



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SONOMA COUNTY

Volume 11, No. 7

September 2006

SEPTEMBER KICK-OFF GENERAL MEETING

Monday, September 25

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Santa Rosa City Hall Council Chamber
100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Santa Rosa

OPEN SPACE AND RAIL TAX FORUM

FORUMS ON THE OPEN SPACE AND SMART SALES TAX MEASURES

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED

The LWVSC will be presenting a forum on two tax issues that will appear on our Sonoma County ballot on November 7.

I THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE SONOMA COUNTY AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT, 1/4 % SALES TAX

II SONOMA-MARIN AREA RAIL TRANSIT TAX (SMART), 1/4 % SALES TAX

The news media is full of conflicting facts and opinions regarding these two measures. So that we may become better informed on these vital issues your League is providing this Forum on Monday, September 25, from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM at the Santa Rosa City Hall Council Chamber at 100 Santa Rosa Avenue.

This will be a meeting you won't want to miss. It is an excellent opportunity to invite others to come and find out what the League does and to see it in action.



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

100 E Street, Suite 209
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
707-546-5943
info@lwvsonoma.org
http://www.lwvsonoma.org/

Officers:

Corol Ann Fontana-Cary, President
Willard Richards, VP Action
Jane Ernsberger, VP Administration
Chlele Gummer, Secretary
Susannah Likins, Treasurer

Directors:

George Ellman, Transportation & Land Use
Liz Hawthorne & Sandy de Lorimier,
Program
Laurie Hall & Susan Milstein, Public Relations
Olive Horrell & Ethyl Schy, Membership
Amy Southwick, Voters Service
Carol Adams, Voter Outreach

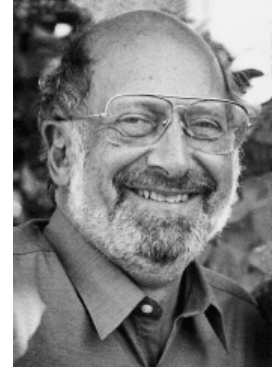
VOTER Team:

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

BOOK CLUB CORNER

At 10:30 AM on Thursday, September 21, you are invited to discuss Peter Schrag's latest book, *California: America's High-Stakes Experiment*, in the League Office, 100 E Street, Suite 209, Santa Rosa.

In this book Schrag, a contributing editor to the *Sacramento Bee*, looks at how California arrived at the point where it is nearly impossible to craft a balanced budget, to maintain an adequate infrastructure, or to elect a competent legislature. In spite of all of this, Schrag finds reason for optimism in the most controversial of places—our immigrant population. Surely there will be a lively discussion.



If you can't make the September meeting, plan to join us on the third Thursday in October when we will discuss a chapter from Martha Nussbaum's upcoming book, *The Fixed Star*. Nussbaum is a prolific author, Ernst Freund Distinguished Service Professor of Law and Ethics at the University of Chicago, and a person long committed to the examination and defense of human rights. In this chapter she examines Roger Williams' distinctive view of the concept of freedom of conscience in an attempt to recover a peculiarly American tradition of tolerance. You may call the office for a copy of the chapter or e-mail me for a link (it is a long link). At the October meeting we will also pick the books for discussion for the coming months.

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

Lynda Hungerford
539-5770
info@lwvsonoma.org

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS STUDY
GROUP**

The International Relations discussion group will meet on Tuesday, September 12, at 12 NOON at **210 Windsor Drive, Petaluma**. It is a brown-bag lunch session.

The topic for discussion will be "**India and China: partners or competitors?**" China and India have emerged on the world stage, after following different paths toward rapid economic growth. Will China and India work closer together or compete with each other to become major world powers? How will their growth affect the U.S. economy and strategic interests?

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.

VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE ON NOVEMBER 7



YES ON PROPOSITION 1B

Highway Safety, Traffic Reduction, Air Quality, Port Security Bond Act of 2006



Part of the bond package developed to help rebuild California's infrastructure. This bond act would raise \$19 billion for transportation improvements.

