



The VOTER

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF SONOMA COUNTY**

Volume 14, No 4

April 2009

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SAVE THE DATE JUVENILE JUSTICE IN SONOMA COUNTY

On Saturday, May 30, from 10:30 am to noon, the Juvenile Justice Interest Group will present a culmination of their two-and-a-half year study. They will discuss up to date information and their recommendations. There will be time for questions and discussion. The meeting will be held at the Library in Rohnert Park. See more details in the May VOTER.

Ann Berens

APRIL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING SONOMA MOUNTAIN VILLAGE TOUR WEDNESDAY - APRIL 22 - 10:30 AM

Sonoma Mountain Village is the only One Planet Community in North America at this time. We will learn about the concept during our tour of this planned, advanced, sustainable community. The 200-acre site with plans for 1,900 homes plus commercial, retail and office space is being created as a deeply sustainable, mixed-use village using smart growth and green technologies. There will be a PowerPoint presentation and then a leisurely walking tour. We will finish at noon at the Event Center where the Sally Tomatoes Café is located. The café is quite casual with reasonable prices and members who wish can stay for lunch.



To carpool, plan to meet on the west side of the Santa Rosa Vets Memorial parking lot at 10 o'clock. See page 6 for directions to the tour location.

Sandy deLorimier 433-4196 vive@sonic.net

THE LWVSC IS MOVING TO A NEW OFFICE ON MARCH 29, 2009 555 FIFTH ST., SUITE 300P, SANTA ROSA, CA 95401 SAME TELEPHONE NUMBER - (707) 546-5943

The office is in the Upton Building on the north side of Fifth St. just west of Mendocino Ave. It is open on weekdays and may be open weekends when others are working. Most meetings will be held in the third floor conference room directly across the hall from the elevator. The new League office is through the glass doors to the left and then left. The League office door will have the same lock box as the old office, but the glass doors may be locked on weekends. The landlord prefers to issue a limited number of keys. The telephone is scheduled to be connected in the new office on Monday, March 30.

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

100 E Street, Suite 209
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
707-546-5943
league@lwvsonoma.org
<http://www.lwvsonoma.org/>
See CONTACT US page to email Directors

Directors on the Executive Committee

Chlele Gummer, President
Gloria Norton, VP Administration
Susannah Likins, Treasurer
Phyllis Stanley, VP Action/Advocacy
Carol Adams, Past President

Directors:

Elaine Book, Secretary
DeeDee Bridges, Voters Service
Sandy deLorimier, VP Program
George Ellman, Bay Area Representative
Nancy and Willard Richards, VOTER Editors
Ethel Schy, Membership

BOOK GROUP

League members and the public are invited to join the book group at 10:30 AM, Thursday, April 16, to discuss Jeffery Toobin's *The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court*. Tentatively, the book group will meet in the conference room for the new League office, 555 Fifth Street, Suite 300 P, Santa Rosa. Watch the web site or call me to confirm the location.



Toobin is a *New Yorker* staff writer and CNN legal analyst. In *The Nine* he examines the last fifteen years of court history with attention to the roles of individual justices in key cases.

The book group meets on the third Thursday of the month except for the months of July and December. You can download the schedule of books to be read from the calendar listing for the group on the League's Website, <http://www.lwvsonoma.org>.

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

Lynda Hungerford
539-5770 league@lwvsonoma.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In February, as you know, we had the consensus meeting for the National Popular Vote Compact Study. Our group of League members almost filled the conference room in the Windsor Library. Included were several past



presidents, as well as new members, and those committed members who come to every meeting. Ethel Schy began the Study presentation with a background of the Electoral College issue. Nancy Richards, Sandy deLorimier and I presented the various aspects of the study, including the pros and the cons, before the group discussed the seven consensus questions. Anita Lytle, a fairly new member, presided over the event, as she was chair of the study committee. We are thankful for her interest and skills of organization needed for the job.

Thanks to you who attended and offered your thoughtful opinions and perspectives. Remember that you are a necessary component in the work of the League. All your voices join League members throughout the nation to form a League consensus on issues such as this. One of our core beliefs is that the League speaks with one voice. Study and consensus are the methods we use to find it.

Chlele Gummer, President
707-537-1207: chleleg@sonic.net.

ACTION/ADVOCACY

The League of Women Voters of Sonoma County sent a letter to the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors questioning their intention of amending the General Plan to accommodate the Dutra Asphalt Plant now being planned near Petaluma. The area is now designated as a scenic corridor and is adjacent to Shollenberger Park. The League favors measures that protect the overall quality of the environment and believes that the plant would severely impact the air quality for those using the adjacent park.

