



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SONOMA COUNTY

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May 2006

According to a recent Pew Research Center Report on how people get political news, **the Internet is now on par with such traditional outlets as public television broadcasts**, Sunday news programs and the weekly news magazines. Young people are abandoning mainstream sources of election news and increasingly going to alternative outlets.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO SAVE POSTAGE AND PRINTING COSTS FOR THE LEAGUE?

Request that the VOTER *not* be mailed to your household.

The LWVSC VOTER has been posted on the web since September of 2003 and there are several advantages over the mailed version.



It's available about one week earlier than the print version—typically seven days before month's end. An email will be sent to you when it is available.

It's in **color!**

If you want a paper copy, you may print one.

The on-line VOTER is available at <http://www.lwvsonoma.org/>. Click on "Publications."

To *not* receive the mailed version, simply indicate your request in an email to Corol Ann at corolann@hotmail.com.

Of course, you may choose to view the VOTER online and still receive the printed version by mail.

In our changing political world, it is more and more important for the League to get its information onto the Internet and to let people know what rich resources are available to them. So, spread the word about nonpartisan election information on Smart Voter!

The Smart Voter web address is:
<http://smartvoter.org/>

The Annual Meeting is on June 3. See the article on p. 3 and the meeting kit on pp. 5-6.

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of Sonoma County**

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Chlele Gummer, Secretary
Susannah Likins, Treasurer

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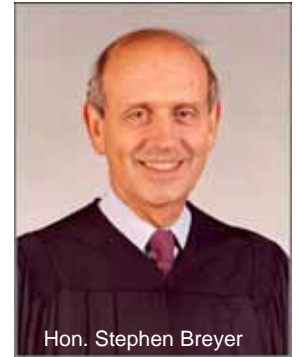
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Betty Keefauver
Caroline Ramberg
Nancy Richards

BOOK CLUB CORNER

The Book Group invites you to a discussion of Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer's *Active Liberty: Interpreting Our Democratic Constitution* on May 18 at 10:30 AM in the League office, 100 E Street, Suite 209, Santa Rosa.



Hon. Stephen Breyer

At a time when the Supreme Court is often at the center of controversy, this short book provides a clearly written argument for one side of the debate over judicial interpretation. For another side, see Justice Antonin Scalia's earlier *A Matter of Interpretation: Federal Courts and the Law*. And for what it's all about, check out the United States Constitution.

Breyer's vocabulary, at least, is one familiar to League members as can be seen in this quotation:

When I speak of *active* liberty, I mean to suggest connections of this kind between the people and their government—connections that involve responsibility, *participation*, and capacity. Moreover, active liberty cannot be understood in a vacuum, for it operates in the real world. And in the real world, institutions and methods of interpretation must be designed in a way such that this form of liberty is both *sustainable* over time and capable of translating the people's will into sound "policies".

League members and guests are invited to join our book discussions the third Thursday of every month from 10:30 AM until noon. The book for June will be Asene Seierstad's *The Bookseller of Kabul*. The location of the June meeting will be announced in the June VOTER and posted on the League Web site at <http://www.lwvsonoma.org>.

If you have questions about the Book Group, please call 539-5770.

Lynda Hungerford

info@lwvsonoma.org

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS STUDY GROUP

The International Relations Study Group will meet on Tuesday, May 9, at 12 NOON in the Santa Rosa League office. It is a brown-bag lunch session.

The topic for discussion will be "Global Health Pandemics and Security. Post 9/11, security and public health authorities are planning for epidemiological disasters as never before. What does that planning encompass, and how effective is it likely to be? What lessons can be learned from reactions to the global AIDS pandemic and its growing impact on the developing world?"



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.

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

Rosalie Gillmore

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.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we approach the date for our annual meeting, I am amazed to realize how fast these past two years have flown. After having been a League member since around 1970, I finally took the position of president. I really felt that it was my turn to give back to an organization that had given me great enjoyment and the opportunity to work with so many interesting and inspiring people.



I must say that some "arm twisting" did take place before I agreed to take the position, but I have never regretted the decision.