YES ON PROPOSITION 1C

Housing and Emergency Shelter Trust Fund Act of 2006



A bond measure to finance housing-related programs, brownfield cleanup, and parks related to infill development.

The League has long been concerned about providing adequate housing.

YES ON PROPOSITION 1D

Kindergarten-University Public Education Facilities Bond Act of 2006



This bond measure would fund new school construction, modernization, relief of overcrowding, and other school infrastructure needs. The League supports improving California's educational infrastructure.

YES ON PROPOSITION 1E

Disaster Preparedness and Flood Prevention Bond Act of 2006



This bond measure will provide funds for flood protection, levee protection in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, and storm water management. The League supports protecting our existing water supply infrastructure.

YES ON PROPOSITION 84

Water Quality, Safety and Supply. Flood Control. Natural Resource Protection. Park Improvements. Bonds



This initiative continues the League's past support of efforts to insure that California has adequate water supplies. This initiative would fund projects for safe drinking water, flood control, protection of rivers, lakes, streams, forest and wildlife conservation, and coastal protection and state parks.

NO ON PROPOSITION 85

Waiting Period and Parental Notification before Termination of Minor's Pregnancy



Parents rightfully want to be involved in their teenagers' lives, and all parents want what is best for their children. But good family communication can't be imposed by government. Mandatory notification laws may sound good, but in the real world, they just put teenagers in danger.

YES ON PROPOSITION 86

Tax on Cigarettes



This constitutional amendment imposes an additional 13-cent tax on each cigarette distributed and increases taxes on other tobacco products. The estimated \$2.1 billion in annual revenue will fund children's health coverage, emergency services and nursing education for qualified hospitals, and tobacco-use prevention programs, research and treatment of various tobacco-related illnesses. The League believes that the overwhelming social benefits of this measure greatly outweigh the potential downside of this earmarked tax.

NO ON PROPOSITION 88

Education Funding. Real Property Parcel Tax



This measure would impose a \$50 tax on each real property parcel to create the Classroom Learning and Accountability Fund in the state treasury. While the League supports equitable access to quality education, this measure violates the League's State and Local Finances positions and is not real reform. It proposes to earmark funds via a constitutional amendment without providing sufficient funding to even bring education spending up to the national average. It also involves the state for the first time in taxing property.

YES ON PROPOSITION 89

Political Campaigns. Public Financing. Corporate Tax Increase. Contribution and Expenditure Limits



This measure, the California Clean Money and Fair Elections Act of 2006, would allow candidates running for office to receive public campaign funding by meeting certain eligibility requirements. Funding would be provided for by an increase of 0.2 percent in the corporate income tax rate. This measure also imposes new limits on campaign contributions, and places new restrictions on contributions by corporations and lobbyists. The League vigorously supports practices which will enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office, and which place realistic limits on campaign contributions and expenditures.

NO ON PROPOSITION 90

Government Acquisition, Regulation of Private Property



This measure redefines the eminent domain process in ways that will make it difficult for government to protect the environment. It will likely increase costs to taxpayers for implementation of environmental protection laws or new consumer protection laws. The measure is, in part, vaguely worded and will likely result in extensive litigation.

The League has no position on Proposition 83 (Sex Offenders. Sexually Violent Predators. Punishment, Residence Restrictions and Monitoring) and will be neutral on Proposition 1A (Transportation Funding Protection) and Proposition 87 (Alternative Energy. Research, Production, Incentives. Tax on California Oil Producers).

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our Voters Service team and Action Committee are both working very hard preparing for the November election. In addition to State ballot measures, there will be two Sonoma County measures on our ballot. One of the measures will be a quarter cent sales tax to support Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit, known as SMART. Our League will support this measure jointly with the Marin League.