Phyllis Stanley

LEAGUE ANNOUNCES OPPOSITION TO MAY BALLOT MEASURES

On March 12, the League of Women Voters of California announced its opposition to Propositions 1A, 1C, 1D and 1E on the May 19 Special Election ballot and urged voters to reject them.

“We oppose these measures because they are NOT the solution to our long term financial crisis, with the continuing structural deficit in the state budget and flawed budget process,” said Janis R. Hirohama, president of the League. “We make this decision with regret. We would support real reform to make the state budget process more accountable and give the Legislature and Governor effective tools to advance state priorities. However, these hurriedly drafted propositions, produced at the end of a flawed process that kept both the public and most legislators in the dark, will only make our fiscal situation worse.”

Proposition 1A is touted by its proponents as the way to bring stability to the budget process. But what it will really do is tie the hands of the Legislature and Governor as they face changing needs for state and local government services. It will keep them from taking into account the state’s changing demographics and growth in the actual cost of important services like health care.

“Although some claim there is an urgency to pass Prop. 1A to resolve our state’s budget problems, we disagree,” said Hirohama. “Most of its provisions will not take effect for two years—two years that we should spend hammering out real solutions to our budget and fiscal challenges.”

The League believes elected officials should be allowed to carry out their responsibilities with flexibility. Years of “ballot-box budgeting” and formulas for auto-pilot spending have greatly eroded that flexibility. Prop. 1A, however, adds to the problem. For example, it dictates how half the funds that must be transferred to the “Budget Stabilization Fund” are to be used; it removes the Governor’s ability to suspend transfers to the fund in difficult years; and it imposes new formulas for calculating “unanticipated revenues” and specifies how they can be used in good years. And, after the deep cuts made during these strapped times, it could lock in a reduced level of services by failing to properly take account of increased caseloads and program costs.

If Prop. 1A passes, the Governor would be given new power to make mid-year cuts and suspend COLAs in state programs without

legislative oversight. The League believes that mid-year budget adjustments should require joint action of the legislative and executive branches so that checks and balances are maintained.

Proposition 1C. This proposal attempts to raise money for the short term by selling bonds that would be paid off by future lottery revenue. In light of California’s poor credit rating and the state of the economy, those bonds would have to be sold at very unfavorable interest rates, if they can be sold at all. The Legislative Analyst says that in the long term, lottery profits probably would not be enough to cover the higher payments to education required by Prop. 1C. We criticized this proposal as irresponsible last fall, and if anything, that criticism applies more than ever now.

Propositions 1D and 1E. On May 19, voters will also be asked to approve the temporary taking of funds from early childhood and mental health programs that were established by two previous initiatives. These are illusory, stopgap measures, and the League opposes these propositions as part of this objectionable package. It is ironic that these initiatives, which did what many consider “the right thing” by providing a source of funding, now face reductions.

The League is neutral on **Proposition 1B.** State responsibility for the funding of public education is essential, and we appreciate the need to pay back the devastating cuts that our schools and community colleges have sustained. On the other hand, the Legislature will have the ability to restore school funding without Prop. 1B, and it is not needed in this package of propositions.

Since the League has no position on setting salaries for public officials, we take no position on **Proposition 1F**, which would prevent pay raises for legislators and statewide constitutional officers during budget deficit years.

The League of Women Voters recognizes that California is facing the worst budget crisis in its history, with the worldwide recession severely affecting state revenues and the need for state services. Moreover, our budget system is broken and in desperate need of reform. This year illustrates the need to abandon the two-thirds vote requirement for passing budgets and raising revenues, and we must also look at other budget reforms. In the meantime, a new tax commission is considering ways to broaden or stabilize our revenues. “There is much that needs to be done,” Hirohama stated, “but we are certain that the propositions on the May 19 ballot are not the answer.”

VOTERS SERVICE

The Voters Service Committee is preparing for participation in the Landfill Forum. Our roles will be timekeepers and question sorters. This is an interesting and important topic for all of us.

The May 19th Special Election is just around the corner. For this election we will be presenting a Pros and Cons of the propositions in front of a camera at the Community Media Center. Angelica Tercero will tape our efforts and create a DVD we can then duplicate and share with organizations that are interested in this election.

Easy Voter Guides for the election should arrive during the first week of April. Keep an eye out for them.

DeeDee Bridges

HOW DO WE KNOW OUR VOTES ARE COUNTED ACCURATELY?

This last month the League had the opportunity to verify the logic and accuracy of the votes counted in the election for the Gravenstein School District Ballot Measure. There are certain procedures that must be followed in order to certify the election. First members of the Accuracy and Logic Board observe a trial run of the machines used to count the votes in the election.