So much is happening in the organization as a whole. Especially evident is the soaring increase in the use of Internet communication. It is now very easy for me to keep up with activities and programs at other levels of League. If you are not in the habit of visiting our local website, please check it out at <http://www.lwvsonoma.org>. I needed to check on a detail in our budget and *voila*, there it was.

We have the privilege of always having a great Board that works very well together. Unfortunately, at the moment we do not have someone stepping forward to take over the position of president, but we have some creative ideas about sharing the responsibility, so, we will carry forward as usual. A number of members are lurking in the wings and do not feel that the time is right for them to step forward, but I'm sure they will be ready soon. Please try to attend one of our Board meetings to see first-hand what our work is about.

Carol Ann Fontana-Cary

JUNE ANNUAL MEETING

Reserve Saturday, June 3, for LWVSC's Annual Meeting and Pot Luck Luncheon

This will be held at Canine Companions for Independence, 295 Dutton Avenue in Santa Rosa. This is your opportunity to be updated on the League's program proposals, as well as to enjoy hearing a guest speaker. Top that off with the fun of socializing with fellow League members over a delicious Salad and Dessert Pot Luck Lunch, and you have an informative and enjoyable time in store for you.

The Annual Meeting Kit including the agenda and proposed budget is included in this issue of the VOTER on pp. 5-6. Please bring it to the meeting.

This year, to facilitate the Hospitality Committee's set-up for the meeting, we are asking members to RSVP to: Janie Hawker, 584-5210 or Sandy Benson, 763-1629, rwnatbenson@comcast.net.

When you contact Janie or Sandy, please let them know what you are bringing. This will allow the Hospitality Committee to better balance the luncheon menu. After all, the ringing declaration "Let them eat cake!", didn't seem to work all that well for Marie Antoinette. And, we certainly don't wish to risk the possibility of League business being conducted by members on a *sugar high* because of a menu snafu.

As always, this meeting provides a wonderful opportunity to introduce someone to the League and its programs, and we encourage you to bring guests to enjoy the day with you. See you on June 3.

Sandy Benson

4th ANNUAL TOWN HALL MEETING

Sponsored by Sonoma County Child Care Planning Council

How will the 2006-2007 State Budget impact local programs? Is it good for the children? Come for a moderated panel discussion and Q&A session with our legislators, politicians and appointed officials.

Topics will include:

- Early Care and Education: Preschool
- Child Care
- Health/Mental Health Services
- Human Services: CalWORKS, Foster Care, Child Protective Services
- K-12 Education, After-school Programs
- Special Needs

DATE: Thursday, June 1

TIME: 7:00 PM

LOCATION: Steele Lane Community Center

MODERATOR: Susan Gorin

Refreshments, child care*, and Spanish translation will be provided. Please call 524-2792 for more information.

* Please RSVP with the number and ages of children needing child care.

LWVC PROTESTS CALIFORNIA VOTER REGISTRATION DATABASE POLICY

Hold the presses! While we really can't do that, the situation described below is in flux as this May issue of the VOTER is being prepared, and this description will be outdated by the time you read it. Since it was written, several positive developments have occurred, perhaps prompted in part by a letter from the League of Women Voters of California to the Secretary of State and by an editorial in the *Sacramento Bee* on April 13. Here is an excerpt from that editorial:

No match, no vote

The prospect of tens of thousands of registered voters being inappropriately rejected by a new California voter registration database policy caused alarm for the League of Women Voters of California. On March 28, LWVC President Jacqueline Jacobberger sent a letter of protest to Secretary of State Bruce McPherson, and LWVC staff is currently involved with discussions about ways to improve the situation.

The problem results from application of the most stringent data matching standards in building the "single, uniform, official, centralized, interactive, computerized statewide voter registration list", which the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) requires that each state must have in place as of January 1, 2006. The California Secretary of State and the U.S. Department of Justice, which administers HAVA, agreed to update the existing *CalVoter* statewide registration system as California's master voter registration database. All voter registrations since January 1, 2006, whether new or updated, going into *CalVoter* were subject to the strictest matching standard.

