



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SONOMA COUNTY

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April 2005

CLEAN (NOT LAUNDERED) MONEY AND THE LWV

The substantial campaign costs of every election are paid by—somebody. Does the source of that money really matter?

If you have any uncertainty as to the answer, learn about some amazingly successful publicly funded election campaigns that have been taking place in Arizona, Maine, New Mexico and a number of municipalities. In Arizona, seven of the state's top nine elected officials were elected with *Clean Money*. These candidates accepted no money from any private interest, beyond a specified number of individual \$5.00 donations, to demonstrate that they were viable candidates.



In Maine, there are now enough Clean Money elected officials in the State House to affect the nature of the legislation being considered, e.g. controlling the price of pharmaceuticals, and a form of universal health care insurance. A public funding bill, AB 583, was recently introduced into the California State Assembly by Loni Hancock. The League of Women Voters of California has not yet studied this bill.

Our local League and the California Clean Money Campaign, an affiliate of the national organization, are presenting an educational forum on public funding of election campaigns. These are new and exciting times. Mark your calendars.

Forum Title

Public Funding of Election Campaigns

Date & Time

Saturday, April 30, 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM

Location

Santa Rosa Main Library, 3rd and E Streets

Panelists

Attorney Gail Jonas, making the presentation for the California Clean Money Campaign

Dr. David McCuen, Professor of Political Science at Sonoma State University

Mayor David Glass of Petaluma, discussing his personal experience of running with public funding

We are still seeking an articulate, knowledgeable panelist to take a position in opposition to public funding. If you know of one, please contact Stan Gold (see our local League directory).

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BOOK CLUB CORNER

The League of Women Voters of Sonoma County

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Jack Dupre, VOTER Editor
Marsha Vas Dupre
May Huddleston
Lynda Hungerford
Caroline Ramberg

The book group invites you to join them at 468 Hillsdale Drive, Santa Rosa, on April 21 at 10:30 AM to discuss Matt Miller's The Two Percent Solution: Fixing America's Problems in Ways Liberals and Conservatives Can Love.



Author, Matt Miller

Miller is a nationally syndicated columnist, a commentator on National Public Radio's 'Morning Edition' and a Senior Advisor to McKinsey and Company, a global management firm. From 1993 to 1995, he served as a Senior Advisor to the Director of the White House Office of Management and Budget.

The Two Percent Solution examines four pressing problems, all of them on the League program at some level, and offers solutions that Miller believes to be politically feasible and economically responsible. The problems are the uninsured, the working poor, impoverished school districts, and money-drenched campaigns.

Sustainability, also on the League agenda, is sometimes described as a three-legged stool, with three e's to jog the memory: environment, social equity, and economy. In our March book group, The Coming Generational Storm, one of these legs was examined, the economy. Miller attempts simultaneously to handle two: social equity and the economy.

League members and guests are invited to join in our book discussions the third Thursday of every month from 10:30 AM until noon. The title of the book selected for May will be posted on our website after the March meeting: http://sonco.ca.lwvnet.org/.

Lynda Hungerford

NEW, RECENT AND PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS: A SPECIAL EVENT PLANNED JUST FOR YOU

We want to welcome you to League. Join us for a New Member Social on Sunday afternoon, May 15, from 3 to 5 PM at 5804 Owl Hill Avenue, Santa Rosa.

Refreshments will be served.

At this informal get-together, new and prospective members will have an opportunity to meet the LWVSC Board of Directors, other officers, and committee chairs. There will be time for questions and answers that will inform you about the range of LWV activities.

We look forward to meeting you there. Please watch the May VOTER for additional information and driving directions. But save the date: May 15! RSVP to Janie Hawker at 584-5210.

NEW MEMBER

Sandra De Bella Bodley
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Fax: 823.6659
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ROSTER CHANGE

Chele Gummer
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Santa Rosa 95409
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CALIFORNIA VOTER AVAILABLE ONLINE

To subscribe to receive an email notice when a new California VOTER is posted on the LWVC website, go to the LWVC website, http://www.lwvc.org, and click on 'Newsletters' at the bottom of the left hand column.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our California State Convention will be held May 20-22 in Garden Grove. LWV Conventions always prove to be a great place for newer members to learn about League and discover many ways to participate in our activities. Our budget covers most of the cost involved including registration, lodging and the banquet. If we carpool we can cut transportation costs greatly. I am looking for four delegates to join me! If you are interested, please let me know now.



Our own annual meeting is coming soon. We will again be guests at Canine Companions, which has so generously offered their wonderful facility to us. Our business will include the election of the board for the coming year. Please contact the nominating committee if you are interested in serving on the board.

"Meeting the Challenge 2005-2006" is a continuing incentive program designed by LWVC. Successfully completing the program can earn us a rebate of our PMP (per member payment). The program is completely structured and supported by LWVC including detailed information for each of the areas in which we choose to participate. I need to find a member who is willing to spearhead this project. This is another great opportunity for a newer member to participate in League and really make a difference at our local level. I have all the information you will need to get us onboard with the project! Please step forward to help us "meet the challenge!"

