



# The VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF SONOMA COUNTY

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February 2009

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## WATER – CALIFORNIA’S NEW GOLD

Bay Area League Day  
Saturday, January 31, 2009  
Oakland



Bay Area League Day is always a day packed with up to date information about current issues presented by excellent speakers. See the January VOTER for details and plan to

attend. If you wish to carpool, contact Nancy Richards, NancyR@sonic.net or call 575-7160. We should leave about 7:30 AM.

## CONSENSUS MEETING NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT

Saturday – February 21, 2009  
10:30 AM – Noon  
Windsor Public Library  
9291 Old Redwood Highway

Since 1970 the League has advocated for direct election of the President by popular vote. The approach to achieve this required a constitutional amendment; a procedure that once initiated would take years to wend its way through the state legislatures before being enacted.



The National League is now conducting a mini-study on an alternative proposal, the National Popular Vote Compact. On February 21, our local League will present a program to explain the Compact and to present the pros and cons of the issue. We will then reach consensus on questions posed by the National League.

Read a brief explanation of the Compact inside on page 3. Check out the background information, full text of the compact, arguments for and against and consensus questions to be discussed at our February 21 meeting by going on line at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) . Point to FOR MEMBERS on the blue bar and then click on Projects and Programs on the drop-down menu. Then click on National Popular Vote Compact Study on the right sidebar. This will bring up a page with links to all this information.

Plan to attend this consensus meeting and make your voice heard. Participate in the process the League uses to adopt positions that become the basis for advocacy.

**The League of Women Voters  
of Sonoma County**

100 E Street, Suite 209  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404  
707-546-5943

[league@lwvsonoma.org](mailto:league@lwvsonoma.org)  
<http://www.lwvsonoma.org/>

See CONTACT US page to email Directors

Directors on the Executive Committee

Chlele Gummer, President  
Gloria Norton, VP Administration  
Susannah Likins, Treasurer  
Phyllis Stanley, VP Action/Advocacy  
Carol Adams, Past President

Directors:

Elaine Book, Secretary  
DeeDee Bridges, Voters Service  
Sandy deLorimier, VP Program  
George Ellman, Bay Area Representative  
Nancy and Willard Richards, VOTER Editors  
Ethel Schy, Membership

**BOOK GROUP**

League members and the public are invited to join the book group at 10:30 AM, Thursday, February 19, for a discussion of *Democracy in the States: Experiments in Election Reform*, edited by Bruce Cain and others. The book group will meet in the League office, 100 E Street, Suite 209, Santa Rosa.

Cain is Heller Professor of Political Science and Director of the UC Washington Center. He is much published, much consulted, and a recipient of the Zale Award for Outstanding Achievement in Policy Research and Public Service.

*Democracy in the States* is a collection of essays which evaluate various kinds of election reforms that have been implemented in the several states, including early voting, term limits, multimember districts, and redistricting reforms.

The book group meets on the third Thursday of the month except for the months of July and December. You can download the schedule of books to be read from the calendar listing for the group on the League's Website, [www.lwvsonoma.org](http://www.lwvsonoma.org).

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

*Lynda Hungerford*  
539-5770 [league@lwvsonoma.org](mailto:league@lwvsonoma.org)

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**



In January your Board hit the ground running and the new year started in earnest with the Theater Party and the Program Planning meeting. I thank them and all of you who helped with these League events. In the next couple of months, we have many other

activities to work on and we need more help from you, our members.

In February, we need to interview our legislators. This involves a short meeting to organize our questions and then 30 minutes to meet with the legislator. The chairperson, an experienced member, conducts the interview. A member acts as secretary and records the comments, later compiling them and sending them to the State League. We will be looking for new members to accompany the chairperson. Wouldn't you like to meet your legislator in person?

Also, we have been asked by our National League to 'do' a study of the National Popular Vote Compact. This is a mini-study which involves a committee of five or so to study the three papers on the website, and then present the information at a meeting of the members where there will be a discussion of issue. Consensus questions will then be considered. The time required would be one or two committee meetings to study the issue in depth, present the issue to the membership, assist in the discussion of the issue, and to help the membership reach a consensus on the Compact. Wouldn't you like to take part in a study?

Coming up in March will be interviews with a newsperson and one of our US legislators. Another important activity, which we may do this spring, is a forum focusing on election issues that may be on the ballot. At a forum we need people to be there to help with the audience, ushering, taking questions, etc.