The accuracy test is used to check the hardware, especially the card readers. This test makes sure that ballot card readers can read every possible mark on the ballot card. Next the Logic test is run. This test has predetermined totals for all contests on the ballot with every candidate in a contest receiving a different number of votes than every other candidate. A summary of the results of this test is printed and then signed by the Accuracy and Logic Board. This test ensures that tally programs and hardware correctly interpret, summarize and report voters' marks for a specific election.

These tests were run several days before the election. Then on the day of the election they were run again to make sure everything was in working order. First the absentee ballots were run and numbers of votes were validated then the ballots from the precincts were run and validated. The members of the Accuracy and Logic Board certified the results. They were again on site the following day to verify and certify the votes that were turned in to the County on the day of the election.

It was a very interesting process even for just one issue for a very small election. The County Registrar of Voters has many checks and balances to ensure that all votes are counted correctly. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Logic and Accuracy Board for the May 19th election, please contact me.

DeeDee Bridges

591-0632 deedebridges@sbcglobal.net

BOARD BRIEFS

The board revised and then approved the consensus question report to National on the National Popular Vote Compact.

The board unanimously agreed to contribute \$50 to support Affordable Housing Week activities and events, May 11-17, sponsored by the Sonoma County Housing Coalition.

President Gummer announced that the League display at the Sonoma County Regional Library in Rincon Valley will be there until March 28.

Action/Advocacy chair P. Stanley will move the Action/Advocacy meeting to the last Thursday of the month to make reporting of the committee in the VOTER more timely.

Board members will meet in the League office next week to begin to pack and prepare for moving the League office on Sunday, March 29.

Member Marsha Dupre, League's representative on the Literacy Coalition, discussed the formation and function of the Coalition which is made up of the Adult Literacy Program and the Adult Literacy League

It was voted to remove *League Lodging* from our website as this function has been inactive for several years.

Claire Golding has resigned as Publicity Chair. The board is looking for a replacement.

N. Richards will replace C. Adams on the executive committee.

Discussed the possibility of making a DVD of the initiatives on the May State ballot and to make it available to groups for a small fee.

Nancy Richards

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

On the afternoon of March 8, Petaluma was the location of a neighborhood get together for members of and people interested in LWV. Our hostess was past president Carol Ann Cary, assisted by membership committee members Nancy Richardson and Muriel Smith. Ten Petaluma residents attended; three were non-members and one, Karen Nau, came with her Mother, member Ettamarie Peterson, who gave her the gift of membership at the meeting. What a great idea for all parents of adult voters!

The people who came decided to have meetings in Petaluma to discuss local issues, to get acquainted, and to arrange car pools to our events. More information will be coming.

Plans are under way for a meeting in West County for people who live in that area. Mary Ruthsdotter and Sukey Robb-Wilder have arranged for a meeting at Two Acre Wood in Sebastopol on Saturday, April 4 at 2:30 P.M. Invitations with details are being sent. Call 579-1488 to RSVP and for directions. If you know people who live in that area and are reluctant to join because of the distance to most of our meetings, please email or phone me about inviting them. Also contact me with any questions you have about the doings of the membership committee and especially if you would like to join us!

Ethel Schy, Membership Chair
579-1488, ethels@sonic.net

NO LEAGUE IS AN ISLAND

We are approaching our springtime ritual known as the annual meeting. For those who focus on our budget, now is the time to look longingly at the dues that we pay to the state and national Leagues. What could we do if we kept all that money for ourselves?

There is a whole list of truly important things that we could not do available on the LWVC Website home page <http://www.ca.lwv.org>. This year has been notable for the range and significance of the action side of LWVC. From the home page you can go to pages rich with information on League's positions and activities on such critical issues as:

- Proposition 8
- The California Budget Crisis (including history and League statements, articles, and letters)

- Proposition 11 (Redistricting) with the history and the League's plan to remain involved, including an invitation to you to participate.

It would be difficult to find better or more complete information on these topics anywhere else.

Our state dues pay for office and staff that support the many volunteers from local Leagues who coordinate our state studies and use our positions to influence the legislature and the public.

Lynda Hungerford

PROSPECTS FOR AFGHANISTAN

The Sonoma County chapters of the United Nations Association and the World Affairs Council will present a program on Afghanistan on Thursday, April 23, at 7:30 PM. The meeting will be held at Spring Lake Village and the public is invited. Admission is free.

Guest speaker is Ted Eliot, former ambassador to Afghanistan from 1973-1978. He is currently on the boards of the Asia Foundation and the Community Foundation of Sonoma County. He is also an advisor to the Dupree Foundation which is establishing a center for Afghan studies in Kabul, Afghanistan.

