



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SONOMA COUNTY

Volume 8, No. 9

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The League of Women Voters of Sonoma County

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THE PATRIOT ACT

Forum Meeting
Saturday, November 15
10:00 AM to Noon
Santa Rosa City Council Chambers
100 Santa Rosa Ave., Santa Rosa



(See p. 3 for more information.)

TRANSPORTATION 2030 PUBLIC FORUM

*Sponsored by LWVBA Education Fund and the
Metropolitan Transportation Commission*

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2003
9:30 AM to 1:30 PM
VALLEJO NAVAL & HISTORICAL MUSEUM
(Vallejo's former City Hall)
734 Marin Street
Vallejo
(See p. 4 for more information.)



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

With short notice for the October 7 election, local and state League members managed to cover the bases well. Members who fill the registration boxes throughout Sonoma County made more trips than usual to keep those boxes filled. Easy Voter Guides in 4 languages were distributed around the County, as were the Pros and Cons. Our kick-off membership meeting at the Santa Rosa City Hall was very well attended, probably partly due to the program on the recall. The State League's recommendation to vote "no" on propositions 53 and 54 quite likely contributed to the defeat of those two initiatives.



Since the League takes pride in its long and respected history as a nonpartisan voter education organization and does not arbitrarily include or exclude candidates on party affiliation, an explanation concerning one element of the election is in order.

Peter Camejo's remarks stating that the League had "excluded" him from debates in Los Angeles and San Diego had those Leagues' phones ringing off the hook. Even our Sonoma County League received calls wanting to know why Mr. Camejo was being excluded.

With 135 candidates for governor, it was necessary to set quantifiable and impartial criteria for the debates. The League and the other co-sponsors set 3% support as the threshold for a candidate to qualify for inclusion in the debates. All candidates were informed of the criteria. At the time of Peter Camejo's remarks, his candidacy was polled at 2%.

A later poll closer to the election showed that Mr. Camejo's support had increased to 3% and he was ultimately included in the debates. Every candidate was invited to post information on the League's Smart Voter Website and Mr. Camejo appeared, as well, in the Easy Voter Guide in which the League is a partner.

And the beat goes on. There will be elections in November with Cotati looking at zoning changes to increase sales tax income, Petaluma considering a utility tax to fund street repair, and other local issues, but it is not too early to be looking to the March primaries. Now is not too early to organize a dynamic speakers bureau that will present the exciting pros and cons of initiatives. Think about joining the group. I guarantee that you will really know the issues before you vote.

Nancy Richards

STATE AND LOCAL FINANCES

Delegates to the LWVC convention in May chose State and Local Finances (SLF) as one of their Issues for Emphasis. Excerpts from the goal for this emphasis state, "The education focus will include educating our members, encouraging local Leagues to engage in community education activities, monitoring current proposals, and encouraging public involvement. Citizen education on the state budget process and state/local fiscal relationships and proposals for improvement will be a focus. The action agenda will include tracking legislation and advocacy in the state legislature based on the LWVC position and legislative priority." This is the second in a series of articles on this important issue from LWVC.

**Something to Think About—
Doing the Math**

Assume a neighbor earns \$1 million annually and you earn \$30,000. You buy a used Ford Escort for \$10,000. With a sales tax of 7% you pay \$700 in sales tax; this is 2.3 percent of your yearly income. Your neighbor buys a new BMW for \$40,000; he pays \$2,800 in sales tax or 3/10 of 1 percent (0.3%) of his income for the tax on his car purchase.



You each need a new refrigerator and purchase the same model for \$900. About \$63 in sales tax is almost 11 percent of your weekly paycheck. Your richer neighbor pays 1/3 of 1 percent of his weekly paycheck in sales tax for the same item.

You are contributing 12 times as much of your income in sales tax to support your state government as your neighbor, despite the fact that his income far exceeds yours.

It quickly becomes apparent that the sales tax has a far greater impact on the middle class and working poor than on the wealthy.

Dick Seeley,
LWV Glendale/Burbank

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.