A voter's record in *CalVoter* was flagged as a reject if the voter registration information failed to contain all of or to match exactly that individual's other official records, such as Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) or Social Security records. Under HAVA, a driver's license (or state ID) number or the last four digits of his/her Social Security number is required in the voter registration database. Mismatches due to misspellings or missing data like no DMV identification number or middle initial cause records to fail. According to a *Sacramento Bee* editorial

on April 13, 26% of all new voter registrations or re-registrations were being rejected.

The full text of the editorial is available in the *Sacramento Bee* web archive at <http://www.sacbee.com/>.

These "pending" rejected registrations are reported by the Secretary of State's office to the appropriate county's Registrar of Voters for verification by the voter. Until the local Registrar of Voters is able to verify all the voter's information by phone or mail and update the database, a "pending" voter cannot receive a sample ballot, ballot pamphlets, or notice of the location of his/her polling place; nor can he/she request an absentee ballot. Because election deadlines are rapidly approaching, such delays could lead to massive voter disenfranchisement for legitimate California voters.

Because of differing demographics, counties will have different rates of such "dropped" voters. A recent *Los Angeles Times* article reported that in Los Angeles County alone, the California database rejected 14,629 people, 43% of those who registered from January 1 to March 15, 2006.

Sonoma County Assistant Registrar of Voters Janice Atkinson is currently working with about 50 voter registrations that have been returned from the Secretary of State's office. She expects they can be processed in time to allow those citizens to vote. Whether a "dropped" voter will be allowed to vote provisionally at the polls has not yet been determined.

Although Secretary of State McPherson originally announced that no changes in the implementation of the voter database policy would occur until after the June Primary, he has recently instituted some new database matching rules that eliminate some 30 percent of inappropriate rejects. A debate is underway about whether the situation can be corrected by urgent legislation (which takes effect as soon as it is signed) or by regulation, or some combination of both.

Research by the nonprofit, nonpartisan Brennan Center for Justice has confirmed that improper implementation of HAVA-required voter database management is resulting in millions of eligible voters nationwide being denied access to the polls. The League of Women Voters of California continues to urge changes to the rigid "No Match, No Vote" policy. The LWVC wants only positive information of a disqualifying characteristic to be used to disqualify a voter.

So stand by for more breaking news!

Eve Roberson,

Member, Voters Service

With special thanks to Trudy Schafer, Program Director/Advocate, LWVC

2006-2007 ANNUAL MEETING KIT

Location

Canine Companions for Independence
295 Dutton Ave.
Santa Rosa, CA

Agenda

June 3, 2006

10:00 AM Registration and coffee/muffins
10:15 Call to order
10:20 President's report
10:25 Treasurer's report
10:30 Presentation of proposed budget
10:40 Presentation of recommended program
10:50 Break
11:00 Discussion and adoption of local program
11:30 Report of nominating committee & elections
NOON Adjourn to potluck lunch
12:30 PM About Canine Companions
12:45 Speaker, *to be determined*
1:15 Question and answer period

NOMINATIONS

Officers:

President	<i>To be announced</i>
V.P. Action	Willard Richards
V.P. Administration	Jane Ernsberger
Secretary	Corol Ann Fontana-Cary
Treasurer	Susannah Likens

Directors:

Membership	Olive Horrell and Ethel Schy
Program	Liz Hawthorne and Sandy de Lorimier
Transportation & Land Use	George Ellman
The VOTER Editor	Helen Sundergill
At Large	Jeri Miller

Nominating Committee: Phyllis Clement, Chair
Sandy Benson
Alice Richardson

Program Recommendations

The board recommends retaining all existing positions. You may view or download our current positions from our website at <http://www.lwvsonoma.org>; you may call the office to request that you be sent a paper copy; or you may pick up a copy at the Annual Meeting.

The board recommends adoption of amended language in the Transportation Position adding the word "multi-modal" as shown in the third paragraph below.

We believe that the true cost of transportation should be made known. Subsidies of any form of transportation should be clear and not hidden.

A variety of funding methods are appropriate including general funds, sales tax revenues and private sources such as developers' fees. The funds generated should be spent on the most cost effective traffic reduction projects.