Because the rail line goes through both Marin and Sonoma Counties, and the measure will appear on ballots in both counties, it was necessary for both Leagues to agree on whether or not to support the measure. If one League chose not to support the measure and the other League chose to oppose it, the only position both Leagues could take was "no position".

The final decision to support the measure proceeded through many steps. Our Sonoma League discussed this at our program planning meeting in January, at several action meetings, a general meeting and at our Annual Meeting in June. The Marin League polled their members, discussed it at a well-attended action meeting where they finally reached consensus on the position which was discussed and adopted by the Marin board.

We are also supporting the Reauthorization of the Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District. We supported the original measure when it appeared on the ballot ten years ago.

We will be sponsoring a forum on September 25th in the Santa Rosa City Council chamber where voters can learn more about these two sales tax measures.

Carol Ann Fontana-Cary

REPORT OF LWVUS CONVENTION 2006 ACTION

The following motions were passed at the 2006 LWVUS Convention, held June 9-13 in Minneapolis, MN:

Motion to adopt the League of Women Voters of Illinois Death Penalty position by concurrence on the Convention floor. The position will read "The LWVUS supports the abolition of the death penalty."

Motion to adopt the following resolution related to program requiring a voter-verified paper ballot or paper record with electronic voting systems. Whereas: Some LWVs have had difficulty applying the SARA Resolution (Secure, Accurate, Recountable and Accessible) passed at the last Convention, and Whereas: Paperless

electronic voting systems are not inherently secure, can malfunction, and do not provide a recountable audit trail, therefore be it resolved that: The position on the Citizens' Right to Vote be interpreted to affirm that LWVUS supports only voting systems that are designed so that:

1. they employ a voter-verifiable paper ballot or other paper record, said paper being the official record of the voter's intent; and
2. the voter can verify, either by eye or with the aid of suitable devices for those who have impaired vision, that the paper ballot/record accurately reflects his or her intent; and
3. such verification takes place while the voter is still in the process of voting; and
4. the paper ballot/record is used for audits and recounts; and
5. the vote totals can be verified by an independent hand count of the paper ballot/record; and
6. routine audits of the paper ballot/record in randomly selected precincts can be conducted in every election, and the results published by the jurisdiction.

Motion to adopt the following resolution:

1. Elevate the restoration of our System of Checks and Balances and Separation of Powers to a top priority by specifically adding it to our Democracy Agenda for advocacy and education.
2. Denounce the erosion of our System of Checks and Balances and Separation of Powers and the resulting damage to our constitutionally guaranteed civil liberties, and
3. Call upon Congress to assume its vital role for oversight and as a co-equal branch of government responsive to the citizens its members represent.

Motion to amend the proposed program by adding: Resolved that the League of Women Voters of the United States support the concept of Internet neutrality by calling upon Congress to protect equal access to the Internet.

Motion to adopt a three year study of immigration policies.

Motion to retain all existing positions in the areas of Government, International Relations, Natural Resources, and Social Policy.

NATIONAL LEAGUE PRESIDENT CALLS ON CONGRESS TO IMPROVE VOTER PARTICIPATION

Washington, D.C. – The League of Women Voters today testified before the Committee on House Administration's *Securing the Vote* hearing in Phoenix, Arizona. At the U.S. congressional hearing, Mary G. Wilson, the national League president opposed plans to require that eligible voters show photo identification at the polling place and present documentary proof of citizenship in the voter registration process.

"Some have suggested that illegal voting by non-citizens is a significant problem in federal elections. We in the League of Women Voters do not share that view," Wilson said. "Any proposal that restricts voter registration or raises barriers to voting in order to deal with the supposed problem of non-citizen voting is a fear-based approach instead of a fact-based solution," stated Wilson.

"In modern society it is easy to assume that everyone has appropriate ID or can prove their citizenship. But it is more difficult than one might think. The costs of obtaining proof of citizenship and photo ID would clearly discourage voter participation," Wilson said.

