



The VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF SONOMA COUNTY

Volume 13, No 8

October 2008

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Message..... 2
 Book Group..... 2
 Kickoff Meeting 3
 Board Briefs..... 3
 Voters Service..... 3
 LWVC Positions on Propositions..... 4
 LWVC Campaigns for Proposition 11 .. 5
 League Supports SMART 5
 Cable TV Program Guides 5
 International Relations..... 6
 China and Human Rights 6
 Save the Dates 6
 In Memoriam 6
 New Members and Address Changes... 7
 Membership Application 7
 Calendar Back Page

ELECTION FORUMS

See the Calendar on the back for the times and locations of these forums. Forums held in Petaluma, Rohnert Park, and Santa Rosa are broadcast live on Comcast Cable in those communities. See page 5 for program guides.

County Supervisor:

- First District, September 22
- Third District, September 22
- Fifth District, October 8

City Councils

- Cotati, October 1
- Petaluma, October 1
- Rohnert Park, September 24
- Santa Rosa, September 29
- Windsor, September 30

Districts

- Petaluma Health Care, October 1
- Windsor School and Fire, Sept.30

Ballot Measures

- Petaluma Measure K, September 24
- California Proposition 11, October 6

WHY DO WE NEED REDISTRICTING REFORM?

Join us to learn the answers

**Forum on Proposition 11
California Voters FIRST Act**
7:00-8:00 PM Monday, October 6, 2008
Santa Rosa City Council Chambers

SPEAKER - LINDA CRAIG
Regional Government Director,
The Bay Area League, and
LWVC Advocacy Chair



THE GERRY-MANDER

A new species of *Monster*, which appeared in *Essex South District* in Jan 1812.

See page 5 for more information. The League of Women Voters of California is a cosponsor of this important ballot measure.

This cartoon and caption were printed when Massachusetts Governor Gerry created the district shown.

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

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

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Are you enjoying this election cycle? It seems we learn something new each day about the candidates and the issues. Of course the League was very busy arranging the local candidate forums in September. I hope you were able to attend them and to help out with the many small tasks that had to be done. On Monday, October 6, the League is sponsoring an Advocacy Forum, featuring our state Advocacy Chair, Linda Craig, who will explain the Redistricting Reform Proposition 11. Last year I was excited to be involved at the grass roots level as we collected signatures on petitions to get the proposal on the ballot. Now we are working to get the voters to pass it. California needs a non-partisan commission to draw those district lines, not the legislators, as in the past. Don't miss October 6. You will learn how to talk about this proposition to your friends.



Each month I plan to introduce you to one of our board members. This month I want to introduce you to your Voters Service Chair, DeeDee Bridges. She began with the League when she retired from her teaching career. She started by agreeing to be editor of the VOTER since she was well versed in computers; at one time she had taught computer skills to junior high students. This year she accepted our Voters Service Chair position; she was willing to learn on the job. She found out how busy the job is during the three months before the election. She has had a varied

career not only teaching all levels, but also working at Wells Fargo Bank for 13 years. She and her husband have raised a son and now enjoy three grandchildren, whom they visit regularly. When she's not doing League work she and her husband travel. I hope that when you see her, you will thank her for her dedicated service to the League.

Also, I would like to tell you about one of our very new members, Angelica Tercero. She joined the League at our annual meeting last June, which she attended, invited by Ann Berens, Juvenile Justice Committee Chair. Angelica is very concerned about juvenile justice and is a member of that committee. Presently she is working at the Community Media Center educating young people on how to use the equipment (camera, lights, editing programs on the computers) in creating films that the Center will broadcast. Recently she has been working on a Public Service Announcement for the League. We are very fortunate to have new members that are willing to participate in the work of the League.

I welcome hearing from you. Please feel free to call me 707-537-1207 or email me chleleg@sonic.net. I look forward to new ideas and directions.

Chlele Gummer

BOOK GROUP

League members and the public are invited to join the book group at 10:30 AM, Thursday, October 13, for a discussion of *Bitter Friends*, *Bosom Enemies: Iran, The U.S., and the Twisted Path to Confrontation*, by Barbara Slavin. The book group will meet in the League office, Suite 209, 100 E Street, Santa Rosa.



