



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SONOMA COUNTY

Volume 10, No. 1

February 2005



ENERGY FORUM FRIDAY, JAN. 28

The Challenges of
California's Energy
Situation

See p. 6 for details.



BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY SATURDAY, JAN. 29

Bay Area Regional
Planning - from Vision
to Reality

See p. 2 for details.



THEATRE PARTY ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13

If you have not already done so, it is not too late to purchase tickets for the Theatre Party!

If you are looking for "that something special" for Valentine's, or just want to have a great afternoon with family or friends, this is it. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

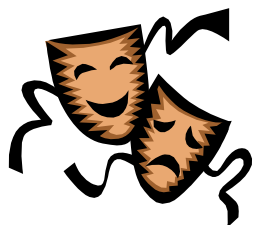
Mame Presented by the Actors Theatre and the Santa Rosa Players and sponsored by the Sonoma County League of Women Voters

Refreshments at 1 PM, Performance at 2 PM

6th Street Playhouse, 52 West 6th Street, Santa Rosa

Tickets are \$25 for refreshments and musical

To purchase tickets or for further information, call Susannah Likins, 792-2660



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

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Willard Richards, VP Action
Nancy Richards, VP Administration
Alexandra Benson, VP Program
Susan Milstein, Secretary
Susannah Likins, Treasurer

Directors:

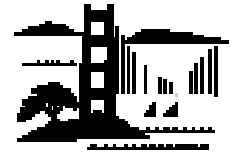
George Ellman, Transportation
Olive Horrell, Membership
Rosalie Gillmore, Voters Service

VOTER Team:

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

BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY

**BAY AREA REGIONAL
PLANNING - FROM
VISION TO REALITY**



**Saturday, January 29
Metro Center Auditorium
101 8th Street, Oakland, CA
(Across the street from the Lake Merritt BART Station)**

9:30 AM: Registration and refreshments
10:00 AM to 1:00 PM: Program

Keynote: Making Regional Planning Work

Ted Droettboom, Regional Planning Program Director,
ABAG-MTC Joint Policy Committee

Panel One: Alternative Models for Regional Planning

Revan Tranter, former Executive Director of ABAG;
Will Travis, Executive Director, BCDC; and Nick Boll-
man, Director, California Center for Regional Leadership

**Panel Two: Thinking Regionally, Locally Elected Of-
ficials' Perspective on the Challenge of Implementing
the Regional Vision and Values at the Local Level**

David Cortese, Councilmember, San Jose.
Sue Lampert, Councilmember, San Mateo
Nate Miley, Supervisor, Alameda County
Pamela Torliatt, Councilmember, Petaluma

Cost \$10 per person. RSVP to landuse@lwvba-ca.org and
see <http://www.lwvba-ca.org> for additional information.

After the event, there will be a no-host lunch and a tour
at the Fruitvale BART station to see how a well-planned
regional transit station was achieved.

Please contact Nancy Richards at 575-7160 or
nancyr@sonic.net if you are interested in carpooling.

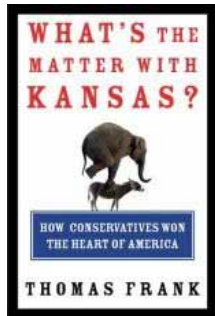
BOOK CLUB CORNER

The book group invites you to join
them at 87 Greenrock Court in
Santa Rosa on Thursday, February
17, at 10:30 AM to discuss Thomas
Frank's *What's the Matter with Kan-
sas? How Conservatives Won the
Heart of America*.

Frank, a one time Kansan, is the
founding editor of *The Baffler* and a
contributor to *Harper's*, *The Nation*,
and *The New York Times* op ed page.

In *What's the Matter with Kansas?*,
Frank asks how Kansas, famous for its radicalism and
the seedbed of Social Security and agrarian reform, be-
came one of the most conservative states in the union.