"It makes sense that this congressional committee would come to Arizona to hold this hearing," said Bonnie F. Saunders, president of the League of Women Voters of Arizona. The Arizona League has joined a lawsuit seeking to overturn Proposition 200 which requires Arizona voters to show ID and present proof of citizenship in order to vote. "Proposition 200 will disenfranchise eligible Arizona voters," stated Saunders. "Congress needs to hear how this will make it harder for Arizonans to vote and keep it from happening across the country."

Wilson said, "We believe popular support for ID requirements reflects a misunderstanding about the difficulties in getting proper ID for even 'average' citizens, the likely discriminatory effects of such requirements, and the difficulties in administering an ID system."

"Instead of dampening the enthusiasm of voters, we need to do every thing possible to encourage and assist voters in exercising this right that we as Americans too easily take for granted," Wilson stated.

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.

THANKS TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

OPERATING FUND

Stan Gold
Lynda Hungerford
Connie Codding gave a donation toward
a new copier for the office

EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Willard and Nancy Richards
Susan Gorin

PROS AND CONS NEEDS SPEAKERS

We are in need of many speakers for the upcoming election. If you would like to participate in our Pros and Cons forums, please contact Chele Gummer at 707-537-1207.

KNOW YOUR BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Challenges of Our Interdependent Water Systems

Come enjoy a beautiful day in San Francisco, experience breakfast and the program in the lovely baroque Marines' Memorial Club Crystal Ballroom, and learn about the politics of our water supply and the safety and security of our water systems, with a special look at the Hetch Hetchy upgrades now under way.



Speakers:

- Prof. David Sunding, University of California at Berkeley, Economics: Regional Economic Importance of the San Francisco Water System
- Tony Irons, Deputy General Manager, San Francisco Public Utility Commission, Water System Improvement Program: The San Francisco Hetch Hetchy Water System, the Water System Improvement Program (WSIP)
- Bern Beecham, Chair, Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA): BAWSCA's Formation and Goals
- Nicole Sandkulla, Senior Water Resources Planner, Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency: How Are Wholesale Customers Addressing Water Conservation, Water Supply and Water System Reliability?
- Tim Ramirez, Manager, Watershed and Natural Resources Division, San Francisco Public Utilities Commission: The San Francisco Creeks and Watershed Program
- Dana Haasz, Convener, California Urban Water Conservation Council and Water Conservation Administrator, San Francisco Public Utility Commission: Promoting Water Conservation Regionally and State-wide

Location:

Marines' Memorial Club Crystal Ballroom
609 Sutter Street
San Francisco, CA 94102

Saturday, September 16:

9:00 AM: Registration
10:00 AM: Program
1:00 PM: Adjournment

Cost and Reservations:

Cost is \$17.50 for breakfast and program. To reserve your confirmed attendance, send an email to: treasurer@lwvba.ca.lwvnet.org.

MAIL YOUR CHECK FOR \$17.50 PAYABLE TO LWVBA TO TAM HEGE, 80 FLORADA AVE., PIEDMONT, CA 94610, NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 9TH.

ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

Held on June 3, 2006

The annual meeting, held at Canine Companions for Independence Training Center, 2965 Dutton Avenue, Santa Rosa, was called to order at 10:30 AM by President Carol Ann Cary. Carol Ann introduced the Past Presidents Nancy Richards, Lynn Camhi, Lynda Hungerford, Susan Gorin, and Marsha Dupre. Lynda Hungerford was appointed parliamentarian. Twenty-five members of the membership being present, Carol Ann employed the bylaw exemption about attendance at annual meetings and declared a quorum.

Rules and Procedures

The rules of the day as printed in the meeting kit were reviewed and adopted without discussion.

Order of Business

The agenda, as it appeared in the annual meeting kit, was adopted without objection.

Carol Ann appointed Marsha Dupre, Ethel Schy, and Phyllis Clement to read and correct the minutes of the 2006 Annual Meeting. Susan Gorin, Lynda Hungerford and Nancy Richards were appointed for the budget adjustment committee. George Ellman was selected timekeeper for the meeting.