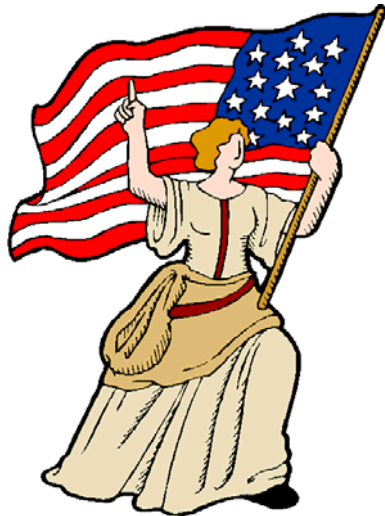
NOVEMBER FORUM

OCTOBER BOARD BRIEFS

The Patriot Act

The Patriot Act has been in the news from time to time with information and misinformation about what the measure calls for and how it is being used.

The League has organized a panel of speakers to explain the Act and to present a spectrum of views on it. Professor David McCuan from the Political Science Department at Sonoma State University will speak about the general concept of the Act. Judith Volkart, the former chair of the Sonoma County ACLU, will address issues that the ACLU has with the Act. From the U.S.



Attorney's office in San Francisco, we will have Mark Zanides, Asst. U.S. Attorney, Chief, Anti-Terrorist Section. He will present the provisions of the Patriot Act. In addition, we are fortunate to have a new member in our Sonoma County League, Betty Ann Bruno, former newscaster for Channel 2 in San Francisco, to moderate the program.

Many Leagues throughout the country have presented programs on the Patriot Act to large audiences. This should prove to be a very interesting and informative program.

Please plan to attend on Saturday, November 15, 2003, from 10:00 AM to Noon at the Santa Rosa City Council Chambers, 100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Santa Rosa.

Key discussion points from the October 1st board meeting:

- Jack Dupre presented a proposed policy for inclusion of events of other organizations and inserts in the VOTER. Following a discussion, Jack will prepare a revised policy and present it at the next board meeting.
- George Ellman will chair the local study of the General Plans of the cities of Sonoma County in light of the League position on the Santa Rosa General Plan.
- Nancy Richards received an explanation of why Peter Camejo was excluded from debates co-sponsored by the League. The board recommended that this explanation be included in the VOTER.
- Susan Gorin will present a statement to the Santa Rosa School Board in support of teaching respect for all individuals and intolerance of harassment and violence, and the use of in-service training to help teachers understand personnel/student rights and responsibilities.
- The Board agreed to make flyers about Travel Concepts International (TCI) available at League general meetings. State and local League receive a donation from TCI each time a League member signs up for a tour with that company.
- The Board approved a proposal by George Ellman to draft a letter expressing interest in the status of negotiations between the SMART board and the City of Santa Rosa regarding the lease of SMART property in Railroad Square.
- Willard Richards reported that 17 League members have volunteered to register voters at the Harvest Fair. The Board voted in favor of spending \$30 to pay for those volunteers' admissions that are not covered by the County.
- Action Committee will look into the Santa Rosa City Council's Study Sessions being televised and held in the City Council Chambers where more of the public may be seated.

THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS!

Education Fund:

Patricia Spicer
Greta Goulden
Nancy and Willard Richards
Esther Meskis
Ellen Brosbe
Phyllis and Robert Clement
Susan Gorin
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Barbara Biebush
Caroline Ramberg
Ethel and Stuart Schy
Maurine Olson
Ruth Belmont
Louisa Leavitt
Myrtle Cox

WHAT WILL BAY AREA TRANSPORTATION LOOK LIKE IN 2030?

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD ON REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

- **Come and learn the issues**
- **Give MTC your input**

The Bay Area League of Women Voters (LWVBA) will present a public outreach forum November 22, 2003 at the Vallejo Naval & Historical Museum for public input into the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Regional Transportation 2030 planning process to develop a long-range policy and investment plan for the nine-county Bay Area.

The public is invited to get involved with input that will help guide the draft Transportation 2030 plan. MTC information is available at <http://www.mtc.ca.gov/T2030>, or by calling 510-464-7841.

The November 22 forum will take place in Vallejo's historic former City Hall, 734 Marin Street from 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM and will include a panel, Q & A, and break-out sessions.



Attendees/invitees include

Steve Kinsey, MTC Chair (Marin County); James Spering, MTC Commissioner (Solano County); Daryl Halls, Solano Transportation Authority (STA); Mike Zdon, Napa County Transportation Planning Authority (NCTPA); Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA); James Corless, Surface Transportation Policy Project. Lunch is included courtesy of MTC.

Please reserve early and avail yourself of the Bay Area League's opportunity to participate in the Regional Transportation Plan 2030 (RTP2030) planning process.