Carol Ann Fontana-Cary

SAVE THIS DATE!

Annual Meeting on June 4th!

The League's Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday, June 4th, from 10:00 to 1:15, at the Canine Companions for Independence facility located at 2965 Dutton Avenue, Santa Rosa.

We definitely "multi-task" at this meeting...combining annual meeting business, the opportunity to hear a guest speaker, plus the pleasure of enjoying a potluck lunch with fellow League members and guests!

Each member attending is asked to bring either a salad or a dessert to share. The League will provide beverages and the paper goods. If you are planning to attend, please RSVP to Sandy Benson, 763-1629, or rwnatbenson@comcast.net, so the committee will know how many people to expect.

Our Annual Meeting is a wonderful opportunity to introduce a prospective member to the League. Please invite a guest.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DISCUSSION GROUP

The International Relations Discussion Group will meet on Tuesday, April 12, at noon in the Santa Rosa League office. It is a brown-bag lunch session.

The topic for discussion will be "Freshwater and foreign policy: new challenges. Scarcity of water in many regions creates problems and conflict for large numbers of the world's population. What policies should be adopted to ensure water quality? What international actors or governments will make the greatest impact on improving water governance?"

The group usually meets the second Tuesday of each month. The topics are selected from the *Great Decisions* briefing book published by the Foreign Policy Association in New York City. If anyone is interested in purchasing the *Great Decisions* briefing book or has a question about the group, please contact Rosalie Gillmore at 769-8826. All members and friends are welcome to join the group discussion.

Rosalie Gillmore



LWV WILL FACILITATE WATER FORUM IN LARKFIELD

The League has been asked to moderate a community forum at Riebli School on May 7 from 10:00 AM to Noon. The Larkfield/Wikiup water rights have been purchased by the California-American Waterworks, headquartered in Germany. This meeting will help clarify some of the issues surrounding this purchase and its potential impacts on Sonoma County water. Lynda Hungerford will be the moderator.

INTERESTED IN WATER?

LWVSC to form new water committee

Here's your chance to join other members of the League to learn about some of the important water issues in Sonoma County. The General Plan update is being studied with regard to incremental water run-off, water purity and groundwater. If you are interested, please come to an initial meeting at the League office at 10:00 AM on April 11. We are coordinating our efforts with 26 other organizations called the Water Coalition. Please call Phyllis Stanley, 539-1696, for more information.

BOARD BRIEFS

March 2005

At the March 1 meeting of the LWVSC Board, the following key items were covered:

- The February 13 theatre fund raising party was a success, netting over \$1,000 to help cover LWVSC operating expenses.
- We are entitled to send our president and four members to the LWVSC convention in Garden Grove from May 20-22. LWVSC will help cover the cost of the trip. Members interested in attending should contact Corol Ann.
- Stan Gold and Sandy Benson are organizing a program on Public Financing of Political Campaigns, which will be held on Saturday, April 30, from 10-11:30 AM in the Central Library in Santa Rosa.
- Phyllis Stanley is participating in the organization of a forum on water privatization in Larkfield/Wikiup to be held on May 7 at the Riebli Elementary School. Lynda Hungerford will moderate.
- Rosalie Gillmore agreed to oversee the production of this year's spring fundraising letter. Letters soliciting contributions to LWVSC have been sent for the last two years to non-members. Assisting Rosalie with the fundraising project will be Susannah Likins, Nancy Richards and Olive Horrell. The letter will include an attached list of LWVSC's accomplishments this past year.
- The board requested that Willard Richards write a letter to SMART on behalf of LWVSC regarding TOD (transit-oriented development). The letter would be presented at a workshop sponsored by SMART at 2:30 PM March 10 in the Petaluma Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Milstein

STUDY REPORTS GROWING WAGE DISPARITY IN THE NORTH BAY

On March 5, LWVSC co-sponsored a forum held at SRJC. The forum reported on a study entitled *The Limits of Prosperity*, released by New Economy, Working Solutions, funded and conducted at the University of California at Berkeley. The main findings of the study are that income inequality in the North Bay grew incrementally during the 1980s, but spiked sharply during the 1990s. Low and middle income working families trailed far behind the richest families in income growth. During the 1990s boom, the percentage of working families living in poverty and facing serious economic hardship increased.

One in six North Bay families do not receive income sufficient for basic needs.

The primary cause is the emergent hourglass economy where job growth splits between high and low wage occupations. Projected job growth will further widen the bottom of the hourglass and worsen the situation.

The single biggest roadblock to working families' efforts to improve their lives is the poverty wage dead-end jobs in fast growing sectors like tourism. A panel including Congresswoman Woolsey, Supervisor Kerns, Assemblywoman Evans, and School Superintendent Wong gave their perspectives on the report's findings.