We regard provision of an integrated, multi-modal, efficient, cost effective public transportation network as an important responsibility of local and regional government.

RULES AND PROCEDURES

Proposed Convention Rules

Each speaker shall state name, indicate intention, and speak no longer than three minutes. No one shall speak twice to a question until everyone desiring to speak has had an opportunity to do so.

Adoption of Local Program

League program shall consist of those issues chosen for concerted study and action. The local program as recommended by the Board shall be presented first. Items not recommended by the Board may be proposed for consideration by members at the Annual Meeting. If a non-recommended item is voted for consideration, it is presented to the membership for decision with the Board-recommended program.

Required Votes

Adoption of by-law changes requires a 2/3 vote. Adoption of budget and program requires a majority vote.

Quorum

Twenty percent of the membership as of January 1, 2005 shall constitute a quorum at the Annual Meeting, unless the Board of Directors declares that the quorum is less. The minutes will so state, and any business acted upon will stand, unless written protest is received from any member within 30 days after the Annual Meeting.

Note: There are no recommended by-law changes.

Proposed Budget For 2006-2007

	2005-2006 Budget	2005-2006 Projected	2006-2007 DRAFT Budget	
OPERATING FUND				
<u>Income</u>				
notes 1	Dues	\$9,000	\$9,079	\$9,500
	Member Contributions	\$1,500	\$1,537	\$1,600
2	Nonmember Contributions	\$2,500	\$1,737	\$2,000
3	Sonoma County Contract	\$3,500	\$3,375	\$4,000
4	League Lodging	\$50	\$0	\$0
5	Fundraising Events (gross)	\$5,000	\$2,551	\$4,000
6	Hope Washburn Endowt	\$1,800	\$1,900	\$1,900
	Miscellaneous	\$50	\$0	\$50
	TOTAL INCOME	\$23,400	\$20,179	\$23,050
<u>Expense</u>				
	Board Expense	\$100	\$300	\$300
7	Membership Expenses	\$500	\$500	\$500
	Committees' Expenses	\$150	\$100	\$150
	Program Expenses	\$550	\$300	\$300
	Annual Meeting	\$100	\$100	\$100
8	Conventions, Workshops	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
	Liability Insurance	\$725	\$747	\$760
	Equipt Maintenance	\$200	\$0	\$602
9	Office Supplies, Equipmt	\$400	\$350	\$350
10	LWVBayArea Dues	\$193	\$193	\$183
11	LWVCalifornia Dues	\$4,043	\$4,043	\$3,833
12	LWVUS Dues	\$4,582	\$4,422	\$4,343
13	Position Support	\$200	\$100	\$200
14	Postage	\$800	\$800	\$800
15	Publications	\$100	\$0	\$50
16	Communicatons, Website	\$250	\$250	\$250
17	Office Rent	\$4,980	\$4,980	\$4,980
	Telephone	\$250	\$210	\$250
18	"The Voter" Newsletter	\$2,250	\$1,956	\$2,000
	Voters Service	\$500	\$1,000	\$600
	Fundraising Expense	\$529	\$378	\$500
	TOTAL EXPENSE	\$23,400	\$22,729	\$23,050
EDUCATION FUND: Restricted Fund held by LWV California for our Education Projects				
Balance in Ed Fund:				
<u>Income</u>				
19	Donations	\$1,200	\$1,400	\$1,400
<u>Expense</u>				
	Smart Voter	\$500	\$750	\$500
	Pros & Cons	\$300	\$600	\$570
	Web Maintenance	\$72	\$72	\$80
	Easy Reading Voter, etc	\$250	\$250	\$250
	Total Withdrawals	\$1,122	\$1,672	\$1,400

