



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SONOMA COUNTY

Volume 9, No. 2

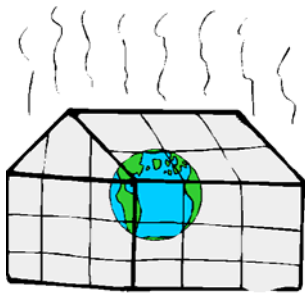
March 2004

MARCH PROGRAM

**The League of Women Voters Invites You
to WELCOME SPRING!**

Saturday, March 27th
10:00 AM - 12:00 Noon

First United Methodist Church
1551 Montgomery Drive
Santa Rosa



**"GREENHOUSE GAS—
WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?"**

COME AND HEAR.....

**What is your city doing about
it?**

What can YOU do about it?

Speakers:

Ann Hancock, Director of Climate Protection Program in
Sonoma County

Pamela Torliatt, Petaluma City Councilwoman and ABAG
Delegate to Bay Area Air Quality Management
District

Ken Wells, Director of Sonoma County Waste Management
Agency

LWV-SPONSORED FORUMS MAKE AN IMPACT. SEE P. 4.



From left to right are Doug Ernst from the Napa Valley Register and Chris Denina from the Vallejo Times-Herald, Moderator Betty Ann Bruno, and 7th Assembly District Candidates Noreen Evans and Jim Leddy. Photo by Craig Scheiner.



**Richard Kimball,
President of Project
Vote Smart, in
Petaluma on Feb. 29.
See p. 2.**

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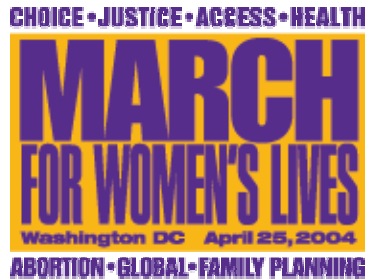
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LWVUS CO-SPONSORS MARCH FOR WOMEN'S LIVES



A reminder that the March for Women's Lives takes place on April 25 in Washington, DC.

A local League member has offered to give some financial assistance to someone who might want to go but cannot afford the full cost. See your February VOTER for details of the program. Check out the website at



<http://www.marchforwomen.org/>.

Call Lynda Hungerford at 539-770 for information.

ACTION COMMITTEE REPORT

We have responded to Action Alerts on both the national and state level. Nationally, we have joined other Leagues in opposing the National Energy Bill, which undermines the Clean Air Act and makes global warming significantly more detrimental. It fails to provide needed energy conservation measures and contains provisions harmful to public health and the environment. It increases pollution through huge new incentives for burning coal, oil and gas.

In the California legislature, the League supports SB 921 (Kuehl) and SB 2 (Burton & Speier). SB 921 creates a publicly financed system of universal health benefits for every Californian. SB 2 provides employment-based health care, taking a step forward toward universal health care by covering the majority of uninsured Californians.

Phyllis Stanley
VP, Action

IN MEMORIAM

Betty Meyer
1924 - 2004

The League of Women Voters of Sonoma County

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RICHARD KIMBALL, PRESIDENT OF PROJECT VOTE SMART IN PETALUMA

Richard Kimball, President of Project Vote Smart, will be in Petaluma on Sunday, Feb. 29 at 6 PM at the Petaluma Community Access Station for a taping of the program. League members are being especially invited to attend and bring any questions they might have. The station is located at Casa Grande High School at 333 Casa Grande Rd. (Hwy. 101 S. from Santa Rosa, Hwy. 116 East, Casa Grande Rd. to the school.)

Project Vote Smart is a non-profit, non-partisan organization located in the Montana mountains that is often called the "Voter's Self Defense System" because it reports on over 40,000 national candidates and elected officials' voting records, issue statements, campaign finances and endorsements.

Having an extra day for Leap Year Sunday, Feb. 29, 2004 may prove to be a lucky day for League members who have an opportunity to meet a very charismatic person dedicated to our democracy and informing voters.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Two relatively new members to the League joined us at our last board meeting. Although the meeting lasted about 2 ½ hours, both were glad they came and neither confessed to being bored.

A comment from one was "Before you invited me, I didn't know that board meetings were open to members." Another comment was, "There's a lot that goes on in the League."