These are opportunities for you to learn what League is about. How about stepping forward and volunteering for these one-time events. By helping your Board, not only do you learn new skills, but you also help make us more effective in our community. I hope when we call, you will say yes.

*Chlele Gummer, President*  
707-537-1207: [chleleg@sonic.net](mailto:chleleg@sonic.net)

## NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT

The League has a long-standing position in support of the direct election of the President by popular vote. In 1970 the League of Women Voters of the United States adopted a position stating, in part, that "the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government." The approach at that time was to amend the Constitution to eliminate the Electoral College. Decades of lobbying for this have been unsuccessful.

The League is now conducting a mini-study to reach consensus on an alternative proposal, the National Popular Vote Compact. States that legislatively enact the NPV Compact would agree that their state electors would vote for the individual that received the most votes nationwide on the condition that enough states have signed the Compact that those states collectively have a majority of the Electoral College votes. The NPV Compact includes procedural provisions to help assure smooth functioning of the agreement – conditions that deal with states deciding to withdraw from the Compact at the last moment, enforcement issues, and recounts.

The NPV Compact does not require a Constitutional amendment because the Electoral College is preserved, and the Constitution grants each state the right to determine how its Electors are selected. When states that have a total of at least 270 electoral votes join the Compact, the popular vote count from all 50 states and the District of Columbia would be added together to determine who receives the electoral votes from those states.

Currently four states, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland and New Jersey have passed legislation to enact the NPV Compact. In August, 2008, both houses of the California legislature approved the NPV Compact bill and sent it the Governor.

The LWVSC will participate in this National mini-study during its February meeting described on the front page. After a presentation on the National Popular Vote Compact and a opportunity to ask questions, local League members will discuss and reach consensus on a list of questions provided by the National League. Directions for obtaining more information on the NPV Compact are on the front page.

*Nancy Richards*

## ALL TIME RECORD FOR SMARTVOTER.ORG



SmartVoter.org set a number of records in the general election, providing well over nine million Web page views in six states (California, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and

Massachusetts). This broke the single-election record by more than two million page views. Records were also set within California, by far and away the largest segment of the Web site and a majority of SmartVoter.org's visitors.

Voters requested more than 800,000 "My Ballot" lookups and at least 180,000 page views related to basic voting procedures, voter registration information and specific information for new voters. Eighty-six and one-half percent of California's registered voters were located in participating counties where all local contests and ballot measures were listed on SmartVoter.org and where local candidates were invited to post additional biographical information and descriptions of their positions on vital community issues.

Our Sonoma County League is so fortunate in having Lynda Hungerford to keep local information up to date on the SmartVoter web site.

## THEATER PARTY – A SUCCESS

The theater party of January 14 was a big success. Joining with the Leadership Institute for Ecology and the Economy worked out very well. The League sold 58 tickets and more than 100 seats were filled, which made a great audience. Many thanks to Susannah Likins and Alexandra Benson for organizing the evening including food and beverages.

The Leadership Institute supplied real glasses, plates and cups so we generated little waste. Something we should strive for at all our events. The two groups were a great mix and we are looking forward to possibly joining forces again next year

*Nancy Richards*

## SONOMA COUNTY CHILD CARE PLANNING COUNCIL

The Child Care Planning Council, coordinated by Carol Simmons, serves as a forum to address the child care needs in Sonoma County. Its mission is "to advise, advocate and plan for quality accessible and affordable child care services in Sonoma County."

It has been my privilege to represent our local League and be a part of this Council for the last 3 years, but the time has come for me to step down. I feel good about having taken part in:

1- Bringing more focus on older children with three new Council members representing programs serving school-children.

2- Proposing a committee to focus on older children, particularly juvenile offenders and foster children, which was included as a focus for 2008-09.

3- Supporting an Outreach Committee focusing for this year on violence prevention activities in child care settings from newborn to school age.

4- Advocating for a focus on protecting funding for child care with an emphasis on school age care, which was adopted as an Advocacy Priority for 2008-09.

This is a vital organization which helps assure the well being of our children in Sonoma County. I hope that a League member will step forward to represent League on this important Council. Please contact me if you have questions.

*Ann Berens*

## NEW MEMBERS

### LOCAL MEMBER

Complete contact information has been deleted in this website version of The VOTER to preserve privacy.