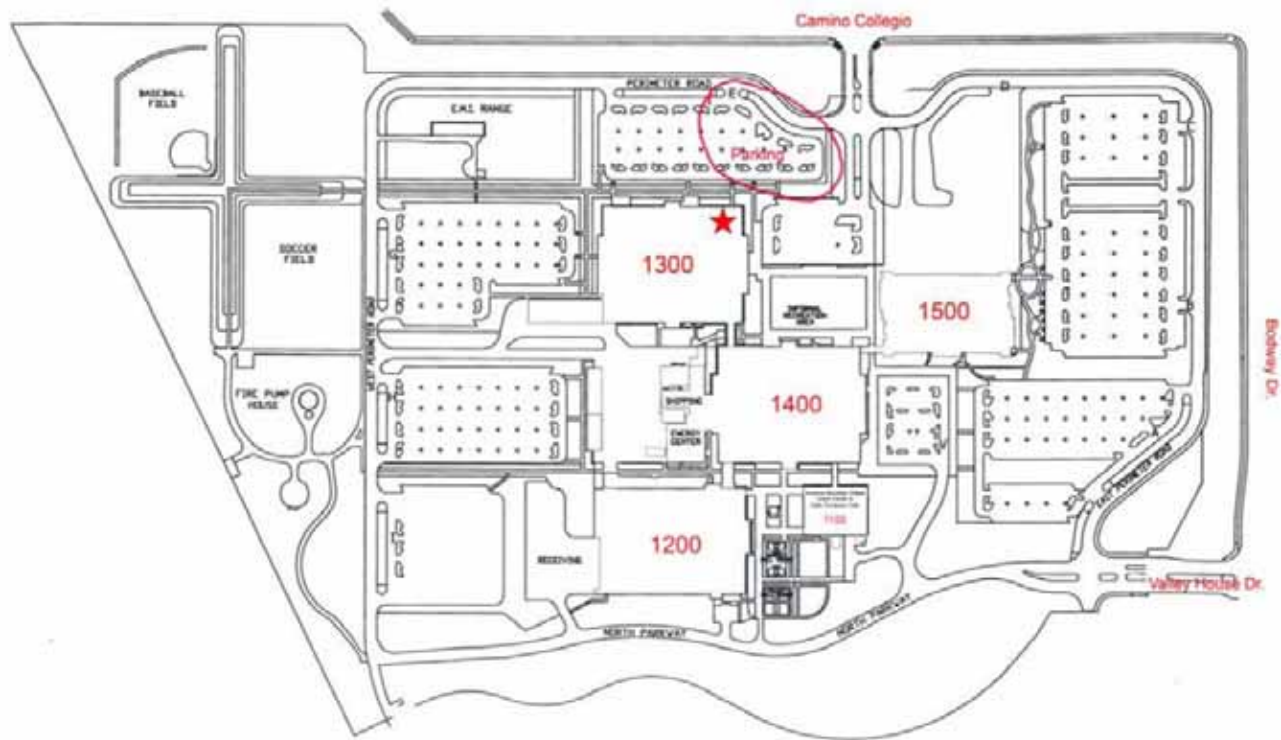
Ambassador Eliot will discuss the policy of the Obama Administration toward Afghanistan in light of the situation within the country and in the region, especially Pakistan. By the time of his talk, the Administration's strategy going forward is likely to be clearer. Ambassador Eliot will give his evaluation of that strategy and the possibilities for attaining its goals.

For additional information, contact Jim Wilkinson, 523-4547.

Beth Martinez

MISSION

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We do not support or oppose any political party or any candidate. We do, however, take action on selected government issues in the public interest.



**SONOMA MOUNTAIN VILLAGE
TOUR DRIVING DIRECTIONS**

Sonoma Mountain Village is in the extreme southern end of Rohnert Park and can be reached by Highway 101 or Petaluma Hill Road. For Highway 101, exit at Route 116 west in Cotati, go east into town, south on Old Redwood Highway, and then left on East Cotati Road. In about 1.1 miles, turn right (south) on Camino Collegio. About 30 ft after the second stop sign, turn right through an open gate into the Sonoma Mountain Village campus. Turn right at the four-way stop sign and left into the parking lot, which is circled on the map above.

From Petaluma Hill Road, go east on Valley House Drive. Go straight ahead at Bodway Parkway to enter the campus then immediately right. Drive north and then west around the perimeter of the campus to the Camino Collegio entrance. Go through the four-way stop sign and then left into the parking lot.