notes

- 1 Our dues: Individual \$50, Households \$75, Limited Income \$37. We have to pay full State and National dues for Limited Income Members
We pay \$45.80 per member to other levels of League. We have Individual Members 139 (12 are Limited Income) plus 29 Households (58 people) = 197 people
- 2 Nonmember contributions include business card ads in newsletter, Spring letter community donations, Water document donations
- 3 Sonoma County Contract: Voter registration project countywide. Members fill registration boxes in post offices, schools, etc.
- 4 League Lodging: inactive program
- 5 Fundraising Events include Holiday Party Silent Auction, Spring Theater Party. We need to increase efforts in this area
- 6 Hope Washburn Fund is a restricted Endowment Fund which disbursed \$1,9000 this year
- 7 Membership Expenses: New & prospective member packets and postage, packet to be updated
- 8 Conventions: Members attending Sacramento weekend meeting in May 06, State Convention May 07
- 9 Office Supplies: Stationery, office needs
- 10 Bay Area League is \$1 for Individual and \$1.50 for household
- 11 State PMP is \$21 for Individual and \$31.50 for household (1 1/2 time Ind. Rate)
- 12 National PMP is \$23.80 for Individual and \$35.70 for household (1 1/2 times Ind. Rate) (139 x 23.8=3308.20) + (29 x 35.70=1035.3)= \$4,343.50
Per Member Payment dues are based on membership figures as of February 1, 2006. Individuals: 139 Households: 29
- 13 Position Support: Member dues to Sonoma County Conservation Council \$75, SC Literacy Foundation \$25, Family Action of SC \$25
- 14 Postage: Bulk mail for newsletter, mailings, annual bulk mail fee \$150, last year in newsletter category
- 15 Publications: Last year published Water Document, 550 copies which we are selling, including funds for reference publications
- 16 Communications, website: Community Media Center \$65, LWVC \$160 for website maintenance, \$25 for Petaluma Community Access Television
- 17 Rent: \$415 per month for 2 years as of April 1, 2005



PROPOSITION 81

CALIFORNIA READING AND LITERACY IMPROVEMENT AND PUBLIC LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION BOND ACT OF 2006

Legislative Bond Act

THE QUESTION

Should the state borrow \$600 million through the sale of general obligation bonds to provide 65 percent of the cost of projects for constructing and renovating local public libraries?

THE SITUATION

Public libraries are generally built and operated by cities, counties, and special districts. A similar measure for \$350 million, The California Reading and Literacy Improvement and Public Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act of 2000, funded 45 projects. The funds from that measure are mostly spent.

A 2003 California State Library survey estimated that \$4.4 billion is needed for 579 library projects. Projects would include technological upgrading, seismic retrofitting and structural repairs, and expansion of facilities to keep pace with population growth. The funds from Proposition 81 would meet a portion of those needs.

THE PROPOSAL

Proposition 81 would:

- authorize the sale of \$600 million in general obligation bonds to fund a library construction and renovation program, with 35 percent in matching funds contributed by local government agencies
- give priority to eligible applications that were submitted but not funded under Proposition 14 (2000); no more than \$300 million of the new funding would be reserved for these applications
- reserve \$25 million for "joint use" projects serving both a library and a public education institution (such as a school district or college)
- establish a seven-member board to review project applications, with the State Librarian as administrator of projects.

FISCAL EFFECT

The total cost to the state's General Fund is estimated to be \$1.2 billion over 30 years, according to the Legislative Analyst. Local agencies would contribute 35 percent in matching funds. After completion, the additional annual operating costs for local agencies could total several million dollars statewide.

WHAT A YES OR NO VOTE MEANS

A YES vote means that \$600 million in general obligation bonds could be sold to provide grants for construction, renovation or expansion of local public libraries.

A NO vote means that these bonds would not be sold.

SUPPORTERS SAY

- Proposition 81 invests in our local communities wisely; it does not raise our taxes, the funds cannot be used for local administrative costs, and the 35 percent matching fund requirement maximizes the use of limited state funding.
- We need to invest in literacy and life-long learning. Illiteracy is often passed from generation to generation, and adult illiteracy hurts our economic competitiveness.

OPPONENTS SAY

- Bond financing ties up our taxes for 30 years, even if the technological improvements become obsolete or if the economy collapses.
- Local governments that cannot raise 35 percent in matching funds cannot participate, but taxpayers will still pay for projects in other communities through their state taxes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

PRO: 916-786-7605, <http://www.yesforlibraries.com>

CON: 916-991-9300, <http://www.protecttaxpayers.com>



PROPOSITION 82

PRESCHOOL EDUCATION

TAX ON INCOMES OVER \$400,000 FOR INDIVIDUALS; \$800,000 FOR COUPLES

Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute

THE QUESTION

Should California create a new preschool program for children, funded by an increase in personal income taxes?