Carol Ann presented a short review of the achievements of this year's board including the study of the SMART rail project and the outreach to the Hispanic community through the radio station of KBBF. She suggested that next year's activities may include a study of health care and the mentoring of elections of school boards. We are committed to follow our goals for "Meeting the Challenge" and work toward increasing our membership. Carol Ann emphasized that we need more member participation in all activities.

Treasurer's Report

Susannah Likins presented the report, which was accepted and filed for audit. Susan Gorin suggested that the Santa Rosa Downtown Assessment may be lower than we paid last year. She recommended that we contact 'Main Street' the administrating body for the project, to secure a lower assessment.

Presentation of Proposed Budget

George Ellman, chair of the budget committee, presented the Fiscal Year 2007 budget as proposed by the committee and as recommended by the board. The membership adopted the proposed budget as printed.

Presentation, Discussion and Adoption of Recommended Program

Sandy Benson, program chair, presented the recommended local program for 2006-2007 as written in the meeting kit and made a motion to adopt the recommendations of the Board to retain all current local positions and to adopt the changes made in the Transportation position.

After a break in the meeting, the members reviewed and discussed the following positions and decided to retain each of them.

- Budget Process: Sonoma County and Cities
- Cable Television Franchising in Sonoma County
- Open Government: Sonoma County and its Cities
 - After a discussion on this position it was suggested that School Districts be included. It was recommended that a more thorough review be done later. The position was retained as printed.
- Santa Rosa General Plan
 - After discussion it was suggested that this be brought forward to the program committee in January for further review and change. There was a general feeling that it should include other cities. The position was retained as printed.
- Sewage Treatment – Wastewater and Sludge
- Sonoma County General Plan
- Transportation
 - Earlier this position was updated to include rail. It was retained as printed.
- Financing Local Schools
- Living Wage

Report of the Nominating Committee

Lynn Camhi, chair of the nominating committee, presented a slate of nominations to the board and to off-board positions that were approved by the membership. Since there was no one filling the position of President, it was suggested that the Board would decide how to proceed until the position was filled.

Those nominated for next year's nominating committee, Phyllis Clement (chair), Sandy Benson and Alice Richardson were approved by the membership.

Directions to the New Board

Susan Gorin recommended that we have monthly programs at varying times and places. We could coordinate these with other organizations as cosponsors. This may help broaden our base. She also encouraged the board to revisit the Open Government position and to have a forum for the membership on the General Plan when it is updated. She suggested we invite various experts to speak at that forum.

Marsha Dupre suggested we include the Community College and School Districts in our Open Government position. Also, she suggested we include the availability of child care, transportation and ADA compliance in the announcements of forums and meetings in the VOTER.

Lynn Camhi suggested we use LWVC's Trudy Schaffer as a speaker.

Stan Gold said we need a process for contacting members needed to sign petitions or letters to government officials. It was suggested that such items can be listed in the VOTER.

Announcements/Reports/Other Business

Liz Hawthorn asked members to sign the petition for inclusion on the November ballot of the health insurance initiative.

Janie Hawker announced that plans are made for the theater fundraiser in March. She invited members to join her Hospitality committee.

Carol Adams announced that four more people were needed for the distribution of voter registration materials. Also she asked for volunteers to staff tables at the high schools to register 18 year olds in this coming August and September. Ethel Schy asked members to take applications to distribute to their friends.

Ann Berens described 'Restorative Resources' which is a juvenile justice program in Sebastopol. She invited members to become involved in this process.

Willard Richards presented Carol Ann with a gift acknowledging her service as President for the last two years. Carol Ann thanked the past Board for all of their help throughout the year.