Slavin is a senior diplomatic correspondent for *USA Today*. In *Bitter Friends* she traces "the complex love-hate relationship" between the United States and Iran, particularly its course during the Clinton and Bush administrations.

If you have suggestions for books for the group, you won't want to miss the November 20 meeting, where we will select the books for 2009. We will not meet in December.

If you have questions about the group, please call or send me a message at lh@sonic.net or 539-5770.

Lynda Hungerford

KICKOFF MEETING A SUCCESS

Over 40 people attended our kickoff meeting on Saturday, September 13. We were pleased to see new and prospective members in the audience.

Chris Coursey, Community Outreach Manager for SMART, gave an interesting and very informative talk on plans for the SMART passenger train and bicycle/pedestrian path along the rail corridor. He did an excellent job of presenting the many, many reasons why we need the SMART train in Sonoma and Marin Counties.

President Chlele Gummer gave a brief, excellent overview of League and the many hats that we wear. Refreshments organized by Sandy Benson and Janie Hawker, were delicious, as always.

Nancy Richards

BOARD BRIEFS

Received a reply from the National League in response to an LWVSC letter regarding confidentiality of information on the voter registration forms.

Susannah Likins reported that 75% of membership has renewed. There are 87 individual, 25 household and 7 limited income members.

The Board has decided to send future issues of The VOTER electronically to other Leagues and to local officials. This will save postage and paper, a green move.

Sandy deLorimier has been appointed by the Board to the nominating committee.

Ethel Schy reported that her membership committee is making a concerted effort to engage new and prospective members from throughout the County.

The theater party is set for January 14. AAUW will not join us this year so we are looking for another organization to share the cost.

Carol Adams reported that the new Roster is about ready to go to the printer.

The new retirement community, Varenna, has offered a room as a venue for a future League meeting.

Nancy Richards

VOTERS SERVICE

What a wonderful crazy time of year! We have been inundated with information on the Presidential Race and have been mesmerized by watching the national conventions. This election season the Voter Service Committee is putting together a full schedule of public candidate and Pros and Cons forums. The supervisorial campaigns are exciting run-off elections and throughout the County citizens are stepping forward to run for offices on town and city councils, school boards, and fire districts. Of the twelve Propositions on the ballot the LWV of California has taken positions on ten. There are also measures on the ballot from four different cities and three district measures. So it is important that we roll up our sleeves and become familiar with those issues and candidates that are sure to impact our lives.

During these last few weeks before the election, the League will sponsor or co-sponsor ten candidate forums and four Pros and Cons. Please see the calendar on back page for dates, times and places. These events do not happen without lots of support from the membership. Rosalie Gillmore is the guiding force behind the events taking place in Petaluma and Ellen Swenson took the lead for the District 5 Supervisorial Candidate Forum in Graton. We have Edie Mendez, Betty Ann Bruno, Paula Hawkes and Alice Richardson from our League who have volunteered to be moderators. We had no Pros and Cons leader, but Janie Hawker volunteered to take on this role. Amy Southwick has been a great Voter Service Chair trainer as has Will Richards. Alice Richardson has taken on the responsibility of putting together the Rohnert Park and Cotati Forums. Carol Adams is handling the public relations for the forums and Pros and Cons. It is amazing what can happen when people are willing to get involved.

You may receive a call asking for your help in putting on one of these forums. Please say yes! If you don't receive a call, but want to help—please do. Call either Alice Richardson or DeeDee Bridges. Civic education is at the center of what we do. **Get involved!**

DeeDee Bridges

Voters Service

CREDIT

In Santa Rosa, live transmission & TV production services are provided by the Community Media Center of Santa Rosa and are broadcast on Comcast channels 69/26 and AT&T channel 99.

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS RECOMMENDS...



YES ON PROPOSITION 1A -- Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act

This \$9.95 billion bond act would partially fund a high-speed train project between Los Angeles/Anaheim and San Francisco, and possible extensions to Sacramento and to San Diego, at a total project cost of \$45 billion, including the additional segments. Federal grants and public-private partnerships would be needed to fund at least half of each segment. Proposition 1A would provide a transportation option that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and lessens the need to expand highways and airports. This revised proposition addresses concerns about cost and financial uncertainties by requiring a new business plan, peer review, and other accountability provisions, and it allows bond funds to be used for the other segments if there is no negative impact on the first phase.