THE SITUATION

Most California children attend some preschool or child care program. A program where children are cared for in groups is referred to as center-based care. Approximately 62 percent of the state's 4-year olds attend such programs, the participation rate varying widely by family income level. About one-half of these children are served by existing state and federal programs, designed primarily for low-income families. There are two main state programs, costing approximately \$360 million annually, and the federal Head Start program in California costs \$500 million annually.

THE PROPOSAL

The Preschool for All Act (PFA) creates a free, voluntary preschool program for all four-year-olds beginning in the fall of 2010. The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) would have overall responsibility for these preschool services, which would include:

1. a program that runs a minimum of three hours per day, 180 days per year;
2. state preschool standards and guidelines coordinated with K-3 education; and
3. minimum class size and staffing requirements.

The program would be funded by an additional 1.7 percent income tax rate (effective January 1, 2007) on individuals' taxable income over \$400,000 (\$800,000 for married couples). These added revenues would not be considered for any limit on state expenditures, nor when calculating educational minimum funding guarantees.

Preschool teachers and instructional aides would be required to meet higher educational standards. The initiative would provide up to \$700 million to address educational requirements.

Under certain circumstances the Legislature could require a parental fee, but no child could be denied access based on an inability to pay. The amount the state is now spending for state preschool and child care would have to be maintained, and PFA funds could not be used to supplant state or federal funding for children with special needs.

FISCAL EFFECT

The increase in personal income taxes would result in revenues for 2006-07 of roughly \$500 million, increasing to about \$2.6 billion by 2010-11; such amounts are expected to fully fund the educational expenditures required by the measure.

WHAT A YES OR NO VOTE MEANS

A YES vote means that the California Constitution and state law would be amended to create a new preschool program, funded by an increase in personal income tax rates for high-income taxpayers.

A NO vote means that the proposed amendments to the California Constitution and state law would not be made to create this preschool program. The current federal and state programs would be unchanged.

SUPPORTERS SAY

Prop. 82 strengthens all education by giving children the right to a high-quality preschool education. It encourages parental involvement, allowing choice among public, private and nonprofit preschool providers.

Prop. 82 invests in our children and our future, resulting in savings from reduced remedial education, lower high school drop out rates, and the economic benefits of a better-educated workforce.

Prop. 82 protects taxpayers with strict financial controls and limits administrative expenses.

OPPONENTS SAY

Analysts expect this program will cost much more than predicted, with related cuts in education that worsen the current fragile quality of K-12 public schools. Public preschools will put private preschools out of business.

California already provides preschool and daycare programs for families in need. We should properly fund existing programs and make them readily available to those who truly need them.

This measure will have a significant negative impact on revenues for other important programs such as schools, public safety, transportation and health care.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

PRO: 310-786-7605, <http://www.yeson82.com>

CON: 916-218-6640, <http://www.NoProp82.org>

NEWS FROM VOTERS SERVICE

There are two state propositions on the June, 2006, ballot:

- **Proposition 81 California Reading and Literacy Improvement and Public Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act of 2006**

If passed, the state would provide grants to local governments to construct new libraries, expand or renovate existing libraries, acquire land for new or expanded libraries, and provide related furnishings and equipment. Funds could not be used for books or other library materials or for ongoing operating costs of new or renovated facilities.

- **Proposition 82 Public Preschool Education. Tax Increase on Incomes over \$400,000 for Individuals; \$800,000 for Couples**

This initiative establishes a right to voluntary state-funded preschool for all four-year-olds, administered by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and county school superintendents. If passed, by 2010 all children in California will be able to attend half-day preschool the year before kindergarten.

To learn the arguments on these propositions, join us on May 4 at 10:00 a.m. in the League office, where Chlele Gummer will conduct a Pros and Cons training session. Since there are only two propositions this time, the training session will be short and provide an excellent opportunity for members who have not presented Pros and Cons to learn how much fun this service can be.