This VOTER has a great deal of information about happenings at the State and National levels of League as well as what is going on in our local League. But there is a lot more discussion and planning that go on in board meetings. High on the list for February's meeting was "Can we afford to renew our office lease and how can we raise money to help pay for it?" Board members reported on their activities for the month, planning forums on candidates and issues, discussing the study of cities' general plans, writing letters to state and national representatives on various legislative bills, planning for upcoming events such as the Program Planning meeting, the theater party, a March forum on Energy and Climate Control, an Oakmont unit meeting, continuing efforts on campaign finance reform for Santa Rosa, and more.

I want to take this opportunity to invite members, especially new League members, to come to a board meeting. Many people believe that you have to be a real whiz on politics and issues to join the League. Some people join the League but worry that they don't know enough to get involved. To the first group, I would say, "Join the League so you can become a whiz at understanding issues." To members who fear to dip a toe in the water, I would advise you to jump in. Most members who are involved in the League started out not knowing much about League. Although board meetings are not open to the general public, once you have joined, the door is open.

There is always more that League could do but for a shortage of people power. Once you attend a meeting or two, I think that you will want to become more involved. Hope to see you at the League office on Election Day - Tuesday, March 2, at 10:00 AM or any first Tuesday of each month.

Nancy Richards

NEWS FROM STATE LEAGUE

State Leadership Council

The State Leadership Council will be held in Sacramento May 14 and 15. This Council, held every other year, is a must for local League presidents but is open to all members. The workshops will provide an opportunity for communication about an array of League programs and activities. Give Nancy Richards a call at 575-7160 if you are interested in attending or want to find out more about it.



February LWVC VOTER will not be mailed.

February's California VOTER will not be printed and mailed. It will appear only on the LWVC website in PDF format. To download the California VOTER, go to the LWVC home page: <http://ca.lwv.org>, select "News/Newsletters" under "The League" on the left. On the next screen, select "California VOTER".

The complete URL for the page is:
<http://ca.lwv.org/lwvc/publications/voter/index.html>

If you do not have a computer and would like a copy of the California VOTER, please call Nancy Richards at 575-7160.

SPEAKERS BUREAU

We are lucky to have several speakers who have experience discussing ballot measures. The League is a sponsor of Proposition 56, and we were invited by AAUW and the Santa Rosa Rotary Club to present the argument in favor of this measure. Ethel Schy and Lynda Hungerford, respectively, made these presentations. If passed, Proposition 56 would decrease the majority required in the California Legislature to pass a budget to 55%. It would also require establishing a reserve account and cause the legislators and Governor to lose their salary every day that the budget is late.

The League also gives impartial presentations of the Pros and Cons of the ballot measures. Requests for seven of these presentations are being filled by the above speakers plus Lynn Camhi, Len and Adrienne Swenson, and Janie Hawker. Helping to inform voters is an important mission of the League.

We often receive requests to help register voters. Please volunteer if you would like to help with these Voters Service activities.

Willard Richards
Voters Service Chair

MARCH 2 ELECTION FORUMS

The League of Women Voters of Sonoma County organized and co-sponsored three evenings of forums for the March 2 Primary Election.

The January 26 and February 2 forums in the Santa Rosa City Council Chambers were co-sponsored with the Santa Rosa Junior College Social Science Department and the American Association of University Women Santa Rosa Branch. They were broadcast live and rebroadcast on Santa Rosa Community Media Access Channel 70.

The first hour of the January 26 forum was a debate between Noreen Evans and Jim Leddy, candidates for the Democratic nomination for the 7th Assembly District of the California Legislature. The second hour was on the local effects of the California budget. The speakers were Rod Dole, Sonoma County Auditor-Controller; Carl Wong, Sonoma County Superintendent of Schools; and Jeff Kolin, Santa Rosa City Manager.

Proposition 98 protects school budgets, but city and county budgets have been declining recently. Carl Wong calculated that schools cost \$4.63 per student hour in his district. Jeff Kolin said that the average Santa Rosa resident pays less than \$43 per month for City services such as Fire, Police, Recreation and Parks, Public Works and Community Development while the average California resident pays about \$133 per month in taxes to the State of California.