Adjournment

Carol Ann adjourned the meeting at 12:05 PM

After the meeting the members enjoyed a potluck luncheon. Guest speaker Lynn Garric, from the Sonoma County Office of Education, gave a talk entitled "Promoting Youth Success: What the Community Can Do to Reduce High Risk Behaviors Among Youth" in which she detailed the data of several studies on the perceptions of worth by students at various ages throughout their school experience. The data showed that care and concern as perceived by youth is the most valuable aspect of their self-image. Secondly it showed that youth need to feel they are needed in the community.

Respectfully submitted,

Chlele Gummer

Secretary

(The Treasurer's Report, the Budget Report, the Local Positions, the Nominating Committee slate and the Annual Meeting kit are filed with the annual meeting minutes.)

BOARD BRIEFS

July 21 and August 3, 2006

The board met twice this summer and the following report includes actions of both meetings

Treasurer's Report

This year we had a deficit of \$197.48. In response to this year's fundraising letters, only \$785 was collected comparing poorly to the usual \$2000. The board agreed that the letters must be sent out earlier, in March. At the National League convention this year, the National PMP was increased from \$23.90 to \$26.30. Board action: Because of the deficit, the lack of moneys from the fundraising letters, and the increase of National dues, the board agreed to increase our dues (individual from \$50 to \$60, family from \$75 to \$90 and the limited income dues from \$37 to \$40). Jack Dupre moved and George Ellman seconded that motion. This action must be affirmed at the next annual meeting.

Voters Service

Amy Southwick announced all election deadlines. She listed the dates of Voters Service meetings (Thursdays September 14 and October 5). Dates have been set for candidate debates at the Santa Rosa City Council Chamber: September 25-Open Space and Rail Tax Forum, October 2-Santa Rosa City Council Candidate debates. October 9th is the California State Propositions 89 & 90 forum. October 5 is the Petaluma Council Candidate debates. There are two county ballot measures: SMART (train tax) and Open Space (renewal of tax levy). Our League supports both positions. We are waiting for the Marin LWV to decide their SMART position. If they are against the issue, we are committed, then, to remain neutral. Voter registration deadline is October 23. LWVSC will have a booth at the Harvest Fair. Carol Adams is organizing the registration of high school seniors at the high schools. She will have a meeting of the 'Outreach' group in September.

Program

The board decided to use the reservation of the Santa Rosa City Council Chamber on Monday, September 25, for our annual Kick-Off Meeting. The two local ballot measures will be debated: Open Space and SMART. The Program committee will engage speakers on both sides even though LWVSC supports both.

Action

The board agreed to support the Sonoma County Water Coalition updated plan for energy conservation to be proposed for the County's General Plan. They also decided to support the Open Space ballot measure as we did when it was first proposed in 1990.

Membership

Carol Ann listed three projects that the membership committee is doing this year: 1) streamlining the membership packet that is sent out to prospective members, 2) creating a one page flyer for Healdsburg

Welcome Wagon to use in their newcomer packets, and 3) working towards increasing Cloverdale's membership.

Chlele Gummer

Secretary

ACTION COMMITTEE REPORT

The LWVSC is a member of the Sonoma County Water Coalition (SCWC), which now includes 32 organizations representing more than 27,000 citizens. On August 10, the SCWC submitted recommendations for changes in the Water Resources Element of the Sonoma County General Plan Update, which is scheduled to be heard by the Sonoma County Planning Commission on August 15. Roni Jacobi represented the League during the development of these recommendations. When they were submitted to the Action Committee and then to the Board for approval, questions were raised about two of the recommendations. Willard Richards and Roni Jacobi worked with the SCWC leaders to develop revised wording for these two recommendations that could be supported by League positions, and those revisions were subsequently accepted by all members of the SCWC.

Among other things, the letter recommends that the Water Resources Element be strengthened to include more study, monitoring and regulation of ground water supplies. Protection of recharge areas is also recommended. At present, the landowner with the deepest straw wins, and a large well can cause neighboring wells to go dry. Also, ground water is scarce enough in some areas in Sonoma County that homeowners must truck in water during the dry months. To learn more, check the Sonoma County Water Coalition website (<http://www.scwatercoalition.org/>). If you wish to see the SCWC recommendations before they are posted on the SCWC website, send a request to action@lwvsonoma.org.