Of *What's the Matter with Kansas?*, Molly Ivins promises,
"This is the only way to understand why so many Ameri-
cans have decided to vote against their own [economic]
interests, and Frank explores
the subject with scholarship,
understanding, passion and—
thank you, Mark Twain—such
tart humor."



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 March will be posted on our
website, <http://sonco.ca.lwvnet.org>, shortly after the
February meeting.

Lynda Hungerford

**IN MEMORIAM
BONNIE VEGOD
1920-2004**

With the death of Bonnie Vegod, our League has lost an
active member and good friend. Always ready to help
when asked, Bonnie participated in many League en-
deavors including League Lodging, membership, voter
registration, event hostessing and fund raising. A
gracious lady with a ready smile. She will be missed.

Nancy Richards

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

After a very busy holiday season, I noticed that our League calendar is filling very rapidly. Two great opportunities to become more informed about League activities are scheduled this month. On January 28, LWVC Education Fund is presenting a forum in San Francisco on energy titled *Keeping the Lights On*. See the article on p. 6. In addition, Bay Area League Day will be held on January 29 in Oakland. See the article on p. 2. Agenda details and additional information about the meeting are on <http://www.lwvba-ca.org>. Please remember that our website, <http://sonco.ca.lwvnet.org/>, is the best place to find the latest calendar additions that might not have made it into the VOTER in time.



At the local level, the issue of water privatization is one of the latest items to come to the attention of the Action Committee, which is "ground zero" for exciting discussion. There is always room for any interested member to participate in these meetings. If you have not been to any of our committee meetings, I encourage you to try it. You will be glad that you made the effort!

Carol Ann Fontana-Cary

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS STUDY GROUP

The International Relations Discussion Group will meet on Tuesday, February 8 at 12 noon in the Santa Rosa League office. It is a brown-bag lunch session.



Vladimir Putin

The topic for discussion in February will be "Russia Under Vladimir Putin." Russia has been shaping its image as a power in Europe and Asia. Putin, in turn, is reshaping Russia by centralizing authority within the federal government. Are Putin's reforms a step backward for Russian democracy? How will Russia overcome

the real challenges of terrorism and a struggling economy?

The group meets the second Tuesday of each month except in January, July, August and December. 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.

Rosalie Gillmore

BOARD BRIEFS

December 2004

At the December 7 meeting of the LWVSC board, the following key matters were addressed:

- The board voted to increase our contribution to Smart Voter from last year's level of \$500 to \$750. In discussing the increased contribution, the board acknowledged the effectiveness of the Smart Voter website.
- Voters Service chair Rosalie Gillmore has prepared instruction manuals that explain how to organize voter registration drives and voter forums. These manuals will be invaluable to future Voters Service leaders. Rosalie has agreed to coordinate Voters Service through June, while new committee leadership is sought.
- VOTER Editor Jack Dupre said he will look into the possibility of mailing the VOTER unfolded in an attempt to encourage greater readership of our newsletter.
- The Smart Growth Symposium that LWVSC agreed to co-sponsor with the Leadership Institute has been postponed. No new date has been set.

January 2005

At the January 4 meeting of the board, the following key items were covered:

- The board approved the draft report compiled by LWVSC's Education Position Update committee for submission to LWVC. Our report will be used to help update the state League position on Kindergarten-12th Grade Public Education.
- The board voted to co-sponsor a forum on income inequality to be held Saturday, March 5, in the Santa Rosa Junior College faculty lounge from 9 AM-11:30 AM. Other sponsors include: North Bay Labor Council, SEIU Local 707, Family Action of Sonoma County, the Leadership Institute for the Economy and Ecology and the SSU Hutchins Institute for Public Policy and Community Studies. A panel of elected officials, educators, and religious leaders will hear testimony from researchers and low-income families struggling to make ends meet in the North Bay.
- Treasurer Susannah Likins reported that with 50 percent of the fiscal year behind us, we are exceeding budget expectations for membership and revenues.
- Nancy Richards received a Certificate of Appreciation from Equality California for speaking on behalf of League in support of same-sex marriage rights at a meeting of the Board of Supervisors.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Milstein

VOTERS SERVICE

Happy New Year to you. It may seem that the November 2004 election just happened, but elections wait for no one and we are facing a special election on March 8, 2005 with 10 school tax measures on the ballot.