This forum is free and open to the public. To reserve a seat and lunch, please contact Gail Schickele at gails@bayarea.net (please indicate LWVBA FORUM) or call 415-922-5826 or the LWVBA office at 510-849-1608.

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, November 11, 2003 at 12:00 noon. The topic planned for the Great Decisions discussion is: **"China in transition: is real**



change imminent? U.S.-China relations are at once cooperative and competitive. How will China's political transition and the changing international environment affect the two countries?" 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.



We follow topics in the Great Decisions briefing book that is published by the Foreign Policy Association in New York City. It is a brown-bag lunch session. All members are welcome.

We will be ordering the 2004 *Great Decisions* briefing book in November for those who are interested in following the topics for discussion next year.

The 2004 *Great Decisions* topics are:

1. Media and Foreign Policy
2. The Philippines
3. Weapons of Mass Destruction
4. The United States and Europe
5. Diversity in Islam
6. An American Overview
7. Middle East Reform
8. Public Diplomacy

The *Great Decisions* book will cost around \$15.

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

Rosalie Gillmore

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION 10/12/03

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ACTION COMMITTEE MEETS ON NOVEMBER 18

One purpose of the Action Committee is to follow current legislation and to discuss any pending bills which need our attention. Please join us on the third Tuesday of every month at 10:00 AM in the League Office to discuss items of interest for the Action Committee.

We communicated with our legislators on the following bills:

- SB 288 (Sher) - maintains California's strict air standards (in opposition are those who work to roll back the Clean Air Act).
- SB 700 (Flores) - removes the decades long exemption from Clean Air laws granted to agriculture in California.
- SB 20 (Sher) - deals with the problem of electronic waste. It establishes a statewide program to collect and recycle computer monitors, televisions, and similar electronic waste.
- SB 810 (Burton) - allows a Regional Water Quality Control Board to block approval of timber harvest plans that violate water quality standards in impaired watersheds.

In addition, we have responded to Action Alerts for E-mail messages to our legislators on the following issues:

- Lobby Request #108-6 - opposes the Clear Sky plan to relax pollution requirements for power plants and other major pollution sources.
- Lobby Request #108-9 - opposes oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.
- Letters supporting S 1497 (McCain/Feingold) - which requires radio and television stations to provide free air time to candidates and political parties for debates before elections.
- SB 921 (Kuehl) - calls for a single-payer system of publicly financed health coverage for all.
- SB 2(Burton and Speier) - expands employment-based health coverage.
- S 14 (McCain/Lieberman) - an amendment to the Energy Bill to curb global warming.

Phyllis Stanley,

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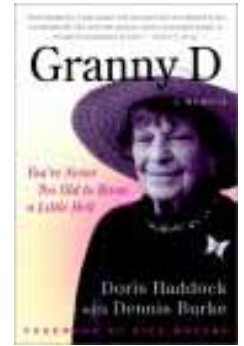
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BOOK CLUB CORNER

The Book Club invites members and the public to join our lively discussion of a wide variety of books. We have moved our meetings from the second Thursday of the month to the third Thursday, and we have decided to meet occasionally in a member's home.

On Thursday, November 20, at 10:30 AM, we will discuss Doris "Granny D" Haddock's *Granny D: You're Never Too Old to Raise a Little Hell* at the home of Caroline Ramberg, 2191 Siesta Lane, Santa Rosa. Granny D at 90 walked across the country to call attention to the need for campaign



finance reform. That trek, however, was but one example of her activism. Local reviewer Jonah Raskin said in his *Press Democrat* review of this memoir, "Granny D is a very funny, very witty and a very wise book." Don't miss this opportunity to share the pleasure of reading it.

The selection for Thursday, December 18, is Paul Krugman's *The Great Unravelling*. We will meet at 10:30 AM at the home of Olive Horrell, 87 Greenrock Court, Santa Rosa.

Lynda Hungerford

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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MEMBER PROFILE

Susan Gorin has almost as many metaphorical hats as Hedda Hopper had real hats

Reared in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, she met her husband Joe in high school. They were married while he was still studying at MIT and Susan was at Boston University.



From Pittsburgh, they went to Loveland, Colorado where Joe worked for Hewlett-Packard and Susan worked for a real estate appraisal firm.