The first hour of the February 2 forum was a debate between Tim Smith, incumbent, and Veronica Jacobi for the Third District Sonoma County Supervisor. A standing room only audience attended the second hour on Santa Rosa Measure F. Areas of disagreement among the six panel members included the net profits to nonprofits that sold fireworks, the practicality of other fundraising methods, and the harm caused by the illegal use of legal fireworks under the existing ordinance.

The February 6 forum in the KRCB TV studio was a new experiment for both KRCB and the League who co-sponsored this event. The KRCB broadcast area covers the 7th Assembly District, including Vallejo, as well as parts of San Francisco and the East Bay. The first hour was a debate between Jim Leddy and Noreen Evans. The second hour was a discussion of the California budget organized by KRCB and moderated by Jonathan Blease of KRCB. The panelists were Kerry Mazzoni, previously California Secretary of Education and Assemblymember; David McCuan, Sonoma State University Professor; and Sean Randolph, President of the Bay Area Economic Forum. Telephone and e-mail questions came from the entire KRCB TV listening area.

Willard Richards

Voters Service Chair

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS STUDY GROUP

The International Relations study group meets the second Tuesday of the month in the Santa Rosa League office. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 9, 2004 at 12:00 noon. The topic planned for the *Great Decisions* discussion is: "U.S.-Latin American relations post-9/11. Rebounding from economic crises and unstable governments, Latin American countries are still seeking to balance internal stability with regional prosperity. How will Latin American governments overcome these challenges?"



Please feel free to bring current material from publications or invite anyone who is knowledgeable about the topic so we can learn more and add to our lively discussion. It is a brown-bag lunch session. All members are welcome.

If you have any questions, please contact Rosalie Gillmore at 769-8826 or Gillmore_R@msn.com.

Rosalie Gillmore



**ELECTION DAY IS
MARCH 2.**

**Vote with the League:
Yes on Propositions 55 and 56**

BOARD BRIEFS

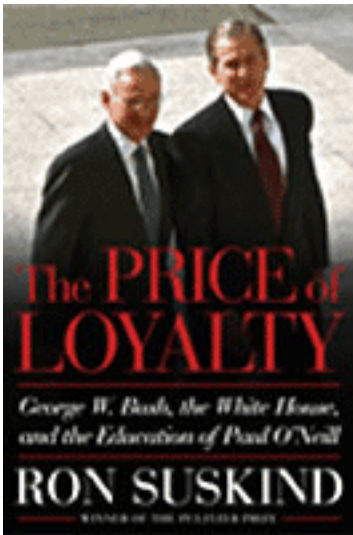
The Board met on February 3 with four non-board members present and heard:

- Updates on plans for future events, including the Program Planning meeting, Theater Party, Oakmont get-acquainted meeting and March Climate Control meeting.
- Willard Richards is working with the City Attorney of Santa Rosa, Brien Farrell, on the final wording of the Campaign Finance Reform Law.
- Our office lease will soon expire and plans must be made to stay where we are or find another location.
- Voter Verified Paper Trails will be discussed at the Program Planning meeting on February 26.

Phyllis Clement

Secretary

BOOK CLUB CORNER



The next meeting of the League's book club will be Thursday, March 18, at 10.30 AM at 2191 Siesta Lane, Santa Rosa. All members and guests are welcome to join in the discussion of the selected book.

The book for March is *The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill* by Ron Suskind, a reporter, who, during his tenure at *The Wall Street Journal*, won the Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing.

The Price of Loyalty describes the workings of the Bush White House based on the reports of Paul O'Neill, a former and disaffected member of the inner circle. The book has received much media attention. Is it cheap sniping or informed analysis? Read the original, discuss it with fellow Leaguers and then decide.

Lynda Hungerford

GET READY TO VOTE!

The League's January meeting offered information on two nonpartisan websites that voters can access to inform themselves as to candidates and ballot issues in the March 2 election.



From left to right are Dina Angress, moderator Carole Bennett, Tony Miller, and Lynda Hungerford. Photo by Willard Richards.

The first presentation was by Lynda Hungerford, who explained the information available on the League's website. Using a computer and a projector, she demonstrated how to search the Smart Voter website (www.smartvoter.org) for information on all local and state candidates. Since Lynda is the person who keeps the website updated, she very ably answered the questions that followed the presentation.