From the parking lot, walk south across the parking lot to Building 1300, marked by the star on the map. Check in at the reception desk at Sonoma Mountain Business Cluster.

NEW MEMBERS

LOCAL MEMBERS

Sandra Dobbins
Windsor, CA 95492

Sharon Holznecht
Napa, CA 94558

Rosalind Marino
Rohnert Park, CA 94928

Karen Nau
Petaluma, CA 94952

Contact information has been deleted from this Internet version of The VOTER to preserve privacy.



There's something special in your own backyard.

Be a part of it!
Become a member.
Become a volunteer.

For Membership call Emily
@ 579-4452 # 108
To Volunteer call Kristi
@ 579-4452 ext. 116

or visit www.SchulzMuseum.org
click on "Membership" or "Volunteers"



HURRY TO THE MUSEUM AND REMEMBER WHY YOU LOVE PEANUTS!

NEW MEMBER PROFILE

New member, **LINDA TRODDEN**, was born in Cheyenne, Wyoming, raised in Phoenix and moved to California in 1975. Linda holds a masters degree in Education and Linguistics and is an elementary school teacher by profession. She began her career at a Navajo Reservation followed by stints in such diverse locations as Alaska and Kuwait. She recently retired from the Roseland School District. Linda is a widow. Her interests and hobbies include volunteer work at Children's Village, Lifelong Learning classes at Sonoma State, worldwide travel, hiking and daily yoga. A friend suggested she join League. She finds that she is particularly interested in LWVSC's Juvenile Justice program.



League of Women Voters® of Sonoma County Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Zip _____ Telephone _____

Fax _____ Email _____

I am interested in the following areas:

Program _____ Membership _____

Speakers Bureau _____ Social Policy _____

Natural Resources _____ Voters Service _____

Newsletter _____ Fundraising _____

Cable TV _____ Smart Voter _____

Community

Outreach _____ Website _____

Yes, I want to join the League of Women Voters. Enclosed is my check for dues. (\$60.00 for individual annual membership, \$90.00 for household, and \$40.00 for limited income. The membership year is July 1 to June 30.) Please mail check to LWV Sonoma County, 100 E Street, Suite 209, Santa Rosa, CA 95404. Thank you.

The League of Women Voters
of Sonoma County
100 E Street, Suite 209
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

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Time Dated Material

The VOTER, a publication of The League of Women Voters® of Sonoma County, is published monthly except during the summer, i.e. ten regular issues per year. The deadline is the 10th of the month preceding the issue month.

APRIL 2009 CALENDAR

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

The third floor conference room is opposite the elevator.

Date	Time	Place	Description
Thursday March 26	10:00 AM	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Action/Advocacy Meeting Action/Advocacy now on last Thursday NEW DATE IN THE OLD OFFICE
Sunday March 29		From 100 E St., Suite 209 To 555 Fifth St., Suite 300P	LWVSC OFFICE MOVE
Monday March 30	8:00 AM open 8:30 to 11 AM forum	Santa Rosa City Council Chambers 100 First St., Santa Rosa	Forum: Solid Waste Disposal in Sonoma County Broadcast live on Comcast Ch 26 in Santa Rosa See front page
Thursday April 2	10:00 AM	League Office, 555 Fifth St. Third Floor Conference Room	Voter Service Meeting First Thursday
Monday April 6	1:00 to 3:00 PM	League Office, 555 Fifth St. Third Floor Conference Room	Juvenile Justice Interest Group Meeting First and third Mondays
Tuesday April 7	10:00 AM to Noon	League Office, 555 Fifth St. Third Floor Conference Room	LWVSC Board Meeting First Tuesday League members only except by invitation
Thursday April 16	10:30 AM	League Office, 555 Fifth St. Third Floor Conference Room	Book Group. See page 2 Third Thursday
Monday April 20	1:00 to 3:00 PM	League Office, 555 Fifth St. Third Floor Conference Room	Juvenile Justice Interest Group Meeting First and third Mondays
Tuesday April 21	10:00 AM	League Office, 555 Fifth St. Third Floor Conference Room	Membership Committee Third Tuesday
Wednesday April 22	10:30 AM to Noon	Sonoma Mountain Village See front page	General Membership Meeting Tour of Sonoma Mountain Village and optional lunch
Thursday April 30	10:00 AM	League Office, 555 Fifth St. Third Floor Conference Room	Action/Advocacy Meeting Last Thursday NEW DATE

Check out the League website: www.lwvsonoma.org for correct dates and times for meetings and for back issues of The VOTER.

The LWVSC Annual Meeting has been rescheduled for 9:45 AM to 2:00 PM, Saturday, June 13, 2009.