Joe's mother sent Susan off with the advice that the first thing you do when you move to a new community is to join the League. It is the best way to learn about the community. Once in Colorado, Susan acted on that advice and donned her now much worn League hat. Serving as her local League President with her usual dedication, she went to National Convention when she was eight months pregnant.

After nine years in Colorado, Joe was asked to transfer to either the Seattle area or Santa Rosa. His parents had since moved to California; Joe and Susan had fallen in love with California; and they knew they much preferred sunbonnets to rain hats.

Susan has at least one real hat—a bicycle helmet. Joe is an avid bicyclist, and the two enjoy bicycling tandem. They have bicycled from here to Monterey, toured the San Juan Islands by bicycle, and, most recently, pedaled around Maui. No wonder then that Susan was for several years the League's representative and the Chair of the Santa Rosa City Council's Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

Susan has been extraordinarily active in League and in the community. In our League, she has served in virtually every board capacity including three years as President or Co-President. This year, she is our Administrative Vice President. For those of us who are relatively new to the community, Susan is a patient explicator of local League positions and their history.

Susan was elected to a four-year term as trustee on the Santa Rosa City School Board. Currently, among other activities, she serves on the Board of Public Utilities for the Santa Rosa City Council, the Sonoma County Public

Library Foundation Board, and the CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) Board.

When asked, Susan will tell you that tandem biking requires coordination, good communication, and teamwork, as does effective work on boards and committees.

VOTERS SERVICE NEWS

More TV

Thanks to Eve Roberson and Bob and Liz Hawthorne, the September 13 forum on the recall election sponsored by the League was rebroadcast on the local Community Access TV channel seven times in Petaluma and four times in Healdsburg. It was broadcast live in Santa Rosa and rebroadcast there three times.

This is the first time one of our events has been rebroadcast so many times, and this is a trend that should be encouraged. Well-advertised rebroadcasts of League events could significantly expand our audience.

Voter registration

Again this year, the Sonoma County Registrar rented a booth at the Harvest Fair to register voters. People who registered could vote in the few elections in Sonoma County in November and in the March Primary. Even though the deadline for registering for the Recall Election had passed, we registered almost half as many voters as last year for the Gubernatorial and Presidential elections. The seventeen League members who worked at the booth helped with one of our key tasks, and also helped maintain a League presence in the community.

Willard Richards

2004 SONOMA/MARIN ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS FOR SALE

Save on dinner, shopping and entertainment while earning dollars for our League.

We will be selling the 2004 Sonoma/Marin Entertainment Books for only \$25. Participating merchants include Airport Cinemas, River's End Restaurant, The Cantina, Topolos Russian River Vineyards Restaurant, Sweet River Grill, Papa Murphy's Pizza and many others.

Please call or email to arrange for payment and pickup.

Susan Gorin
525-8335
gorins@sonic.net

SONOMA COUNTY LWV PRESIDENT COMMENTS ON SANTA ROSA'S LACK OF CAMPAIGN SPENDING LIMITS

Yet on September 9, a majority of the City Council voted against a provision that would have required candidates to agree to voluntary spending limits in order to receive public funding. They voted for public funding for all city council candidates, no matter how much they spend.

Below is the full text of the letter submitted to the Santa Rosa *Press Democrat*. In the letter published on September 24, 2003, the first paragraph was omitted.

Campaign finance reform measures are intended to reduce money spent on campaigns. Public funds should go to qualified citizens who cannot raise large sums of money to run a viable campaign, not to support campaigns of big spenders. Public financing should help to level the playing field. Santa Rosa's provision does not.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR September 17, 2003

Nancy Richards,
President of the League of Women Voters of
Sonoma County.

Santa Rosa is indeed unique, that is, one of a kind.

Last week, Sacramento joined the other four cities in California that offer public financing only to candidates who agree to spending limits. Last week the State sent out Voter Handbooks with statements only from gubernatorial candidates who agreed to spending limits. Indeed, as far as we can learn, no other state or city offers public funding without requiring voluntary spending limits.

The Press Democrat supported a voluntary spending limit in two editorials. Numerous citizens and organizations including the League of Women Voters urged the Santa Rosa City Council to include such a limit.



League of Women Voters® of Sonoma County Membership Application

Name _____

I am interested in the following areas:

Address _____

Program _____ Membership _____

City _____

Speakers Bureau _____ Social Policy _____

Zip _____ Telephone _____

Natural Resources _____ Voters Service _____

Fax _____ Email _____

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.