Dina Angress, an Ambassador for Project Vote Smart (aka "The Voter's Self Defense System") presented information on this website, which is also nonpartisan. Project Vote Smart (www.Vote-Smart.org) provides reports on all national and some state candidates for public office. This website lists the biographical data, voting records, donations, endorsements and positions on important issues of over 40,000 elected officials and candidates.

The highlight of the program was an update by Tony Miller, Elections Attorney for the Secretary of State's office, on Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) voting machines for casting ballots in elections. He noted that the Secretary of State had recently directed that all electronic voting machines in California should provide an auditable paper trail, to assure accuracy of the vote count and to avoid fraud in the recording or counting of votes. Tony is also a member of The League of Women Voters in Sacramento, California.

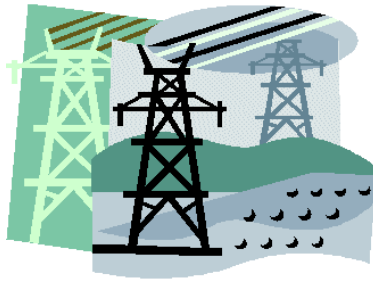
The moderator was Carole Bennett and refreshments were by Janie Hawker.

Eve Roberson

VP Program

KEEPING CALIFORNIA'S LIGHTS ON

The League and Energy



For one startling moment at LWVC convention 2003, the lights went out all over the auditorium. For several miserable days in August 2003, electricity went out all over the eastern part of the United States and Canada. And for a

long hot summer in 2001, the threat of rolling blackouts became part of the daily life of all Californians.

These warnings from our power lines point out the crucial importance in this new century of finding the **best way to secure and deliver an adequate and reliable supply** of electricity for the state. New decisions will be made in Sacramento and in our local communities; new sources of energy and new techniques of delivering it will continue to evolve. The League wants to be in a position to influence public energy policy with its principles. Unfortunately, our Energy Position was last updated in 1980—that is, in a past century! In its day, it was a thoughtful position. Today, we are critically aware of its limitations.

Our 1980 Position permits us to speak on:

- **Conservation**
- **Renewable sources**
- **Siting of facilities**
- **Tax incentives for conservation and renewables**

This leaves **a number of issues on which we cannot speak**. Before 2001, we were concerned about a shortage of supplies and transmission facilities. Then came a **“perfect storm”** which peaked in 2001—drought in the northwest, extreme heat in the southwest, excessive and unregulated prices of natural gas from out of state, bottlenecks in related markets, unexpectedly high business growth in the technology sector, and a flawed attempt at deregulation. Through this experience we gained a new perspective on energy questions. We now see many additional areas calling for an Updated Energy Position. We need to be able to address:

- **Integration of energy policy – from production to transmission to delivery**
- **Regulation or de-regulation - how much?**
- **State and federal energy market conflicts**
- **Investor-Owned Utilities (IOU) or Public Utilities or both**
- **Distributed Energy Resources (DER)***

During the coming months, we will be producing a series of articles expanding on all of these questions. We hope you will read them thoughtfully and bring **your light** to

the League by joining in the study to Update the LWVC Energy Position.

*Distributed Energy Resources are small-scale power generation technologies (typically in the range of 3 to 10,000 kW) located close to where electricity is used (e.g., a home or business) to provide an alternative to or an enhancement of the traditional electric power system.

Source: LWVC

NEW MEMBER

Susan Milstein
5804 Owl Hill Ave.
Santa Rosa, CA 95409
538-5402
susanmil@pacbell.net

ROSTER CHANGES


Glenice and Larz Anderson
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Sofia Lueck
New email: lueck3@sbcglobal.net

Fran Tanti
New email: frantanti@sbcglobal.net

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**Join the Gang –
Become a member of the
Charles M. Schulz Museum**



We have a world-class museum as an attraction in our county. Memberships are important to sustain the museum, and every membership level rewards YOU!

Call Maite @ 579-4452 ext. 108
or visit the Museum web site:
www.SchulzMuseum.org
Click on Membership.



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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. (\$49.00 for individual annual membership, \$70.00 for household, and \$35.00 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 local League is offering a trial membership for \$15 during the months of February and March. The membership is good until the end of our fiscal year, June 30, 2004.

MARCH 2004 CALENDAR

[Click here to link to the Calendar](#)