YES ON PROPOSITION 3 -- Children's Hospital Bond Act

Proposition 3 authorizes \$980 million in bonds to fund children's hospitals. These regional centers provide specialized care for children with serious illnesses or injuries without regard to a family's ability to pay. They treat the majority of California's low-income children. Eighty percent of the proceeds would go to eight nonprofit children's hospitals and 20 percent to University of California children's hospitals. Prop 3 will address escalating construction costs and improve health care access for children who are indigent, uninsured, underinsured or eligible for government health programs.



NO ON PROPOSITION 4 -- Waiting Period and Parental Notification before Termination of Minor's Pregnancy

Prop 4 requires a physician to notify the parent of a pregnant minor before performing an abortion. Mandatory notification laws may sound good but, in the real world, they put the health and safety of teens in danger. A frightened, pregnant teen who can't go to her parents may choose an unsafe, illegal abortion, or even contemplate suicide, instead of seeking the counseling and safe medical care she needs. Parents rightfully want to be involved in their teenagers' lives, but good family communication can't be imposed by government. California voters have rejected this proposal twice, but proponents have put it on the ballot again, adding more unreasonable provisions.



YES ON PROPOSITION 5 -- Nonviolent Drug Offenses. Sentencing, Parole and Rehabilitancy

Proposition 5 would require the state to expand treatment and rehabilitation for nonviolent drug offenders and parolees, and reduce the criminal consequences of nonviolent offenses. Additional costs of treatment would be offset by reductions in prison and parole operating costs, as well as in the need for capital outlay for prison facilities. The League's study of juvenile justice affirmed the need to give funding priority to prevention, early intervention and rehabilitation.



NO ON PROPOSITION 6 -- Police and Law Enforcement Funding. Criminal Penalties and Laws (Runner Initiative)

This measure requires that nearly \$1 billion annually in state general funds be used for designated local law enforcement and probation programs. This will mean an increase of \$500 million a year for these programs and for operating prison and parole systems, and a \$500 million capital outlay for prison facilities. The League opposes the further restriction on the ongoing use of general funds. Harmful policy changes in this initiative include prosecuting more 14-year-olds as adults and giving counties less flexibility in the use of drug and mental health funds for juveniles.



NO ON PROPOSITION 7 -- Renewable Energy Generation

Proposition 7 requires all utilities, including government-owned utilities, to generate 50 percent of their power from renewable energy by 2025. While the League supports a renewable energy target, we feel this is too optimistic to be achieved, and well beyond the targets for implementing the landmark greenhouse-gas emissions reduction law, AB 32. Moreover, Prop 7 is poorly drafted. Experts say it will not achieve its stated goals and will actually disrupt the development of renewable power. It may force small renewable energy companies out of California's market and cause higher energy bills.



NO ON PROPOSITION 8 -- Eliminates Right of Same-Sex Couples to Marry

This proposed limitation of marriage as only between a man and a woman infringes on the equal rights that should be available to all people. The California Supreme Court has concluded that there is a "fundamental constitutional right to form a family relationship." The League opposed Proposition 22 in 2000 and continues to oppose such limits on the basic civil rights that should be guaranteed to all Californians.

 **NO ON PROPOSITION 9 -- Criminal Justice System. Victims' Rights. Parole**

Proposition 9 would expand the legal rights of crime victims in various ways and could undo many of the rights of prisoners and parolees to due process and speedy parole revocation hearings. This initiative asks voters to support victims' rights that are already protected under state law and is unnecessary.

 **NO ON PROPOSITION 10 -- Alternative Fuel Vehicles and Renewable Energy. Bonds**

This measure would authorize the sale of \$5 billion in general obligation bonds to provide rebates to purchasers of certain high fuel economy and alternative fuel vehicles, and to fund grants and other incentives for technology development. The League favors the use of bonds to finance capital expenditures or the purchase of property for public purposes. The purposes of this bond are not an appropriate use for state-issued, bond-generated revenues.