Cheryl Scholar  
Windsor CA 95492

### ROSTER CHANGE

Elaine Tannenbaum

## ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

The Advocacy/Action Committee will be seeking ways to cooperate with the Climate Protection Campaign during the coming months. The idea of "Transition Towns" was introduced as a possible study linking Global Warming and Peak Oil. We will be represented at the Santa Rosa Mayor's meeting on green building, which is supporting retrofitting on a local basis.

New member, Pat Geis, agreed to represent the LWVSC on the SC Water Coalition Board. With interest and possible action, we are following the development of the National Popular Vote study, the Campaign Finance Reform movement, and the state Health Care Reform.

*Phyllis Stanley*

## BOARD BRIEFS

Board was reminded that February 14 is the birthday of the League, 89 this year.

Board will consider participating in the National Popular Vote mini-study. A chair and committee are needed. Results are due May 1.

It was decided to have a League table at the Sonoma County Conservation Council awards dinner in March. Phyllis Stanley will organize the table.

The resignation of Ann Berens as League representative on the Sonoma County Child Care Planning Council was accepted with regret. Ann has served on the Council for 3 years and has represented the League exceedingly well.

C. Gummer has designated various Board members to present positions at the Program Planning Meeting January 24.

Janie Hawker has notified the Board that she is unable to continue as Hospitality Chair. Janie has worked tirelessly for a number of years to supply refreshments at so many of our meetings. We will sorely miss her tasty treats.

Board was reminded that the League's email list cannot be used to send out meeting announcements for other organizations.

*Nancy Richards*



There's something special in your own backyard.

Be a part of it!  
Become a member.  
Become a volunteer.

For Membership call Emily  
@ 579-4452 # 108  
To Volunteer call Kristi  
@ 579-4452 ext. 116

or visit [www.SchulzMuseum.org](http://www.SchulzMuseum.org)  
click on "Membership" or "Volunteers"



HURRY TO THE MUSEUM AND REMEMBER WHY YOU LOVE PEANUTS!

### LEAGUE WEBSITES

#### USEFUL RESOURCES

Back issues of The VOTER, a complete copy of the positions of our local League, and much more information, is available on the two websites for our local League:

[lwvsonoma.org](http://lwvsonoma.org) and [members.lwvsonoma.org](http://members.lwvsonoma.org)

All levels of the League, local, Bay Area, State, and National have websites listed on page 4 of the current Membership Roster. Consult them to learn about, and to support, League action and advocacy.

### MISSION

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.



## 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.

The League of Women Voters  
of Sonoma County  
100 E Street, Suite 209  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

NON-PROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
SANTA ROSA, CA  
PERMIT NO. 65

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Time Dated Material

The VOTER, a publication of The League of Women Voters® of Sonoma County, is published monthly except during the summer, i.e. ten regular issues per year. The deadline is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding the issue month.

## FEBRUARY 2009 CALENDAR

*Unless otherwise noted, meetings are free and open to the public.*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Description</b>
Saturday January 24	10:00 AM to Noon	31 D Street, Santa Rosa Parking at City Hall	<b>Program Planning Meeting</b> See January VOTER
Saturday January 31	9:00 AM to 2:00 PM	MetroCenter Auditorium 101 Eighth St., Oakland	<b>Bay Area League Day. Water: California's New Gold</b> See January VOTER
Monday February 2	1:00 PM	League Office	<b>Juvenile Justice Interest Group Meeting</b> First and third Mondays
Tuesday February 3	10:00 AM to Noon	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	<b>LWVSC Board Meeting</b> First Tuesday League members only except by invitation
Thursday February 5	10:00 AM	League Office	<b>Voter Service Meeting</b> First Thursday
Thursday February 12	10:00 AM	League Office	<b>Action/Advocacy Meeting</b> Second Thursday
Monday February 16	1:00 PM	League Office	<b>Juvenile Justice Interest Group Meeting</b> First and third Mondays
Tuesday February 17	10:00 AM	League Office	<b>Membership Committee</b> Third Tuesday
Thursday February 19	10:30 AM	League Office	<b>Book Group.</b> See page 2 Third Thursday
Saturday February 21	10:30 AM to Noon	Windsor Library – on the Green 9291 Old Redwood Highway	<b>February Meeting.</b> Consensus on the National Popular Vote Compact

Check out the League website: [www.lwvsonoma.org](http://www.lwvsonoma.org) for correct dates and times for meetings and for back issues of The VOTER.