Several party primaries are on the ballot as well. Candidates running for nomination for state or national office in the June primary election are:

- Governor and Lieutenant Governor
- Secretary of State, Controller or Treasurer
- Attorney General
- Insurance Commissioner
- Member, State Board of Equalization (4 districts)
- United States Senator
- United States Representative in Congress (53 districts)
- State Senator (20 even-numbered districts)
- Member of the State Assembly (80 districts)

The LWVSC, the League of Women Voters of Marin County, and the Soroptimists International of Novato co-sponsored a debate on April 19 with the six Democratic candidates running for the 6th District State Assembly seat that Joe Nation is leaving. The debate was recorded at Novato Public Access Television, and videotapes were distributed to community access channels and KRCB for rebroadcast.

Concerning the 6th Congressional District Democratic Primary race, we are very happy to report that a misunderstanding was corrected following a conversation with Holly Butler, Lynn Woolsey's campaign manager. Lynn

Woolsey is not only willing to debate, but will do so on May 1. The LWVSC and the League of Women Voters of Marin County are co-sponsoring this debate. It will be held at the San Rafael Community Access Channel 26 studio and will be videotaped for rebroadcast on Petaluma Community Access and KRCB.

The two Republican candidates for the 6th Congressional District participated in a debate on April 29 and it will also be rebroadcast in Sonoma County.

In Sonoma County, the LWVSC organized two debates that will take place in May. Please refer to the candidate forum schedule below. Watch for announcements by your local public or community access television station of rebroadcast times of these debates prior to the June 6 election.

Lynn Camhi, Rosalie Gillmore, Liz and Bob Hawthorne, Steve Rabinowitsh, Nancy and Willard Richards, Alice Richardson, Amy Southwick, and co-sponsoring organizations worked diligently to put on these debates.

Amy Southwick and Rosalie Gillmore

Voters Service Co-chairs

SCHEDULE OF LWVSC-SPONSORED MAY CANDIDATE FORUMS

Sonoma County Supervisor, District 2 Candidates: Mike Kerns, Mervis L. Reissig

May 2, 7:00-8:00 PM

Petaluma City Council Chamber, 11 English Street, Petaluma

This debate will be videotaped and rebroadcast on Petaluma Community Access TV Channels 26, 27 or 28; and on KRCB. Check your local listings.

Sonoma County Supervisor, District 4 Candidates: Debora L. Fudge, Paul L. Kelley

May 15, 7:00-8:30 PM

Raven Theater, 115 North Street, Healdsburg

Co-sponsors: American Association of University Women (AAUW), Dry Creek Valley Association, Healdsburg Access TV (HATV), Healdsburg *Tribune*, Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce, Raven Theater, *Windsor Times*

This debate will be videotaped and rebroadcast on HATV and Petaluma Community Media Access. Check your local listings.

ACTION COMMITTEE REPORT

Is Change Possible?

Change is surely coming to Santa Rosa. For California, the outlook is less certain, but your support for two measures before the California Senate could make a difference.

The League of Women Voters of California website, <http://www.lwvc.org/>, highlights these measures in the Action & Advocacy column. At the top of the list is the California Clean Money and Fair Elections Act, AB 583 by Loni Hancock, which would provide public financing for state political campaigns. This bill passed the Assembly by 47 to 31 on January 30, and is now in the Senate.

Maine and Arizona made similar public funding available for candidates for the legislatures and state-wide offices a few years ago. The immediate benefits are that candidates running for office have the option of spending their time talking with voters instead of raising money, and when elected, are indebted only to the public. The longer-range benefit is more diversity in the legislatures and better governance. Maine recently passed progressive health care measures.

At the bottom of the list on the LWVC website is the California Health Insurance Reliability Act – Comprehensive Universal Health Care Coverage SB840 by Sheila Kuehl. Go to the LWVC website indicated above to learn more about these bills and their status. Enter the name of each bill in Google to learn more, and if you are unsure, enter CA Senate in Google to learn how to contact your Senator. Then write or fax your Senator as well as key members of the Senate. I did.

If both bills passed, the California dream would truly be revitalized.