 **YES ON PROPOSITION 11 -- Redistricting Reform: California Voters FIRST Act**

It is an inherent conflict of interest for legislators to draw their own districts to guarantee their reelection. Nearly 99 percent of incumbent legislators are reelected every year. Proposition 11 removes from the legislature the power to redraw district boundaries for the State Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization after each census. Instead, it provides for the appointment of a 14-member independent citizens commission composed of five Democrats, five Republicans, and four members not affiliated with either major party to perform this process. It establishes clear criteria for how the boundaries shall be drawn, and requires an open and transparent process with due notice, public hearings, and no communications outside of the hearings. This measure will hold politicians accountable and help stop the gridlock in Sacramento that keeps pressing issues from being addressed.

Because League positions do not cover the issues in Proposition 2, Standards for Confining Farm Animals, and Proposition 12, Veterans' Bond Act of 2008, the LWVC is taking no stand on these two measures.

LWVC CAMPAIGNS FOR PROP. 11

The League of Women Voters of California has been a key proponent of fair redistricting reform for years and supports Proposition 11 because this initiative meets all our criteria for effective redistricting. Proposition 11 enjoys broad, bipartisan support from around the State, including AARP, California Common Cause, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, the California Chamber of Commerce, ACLU of Southern California, and many others.

For more information on the campaign, go to www.yesprop11.org or to redistricting@lwvc.org and then get involved! Attend our local meeting on Monday October 6 described on the front page.

LEAGUE SUPPORTS SMART

The Leagues of Marin and Sonoma Counties jointly support Measure Q, the quarter-percent sales tax for the SMART (Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit) District. In reaching this decision, each League used a participatory process before final action was taken by the individual boards.

SMART is an integral part of the future of transportation for the Bay Area. It will reduce environmental damage caused by reliance on the automobile and will offer an alternative to using the congested Highway 101.

Several improvements have been added to the 2008 ballot measure including weekend service and taking an active role with cities to implement Quiet Zones.

In view of the detrimental effects of greenhouse gases on global warming, the high cost of gasoline, increasing congestion on the highway, and the ever increasing costs of construction, it is imperative that Measure Q pass in November. It is time that Marin and Sonoma Counties move into the 21st century of transportation.

Nancy Richards

CABLE TV PROGRAM GUIDES

See these websites for current schedules for live broadcasts and for playbacks:

Santa Rosa (69/26) www.communitymedia.org

North County: www.ahtv.org

Petaluma: www.pca.tv

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The International Relations discussion group will meet on Tuesday, October 14, 2008, at 12 noon in the Santa Rosa League office. It is a brown-bag lunch session.

The topic for discussion is: **“U.S.-China Trade Policy.”** Recent product safety scares have thrown the spotlight on the enormous role China plays in supplying products to the U.S. Could the large and growing trade imbalance with China have an adverse effect on the U.S. economy? What role does the undervalued Chinese currency play? Check the website at www.greatdecisions.org.

Everyone is welcome with or without the Great Decisions briefing book. Printed media articles are welcome on the topic of discussion. If anyone has a question about the group, please contact me at 769-8826.

Rosalie Gillmore

CHINA AND HUMAN RIGHTS: ONE MAN’S EXPERIENCE

Thursday, October 30 7:00 PM

Merlo Auditorium

Wells Fargo Center for the Arts

The speaker, **John Kamm**, is a human rights campaigner and former businessman in China since 1972. He has traveled to Beijing more than 100 times to engage the Chinese government in a non-governmental dialogue on human rights, focusing on the treatment of prisoners and conditions in Chinese prisons. For the past 18 years he has worked with extraordinary success to free prisoners unjustly held in China and to improve China’s human rights performance.

John Kamm has received many awards for his work and in 2004 he received a MacArthur Fellowship for “designing and implementing an original approach to freeing prisoners of conscience in China.”

The United Nations Association of Sonoma County Chapter is presenting this forum, cosponsored by the **League of Women Voters of Sonoma County** and **Sonoma Academy**.

Nancy Richards

SAVE THE DATES

Saturday, November 15 General Meeting

Renata Brillinger of the Sonoma County Climate Protection Campaign will present *Local Energy Solutions for Climate Protection*. 10:30 AM to noon at the Rincon Valley Library.