The August meeting of the Action Committee discussed cooperating with Restorative Resources, an organization that works with both the victims and perpetrators of juvenile crime to break the cycle of abuse and neglect so often present in offenders. If you are interested, contact Ann Berens. The meeting also discussed action on pending legislation and measures on the November ballot. Articles on these appear elsewhere in this issue.

The Action Committee meets the third Tuesday of each month at 10 AM in the League office. The September meeting will include a discussion of action on the ballot measures.

Save November 21 for a discussion of water issues in Sonoma County. Stephen Fuller-Rowell of the Sonoma County Water Coalition is currently scheduled to lead the discussion.

Willard Richards

Action Chair

HEALTH CARE – SB840

In August, the State of California is about to take a giant step toward radical reform of the health care system. After years of preparation, the final vote in the State Assembly is scheduled by Aug. 31. If successful, SB 840 could be on the Governor's desk for his signature by Sept. 30. Learn the results by going to <http://www.onecarenow.org>.

SB 840 provides for a single payer health insurance plan, administered by the state. Progress thus far indicates the beginning of a shift in public attitude and a readiness for government action of the health care crisis.

This bill covers governance of the system, coverage, cost management, and an outline of plan funding. Next year, work begins on a funding bill to fold in all government funding with privately contracted insurance to one insurance fund. As a financial bill, two-thirds approval will be required.

At present, California is spending over \$5000 per person per year for all health care services. While this is at least \$2000 more than any other country, the US ranks 34th in the world in quality of health care. Governmental funding supplies 44%. The other 56% comes from private sources (you and I). An estimated 50% of our costs go to administration, clinical waste, excessive drug prices, and fraud leaving California with 6.6 million persons with no insurance. Even when the single payer plan has a potential savings of up to \$8 billion in health care costs each year for Californians, the road ahead will not be easy.

Beyond all the controversy within the democratic system, expect massive lobbying, possible referendums, and all out publicity campaigns from those with entrenched interest in status quo. For this reason, Health Care for All and LWVC have started a year long program to raise public awareness and create a grass roots movement that will bring true change. Every day for the next year a town will have an event to arouse support. The point is that every person deserves adequate health care, and that it is a social responsibility.

Bob Hawthorne

Action Committee Member

SMART NEWS

United we stand.



Standard LWV policy requires that when a civic program occurs in regions that cover more than one League district, both (or all) of them need to agree about policies, principles, wording, whatever is the required element before any of them can take a public position on the program.

That was exactly the situation regarding the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit District tax measure that will be on the Nov. 7 ballot in both counties.

Both local leagues held meetings to advise their respective Boards of membership feelings on the matter. The most recent was held in Marin Aug. 7. The Sonoma League had met some months earlier.

My recollections of each of these meetings was that a substantial portion of the members present at both meetings offered words that were supportive of the proposed tax measure. The portion of the group that opposed it was about 20% of the group, in my opinion. In both instances, the respective Boards responded in a subsequent meeting by supporting the measure. Had they not done so, neither local league could have taken a position.

Consequently, you will see something in the local press noting that the League of Women Voters is supporting the sales tax measure.

George Ellman

NEWS FROM VOTERS SERVICE

CONTESTS ON SONOMA COUNTY BALLOTS: FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY AND LOCAL OFFICES

State and national offices in the November general election are:

- Governor and Lieutenant Governor
- Secretary of State
- Controller
- Treasurer
- Attorney General
- Insurance Commissioner
- Member, State Board of Equalization (1st District)
- United States Senator
- United States Representative in Congress (1st and 6th Districts)
- State Senator (2nd District)
- Member of the State Assembly (1st, 6th and 7th Districts)
- Judgeships in the state court system
- State Superintendent of Public Instruction

All candidates were contacted about using SmartVoter when extended filing closed on August 16.