Photo by Todd Cary

The measures are

Measure A:	Cotati-Rohnert Park	\$97/year for 4 years
Measure B:	West Sonoma County High	\$76/year for 8 years
Measure C:	Forestville	\$76.34/year for 8 years
Measure D:	Gravenstein	\$52/year for 8 years
Measure E:	Harmony	\$52/year for 8 years
Measure F:	Oak Grove	\$52/year for 8 years
Measure G:	Old Adobe	\$75/year for 6 years
Measure H:	Piner-Olivet	\$72/year for 6 years
Measure I:	Sebastopol	\$52/year for 8 years
Measure J:	Twin Hills	\$52/year for 8 years

If anyone is interested in putting on a forum or assisting in a forum, there is an instruction manual in the Santa Rosa League office that gives directions on how to conduct one. Please call me if you have any questions. My telephone number is 769-8826. There will *not* be a Voters Service meeting in February.

Rosalie Gillmore

NEW ARRIVALS

Congratulations to League members Robin Swinth and Michael Parker on the arrival from China of adopted daughter, born November 8, 2003, and on the birth of daughter, born December 14, 2004. We wish them much health and happiness.



OAKMONT UNIT MEETING FEB. 3

There will be an LWV Oakmont Unit meeting from 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon on Thursday, Feb. 3, at the Fireside Room of Berger Center. We will discuss "Keeping the Lights On in California"—a follow-up on the program presented by LWVC Economic Committee in San Francisco on Jan.28.

LIMITED PROSPERITY: GROWTH, INEQUALITY AND POVERTY IN THE NORTH BAY REGION

Date: Saturday, March 5, 9 – 11 AM

Location: SRJC Faculty Lounge

Come to hear Nari Rhee and Dan Acland, authors of the report, discuss their findings about the changing demographic and economic profile of the North Bay Region (Sonoma, Marin, Napa and Mendocino counties) since the 1980's. Has the region's pattern of economic growth brought shared prosperity to all its residents?

The North Bay region has been very successful in terms of sheer job growth and increasing per-capita income. However, two devastating weaknesses of the North Bay economy are:

- the growing phenomenon of an "hourglass economy" with job growth concentrated at the top and bottom of the occupational structure, and
- the huge inequality among racial and ethnic groups.

Nari Rhee and others will discuss the highlights of the report, implications of the changing demographic and economic profile and recommendations for the future.

This forum is co-sponsored by LWVSC.

For more information, contact LWVSC member Marty Bennett of *New Economy, Working Solutions*, 939-8933.

ACTION COMMITTEE REPORT

If the January meeting of the Action Committee went as planned, Kelly Brown of Greenbelt Alliance discussed a report describing how Sonoma County must take action now to manage future growth. The report is available at <http://www.greenbelt.org>. Phyllis Stanley led a discussion of issues related to the expansion plans of the private water company that serves Larkfield. Members of a committee appointed by Supervisor Paul Kelley to address these issues were present to explain the current activities.

The Action Committee meets in the League office at 10 AM on the third Tuesday of each month. The February 15 meeting will include a discussion of plans for co-sponsoring a forum with the California Clean Money Campaign on the pros and cons of public financing of elections. It is likely that the discussion of the Larkfield water supply will continue. A report prepared by the Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) District on the economic analysis of the development of the SMART property in Railroad Square will be discussed. Members and guests are welcome.

Willard Richards

HOLIDAY PARTY IN REVIEW

The expression, "And a grand time was had by all," certainly applied to all those who attended the holiday gathering at the lovely home of Eliza and John Meyn on December 5th.