Saturday, Dec. 6 Annual Social/Silent Auction

This holiday party brings in money which the League counts on for our local program. We not only need your attendance but your donations of gift quality items for the silent auction. Bring donations to Phyllis, Janie or the League office, or we can pick them up. Starts at 2:00 PM.

Janie Hawker 224 Parque Margarita, Rohnert Park 584-5210 or Phyllis Clement 753 Hurlburt, Sebastopol 823-0925.

Wednesday, January 14 Theater Party

Plan to see an exciting performance of THE SCENE, a polished dress rehearsal of the North Coast premier of this fierce, edgy, raw and scathing new comedy by Theresa Rebeck. It is all about Ego, Showbiz and a Little Black Dress.

7:00 PM-wine/dessert

8:00 PM-play

IN MEMORIAM

League member Harold Hungerford died September 10 after a long illness. He and his wife, Lynda, joined our Sonoma League in 1997 and have been strong supporters ever since. The membership extends deepest sympathy to Lynda and to the members of their family.

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.

NEW MEMBERS

Margery S. Cahn
Santa Rosa, 95405

Lorene Coconan
Sebastopol, 95472

Randy Langer
Sebastopol, 95472

Jzoy Magdelen
Santa Rosa, 95409

Betty Miller
Santa Rosa, 95405

*Barbara Tomin
Santa Rosa 95404

**EMAIL
ADDRESS
CHANGES**

Pat Eliot

*Andrea English

Deborah Nitasaka

*Jean Holroyd-Sills

*Marks additions and
corrections to
the forthcoming
2008-2009 Roster



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
click on "Membership" or "Volunteers"



HURRY TO THE MUSEUM AND REMEMBER WHY YOU LOVE PEANUTS!



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 _____

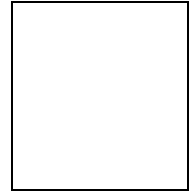
Newsletter _____ Fundraising _____

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



Return Service Requested

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 10th of the month preceding the issue month.

LATE SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER 2008 CALENDAR

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

Date	Time	Place	Description
Mon Sept 22	7:00 to 9:00 PM	Santa Rosa City Council Chambers Parking lot on First St. west of D St.	County Supervisor Candidates Forum First Dist. 7:00 PM; Third Dist. 8:00 PM
Wed Sept 24	7:00 to 8:30 PM	Lucchesi Comm. Ctr., Petaluma	Petaluma Meas. K. Water/Sewer Rate Rollback
Wed Sept 24	7:00 to ** PM	Rohnert Park City Council Chamb.	Candidates Forum - Rohnert Park City Council
Mon Sep 29	7:00 to 9:00 PM	Santa Rosa City Council Chambers	Candidates Forum - Santa Rosa City Council
Tuesday September 30	6:00 to 9:00 PM	Windsor High School	Candidates Forum - Windsor Town Council, School District, and Fire District
Wednesday, October 1	6:00 -9:00 PM	Petaluma City Council Chambers	Candidates Forums - 6:00 to 6:45 Petaluma Health Care District 7:00 to 9:00 PM Petaluma City Council
Wed. Oct 1	7:00-9:00 PM	Cotati Room behind City Hall	Candidates Forum - Cotati City Council
Thurs Oct 2	10:00 AM to Noon	League Office	Voters Service
Mon Oct 6	1:00 PM	League Office	Juvenile Justice Interest Group Meeting
Mon Oct 6	7:00-8:00 PM	Santa Rosa City Council Chambers	Forum on Proposition 11. Redistricting
Tuesday October 7	10:00 AM to Noon	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209, Santa Rosa	LWVSC Board Meeting League members only except by invitation
Wed, Oct 8	7:00 PM	Graton Community Center	Candidates Forum - 5th District Supervisor
Thurs Oct 9	10:00 AM	League Office	Action/Advocacy Meeting
Tues Oct 14	Noon	League Office	International Relations Study Group
Thurs Oct 16	10:30 AM	League Office	Book Group. See page 2
Mon Oct 20	1:00 PM	League Office	Juvenile Justice Interest Group Meeting
Tues Oct 21	10:00 AM	League Office	Membership Committee
Thurs Oct 30	7:00 PM	Merlo Theater at Wells Fargo Center	China and Human Rights. See page 6

Check out the League website: www.lwvsonoma.org for any changes in dates and times for meetings.