The full *The Limits of Prosperity* report may be downloaded from the *New Economy, Working Solutions* website:

<http://www.neweconomynorthbay.org/index.htm>

Lynn Camhi

POLICY CHANGE FOR EMAIL MESSAGES

The initial impetus for establishing a policy on sending emails to the membership was to keep the membership informed while not burdening members with an excess of messages. The Board had restricted messages to reminders about League information that had already appeared in the VOTER or that only pertained to those members with email. Over the past few months there have been a few occasions when a quick message alert via email would have been appropriate, but sending postcards or making phone calls to non-computer users as well was not feasible.

The Board has revised this policy. From time to time, there is an important League issue that comes up where members should be alerted. The new policy allows emails on matters that have *not* appeared in the VOTER to be sent to the membership. Those members without email, who wish to be informed as well, can ask to be contacted by telephone.

I wish to stress that members will not now be inundated with League emails. However, on occasion, a message will be sent before the information appears in the VOTER. If you wish to be removed from the email list, please contact me. If you do not have email and wish to be notified by telephone of information that will be sent out by email, also please contact me. Let me know if you have any questions.

Nancy Richards
575-7160
nancyr@sonic.net

A LETTER FROM LWVUS PRESIDENT, KAY MAXWELL

Dear Friends,

On February 14, the League celebrated our 85th Anniversary. Since our founding, we have been an important advocate for political reform and citizen engagement, and we continue today to push for changes that make our democracy stronger. Thanks to each of you for your help and support throughout the past 85 years and into the future!



Kay Maxwell

President, LWVUS

VOTERS SERVICE

Sonoma County will have a measure on genetically modified organisms (GMO) on the November 8 ballot. However, if Governor Schwarzenegger calls a special election before November 8, as he is proposing, the GMO measure will be placed on the earlier ballot.

Governor Schwarzenegger is threatening a special election if the state legislature does not act on his government overhaul plan which includes merit pay for teachers, an increase from two to five years for the amount of time new teachers must wait before they are tenured, replacing the current pension system with 401(k)-type retirement accounts for newly hired state employees, spending caps, and the redrawing of legislative and congressional districts by a panel of retired judges.

There is also discussion in the legislature regarding state propositions on doctor-assisted euthanasia and universal-type health insurance plans.

Information on state initiatives that have qualified for the ballot or that are circulating can be found on the Secretary of State's website:

http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections_initiatives.htm .

There will **not** be a Voters Service meeting in April.

Rosalie Gillmore

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CALIFORNIA EDUCATION FUND &

The Leagues of Cupertino/Sunnyvale, Fremont/Newark/Union City, Los Altos/Mountain View, Palo Alto, Southwest Santa Clara Valley, San Jose/Santa Clara, and South San Mateo County

cordially invite you to the League's 85th Birthday Celebration

DEMOCRACY DINNER

Friday, April 22, 2005
The Fairmont Hotel
170 South Market Street, San Jose
6:30 PM. – No Host Reception and Silent Auction
7:30 PM – Dinner and Program

Ambassador Nancy Soderberg - Keynote Speaker
Global Challenges, Global Realities
VP for Multilateral Affairs for International Crisis Group

Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren – Master of Ceremonies
CA Senator Joe Simitian – Auctioneer



Tickets: \$150, \$100 for League members.
Reservations required by April 12.
For more information, call Virginia Holtz at
(408) 267-6253

Proceeds will benefit the voter education programs of the League of Women Voters of California Education Fund, a 501©3 organization. Under IRS guidelines, the estimated fair market value of your attendance at the Democracy Dinner is \$55. All contributions in excess of this fair market value are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

**LWVSC CELEBRATES OPENING OF THE 6TH STREET PLAYHOUSE BY
ATTENDING THE SANTA ROSA PLAYERS PRODUCTION OF *MAME*
ANNUAL THEATRE PARTY A ROUSING SUCCESS**



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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!

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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.



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. (\$50.00 for individual annual membership, \$75.00 for household, and \$37.00 for limited income. The membership year is July 1 to June 30.) Please mail check to LWV Sonoma County, 100 E Street, Suite 209, Santa Rosa, CA 95404. Thank you.

APRIL 2005 CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are open to the public.

Date	Time	Place	Description
Tuesday April 5	10:00 AM - Noon	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Board Meeting League members are welcome. Board meetings are not open to the public.
Monday April 11	10:00 AM - Noon	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	New Water Committee See p. 3.
Tuesday April 12	12:00 Noon	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	International Relations Discussion Group Freshwater and foreign policy See p. 3.
Tuesday April 19	10:00 AM	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Action Committee
Thursday April 21	10:30 AM	468 Hillsdale Drive Santa Rosa	Book Club Matt Miller's <i>The Two Percent Solution: Fixing America's Problems in Ways Liberals and Conservatives Can Love</i> See p. 2.
Friday April 22	6:30 PM	The Fairmont Hotel 170 South Market Street San Jose	Democracy Dinner See p. 5.
Saturday April 30	10:00 - 11:30 AM	Santa Rosa Main Library 3 rd and E Streets Santa Rosa	Forum Public Funding of Election Campaigns See p. 1.

[Link to Current Calendar](#)