The LWVSC and the League of Women Voters of Marin County are again co-sponsoring a debate between/among the candidates for the **6th U.S. Congressional District**, which includes all of Marin and the southern part of Sonoma counties. The debate will be videotaped for rebroadcast on Petaluma Community Access and KRCB-TV.

The **1st U.S. Congressional District** covers the rest of Sonoma County, all of Mendocino County, large parts of Humboldt and Del Norte counties, as well as slices of Napa and Yolo counties, so it may be a good fit for a studio debate and later rebroadcasts. Voters Service will explore this option and the possibility of cooperation with LWV Mendocino.

Several positions on the County's boards of education and special district boards will also be on the ballot. LWVSC invites all school and junior college district candidates to use SmartVoter for posting their statements and creating links to their own sites.

Cities in Sonoma County will also be electing council members and/or mayors, so there will be plenty of opportunity to get involved with helping to put on forums. Please contact me.

Amy Southwick

VOTERS SERVICE LIST OF IMPORTANT DATES FOR UPCOMING NOVEMBER 7, 2006 GENERAL ELECTION

October *	
October 2	Santa Rosa City Council candidates' debate: 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM; Santa Rosa City Council Chamber. Coordinator: Steve Rabinowitsh. Moderator: Betty Ann Bruno.
October 4	Petaluma City Council candidates' debate: 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM. Petaluma City Council Chamber. Coordinators: LWVSC: Rosalie Gillmore and AAUW: Sandy Benson
October 5	Voters Service meeting: Santa Rosa League office, 10:00 AM - Noon.
October 9	Absentee voting starts
October 9	California State Propositions 89 & 90 forum presented by LWVSC: 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM; Santa Rosa City Council Chamber
October 23	Registration deadline
October 31	Deadline for requesting absentee ballot by mail
November 7	Election Day

* The League of Women Voters of Sonoma County and the League of Women Voters of Marin County will co-sponsor the 6th District State Assembly debate and the 6th Congressional District debate in Marin County. The dates for those debates have not been confirmed as of this printing and they will likely be held in early October; the information will appear in the October VOTER.

Amy Southwick

OFFICIAL CANVASS AND CERTIFICATION

The Official Canvass must be started by November 9 and is done by staff in order to audit the accuracy of the records and procedures in the conduct of the election. It includes the public process of manual tallying of votes in 1% of the precincts which is to verify the accuracy of the automated vote count. Citizens may view this process.

The Certification of the Vote is done by the Registrar of Voters' report of the final election results by December 5 to the Board of Supervisors. By December 12, the Board's Certification of the vote is required to be forwarded to the Secretary of State.

Submitted by Eve Roberson

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

LOCAL

Gail Barrett

Donna Roper

Sue Scott

Evelina Molina

NATIONAL

Mrs. Douglas Hallock (Mary)



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"




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.

SEPTEMBER 2006 CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are open to the public.

Date	Time	Place	Description
Tuesday September 5	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 September 12	12 NOON	210 Windsor Drive Petaluma	International Relations Study Group "India and China: partners or competitors" See p. 2.
Thursday September 14	10:00 AM – 12 NOON	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Voters Service Meeting See p. 10.
Tuesday September 19	10:00 AM	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Action Committee
Monday September 25	7:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Santa Rosa City Hall Council Chamber	Open Space and Rail Tax Forum See p. 1.
Thursday September 28	TBA	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Pros & Cons Training Trainer: Chlele Gummer
Monday October 2	7:00 PM – 8:30 PM	Santa Rosa City Council Chambers	Santa Rosa City Council candidates' debate
Wednesday October 4	7:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Petaluma City Council Chamber	Petaluma City Council candidates' debate
Monday October 9	7:00 PM – 8:30 PM	Santa Rosa City Council Chamber	LWVSC California State Propositions presentation

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