Nygaard Transportation Consulting Associates, Bruce Hammond - U.S. Green Building Council, Laura Hall - Fisher & Hall Urban Design, and Mary Murtagh - EAH Housing Corporation.

The LWVSC has arranged to have this forum broadcast on Community Media Center of Santa Rosa's Channel 69 and also rebroadcast almost every day from January 19 to February 11. To find a time convenient for you to watch this forum, go to the CMC program guide at www.communitymedia.org and use the binocular icon to search for LWV, or send an email to me asking for the schedule. If you do not receive Comcast cable in Santa Rosa, I can loan you a DVD of this forum.

Major changes are underway in Downtown Santa Rosa. Citizen participation and comments can help shape them.

Willard Richards

Action Chair

REPORT ON JUVENILE JUSTICE INTEREST GROUP (JJIG)

Since July when a group of four LWV members met with Jessalyn Nash, Executive Director of Restorative Resources, we have been meeting about twice a month.

With the League's much valued support and approval of JJIG as a study group, we have met with Judge Arnold Rosenfield who gave us an excellent overview of the Sonoma County Juvenile Justice System (JJS), and recently we were given a two-hour tour of Juvenile Hall.

Gradually we are gathering information to build a thorough understanding of how the system works and how it inter-relates with all the other facets - Probation, Education, Human Services, Health Services (including Mental Health), the District Attorney's Office and more. Next we will be meeting with some of the Commissioners of the Juvenile Justice Commission.

With the objective of increasing public awareness of the JJS, we plan to hold a public forum on Saturday, March 24. Our hope is to encourage community involvement and support of the JJS and to identify where change is needed, from positive treatment of first offenders to rehabilitation and re-entry into their communities of offenders who have been through the system.

There are six of us in the core group, meeting regularly, and we have an email list of others who are interested in this work. We encourage anyone, LWV members or not, who would like to be included in either category to contact us, as it is a vast project and one that we hope may have a positive effect on the Juvenile Justice System of Sonoma County.

E. Ann Berens



Program chairs, Liz Hawthorne (left) and Sandy De Lormier (right) meet to plan LWV programs for the rest of the year.
Photo by Carol Adams

BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY Vision for the Future of the Bay Area: Focus on Housing

Saturday, January 27, 2007
Oak Room, San Mateo City Library
55 West Third Ave., San Mateo
Registration and Refreshments 10 AM
Program 10:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Keynote: John King, Urban Design writer, San Francisco Chronicle

"Successful Smart Growth Design for the Bay Area"

Panels:

Bay Area Focusing Our Vision project - Refining regional smart growth criteria, identifying Priority Development Areas and Priority Conservation Areas, and schedule to confirm agreement by local agencies within the region.

Speakers: Ken Kirkey, ABAG Interim Planning Director; Bettina Ring, Open Space Council; and a local elected official from the regional Joint Policy Committee

New Round of Regional Housing Needs Allocations and Housing Element Updates - Information on legislative changes; criteria for local or sub-regional allocations of affordable housing; and schedule for Housing Element updates.

Speakers: Gillian Adams, Regional Planner; Duane Bay, San Mateo County Housing Director; and a speaker from Non-Profit Housing Association of Northern California (NPH).

Final program will be available on our website www.lwvba.ca.lwvnet.org. Cost will be \$10 per person. RSVP to Tam Hege, Treasurer, at treasurer@lwvba.ca.lwvnet.org.

DIRECTIONS

FROM THE NORTH: Go South on Highway 280. Take the Highway 92 exit going east. Continue on 92 to the El Camino North exit, turning off onto El Camino. Take El Camino to Third Avenue and turn left.

FROM THE SOUTH: Go North on Highway 280. Take the Highway 92 exit going east. Continue on 92 to the El Camino North exit, turning off onto El Camino. Take El Camino to Third Avenue and turn left.

FROM THE EAST BAY: Take Highway 880 to Highway 92 (Hayward-San Mateo Bridge). Cross the bridge, continuing on 92 until the El Camino North exit. Exit onto El Camino, continuing to Third Avenue, and turn left onto Third.

BOARD BRIEFS

January 2, 2007

President Corol Ann Fontana-Cary appointed Olive Horrell, Membership Chair, and Ethel Schy, Board Member at Large, to be on the Nominating Committee for this year's election of officers.

Corol Ann recommended that members read the National League website to remain current on the latest information on immigration as it will be a study for us in the near future. She announced that we received a letter of thanks from the Open Space District for our support for their cause in the November election. She also reminded us that we are responsible for Legislative interviews of newly elected persons.

Willard Richards, Action Chair, reported that Caroline Ramburg read her letter upholding the voluntary spending limits the Santa Rosa City Council was reviewing at a December council meeting. Even so, the council voted to eliminate those limits. Willard expects this to be an issue in the next election.

George Ellman, Transportation Chair, reported that the County Planning Commission endorsed the Mayacamas Mountain Ordinance, which was modeled after the Sonoma Mountain Ordinance. He wants to send a letter of recommendation that League should be represented in the group that does the California redistricting to the California State League. He will enlist the ideas of other board members in the formulation of the letter using email.

Chlele Gummer
Secretary

MISSION
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 policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



League of Women Voters® of Sonoma County Membership Application

Name
Address
City
Zip Telephone
Fax Email

I am interested in the following areas:
Program Membership
Speakers Bureau Social Policy
Natural Resources Voters Service
Newsletter Fundraising
Cable TV Smart Voter
Community Outreach Website

Yes, I want to join the League of Women Voters. Enclosed is my check for dues. (\$60.00 for individual annual membership, \$90.00 for household, and \$40.00 for limited income. The membership year is July 1 to June 30.) Please mail check to LWV Sonoma County, 100 E Street, Suite 209, Santa Rosa, CA 95404. Thank you.

THANKS TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

"Thank you to all who have contributed to our League since July 1, 2006. Your donations have made all the difference in the world to the work we are able to do."
Corol Ann Cary, President

Member Contributions

Mildred Benioff
Barbara Biebush
Ellen Brosbe Ellen
Corol Ann Fontana-Cary
George and Lymona
Castleberry
Myrtle & David Cox
William Dacus
Joan Dickerson
Patricia Eliot
Andrea English
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click on "Membership" or "Volunteers"



HURRY TO THE MUSEUM AND REMEMBER WHY YOU LOVE PEANUTS! © 1997

FEBRUARY 2007 CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are open to the public.

Date	Time	Place	Description
Saturday January 27	10:30 AM - 1:30 PM	San Mateo City Library Oak Room 55 West Third Ave, San Mateo	Bay Area League Day See p. 5.
Tuesday February 6	10:00 AM - 12 NOON	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Board Meeting League members are welcome. Board meetings are not open to the public.
Saturday February 10	10:00 AM - 12 NOON	Oakmont Berger Center Room G Oakmont	State and Local Program Planning Meeting See p. 3.
Tuesday February 13	12 NOON	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 <i>Santa Rosa</i>	International Relations Study Group Middle East See p. 2.
Thursday February 15	10:30 AM	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Book Club <i>Dark Star Safari: Overland from Cairo to Cape Town</i> by Paul Theroux See p. 2.
Tuesday February 20	10:00 AM	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Action Committee

Please consult the web calendar - <http://www.lwvsonoma.org/calendar.html> for any additional meeting times and locations.