The change that is surely coming to Santa Rosa will be presented to the public between 6 and 10 PM in the Santa Rosa City Council Chamber on Monday, May 1. The three teams bidding on the opportunity to develop the 5.4 acres of undeveloped land owned by SMART west of the tracks at the Historic Railroad Station will present their proposals to the public. The public will then have an opportunity to comment. The proposals indicate the final development could include 250 dwelling units, 751 parking spaces plus space for 5 buses or delivery trucks, food and wine facilities, an upscale restaurant, child care, a bicycle shop, retail space, public plazas, and, of course, a rail platform. The proposals are now available in the Central Library.

This meeting is the first of three meetings of the five-member Ad-hoc Selection Committee, all held in the Santa Rosa City Council Chamber. On Friday, May 12, from 2 to 4 PM the SMART staff will present an analysis of the proposals. The Selection Committee will deliberate and make a recommendation on Wednesday, May 24, from 10 AM to Noon. The SMART Board will act on the recommendation at its regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, June 21, from 1:30 to 3:00 PM, in the So-

noma County Supervisors Chambers. All meetings are open to the public.

Willard Richards

Action Chair

BOARD BRIEFS

April 4, 2006

At the March 7 meeting of the LWVSC Board, the following key items were covered:

- George Ellman accepted the role as chairman of the Budget Committee who will prepare next year's budget to be approved at the annual meeting in June.
- Those planning to attend the California Leadership Council in Sacramento, May 6 and 7, are Carol Ann Fontana-Cary, Willard Richards, George Ellman, and Amy Southwick. The League will pay the registration and hotel costs of these participants.
- The Board agreed to co-sponsor the joint Transportation Forum to be held in Novato. The directors of Public Transportation of both Sonoma and Marin counties have been invited. Our League will be responsible for publicity in Sonoma county and attendance of 20 or more people.
- Amy Southwick reported that there is a candidate debate planned in Healdsburg on May 15 at the Raven Theater, Supervisory District 4, between candidates Paul Kelley and Debora Fudge. Other debates in the planning stages are for the Supervisory District 2 and the Sonoma County District Attorney's Office.
- George Ellman announced the results of the Transportation and Land Use Position update that was reached by the members at the March meeting. The board recommended that the League position include the words "integrated, multimodal, efficient, cost effective public transportation."
- The Board discussed LWVC's support for Proposition 81, "California Reading and Literacy Improvement and Public Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act of 2006."
- The board approved sending a letter to the Cotati City Council supporting a **Yes** vote on the Jobs-Housing Linkage Fee on April 12.

Chlele Gummer

Secretary

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Local: Jennifer Bard

Jeannine Park

National: Dana McKinney



There's something special in your own backyard.

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 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
 click on "Membership" or "Volunteers"



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League of Women Voters® of Sonoma County Membership Application

Name_____

Address_____

City_____

Zip_____ Telephone_____

Fax_____ Email_____

Yes, I want to join the League of Women Voters. Enclosed is my check for dues. (\$50.00 for individual annual membership, \$75.00 for household, and \$37.00 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.

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_____

MAY 2006 CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are open to the public.

Date	Time	Place	Description
Tuesday May 2	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.
Tuesday May 2	7:00 - 8:00 PM	Petaluma City Council Chamber 11 English Street Petaluma	Candidate Forum Sonoma County Supervisor, 2 nd district See p. 9.
Thursday May 4	10:00 AM - 12 NOON	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Pros and Cons Training Session See p. 9.
Tuesday May 9	12:00 NOON	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	International Relations Study Group "Global Health Pandemics and Security..." See p. 2.
Thursday May 11	9:30 AM	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Voters Service Meeting
Monday May 15	7:00 - 8:30 PM	Raven Theatre 115 North Street Healdsburg	Candidate Forum Sonoma County Supervisor, 4 th district See p. 9.
Tuesday May 16	10:00 AM	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Action Committee
Thursday May 18	10:30 AM	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Book Club <i>Active Liberty: Interpreting Our Democratic Constitution</i> by Stephen Breyer See p. 2.

LINK TO CURRENT CALENDAR