The competition was stiff for silent auction items.

Along with good food, good cheer and good conversation, League members and their guests had the fun of bidding on *white elephant* items offered at the silent auction, which was efficiently organized by Janie Hawker and Phyllis Clement. Thanks to their efforts, plus the generous donations from members and the "spirit of competition" from the bidders, almost \$800 was raised for the League's office rental budget.

Thank you to the Meyns, to Janie and Phyllis, and to all the members who made the party such a success. Thanks to Todd Cary, additional photographs of the Holiday Party may be viewed and downloaded. http://209.204.172.137/lwv/041205_christmas/

Sandy Benson

EDUCATION CONSENSUS MEETING PROVIDES INPUT FOR THE UPDATE ON OUR STATE LEAGUE'S EDUCATION POSITION

On December 13, a distinguished panel addressed the issues of governance, accountability & assessment, and the public's role in public education. Following the panel, a League meeting discussed the consensus questions. This resulted in an Update report on the LWVSC Education Position, which was subsequently approved by the board on January 4.



The Education Consensus Meeting panel consisted of, from left to right, Jim Leddy, Virginia Strom-Martin, Steve Butler, and Carl Wong. Photo by Willard Richards.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SAVE POSTAGE AND PRINTING COSTS FOR THE LEAGUE?



Request that the VOTER *not* be mailed to your household.

The LWVSC VOTER has been posted on the web since September of 2003 and there are several advantages over the mailed version:

It's available about one week earlier than the print version—typically seven days before month end. An email will be sent to you when it is available.

It's in **color!**

Links to websites are live! That is, you can simply click on an address and go directly to the linked site.

If you want a paper copy, you may print one.

The on-line VOTER is available at <http://sonco.ca.lwvnet.org/>. Click on "Publications."



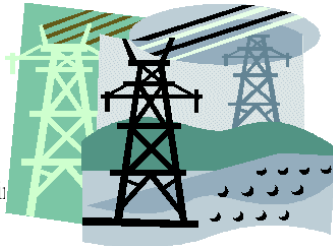
To *not* receive the mailed version, simply indicate your request in an email to Carol Ann at corolann@hotmail.com.

Of course, you may choose to view the VOTER online and still receive the printed version by mail.

KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON

A Forum on California's Energy Challenges Co-sponsored by LWVC Education Fund, California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), California Energy Commission (CEC), and The Commonwealth Club of California

Friday, January 28,
9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
CPUC Headquarters
505 Van Ness Ave.
San Francisco
(across from City Hall)



Admission: \$25 with box
 \$15 for meeti

- What are the challenges to how energy policy is made—post restructuring?
- What are the needs and the options in terms of energy resources and transmission?
- Are there changes in the way that electric utility business is done and regulated that would benefit the people of California?
- What is the role of citizens in state energy decision making?

Invited speakers include:

- Debra Bowen, State Senator
- Martha Escutia, State Senator
- John Geesman, CEC Commissioner
- Jim Boyd, CEC Commissioner
- Michael Peevey, CPUC President
- Sunne Wright McPeak, Secretary, Business, Transportation and Housing Agency
- Joe Desmond, Deputy Secretary for Energy, Resources Agency
- Susan Kennedy, CPUC Commissioner

The complete agenda is available on the LWVC website at <http://lwvc.org/>. You may also contact Phyllis Stanley at 539-1696.

NEW LOCAL MEMBERS

- Carol Adams
- Diana Immel, student
- Linda R. Picton
- Myfanwy Plank

THANKS TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

- Lisa Hardin
- Nancy Richardson
- Gladys Sawyer
- Jean Schulz
- In memory of Aida Hunter:
Susan Gorin
- In memory of Bonnie Vegod:
Phyllis and Robert Clement
Marie Fry
Susan Gorin
Jean Schulz

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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. (\$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.

FEBRUARY 2005 CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are open to the public.

Date	Time	Place	Description
Friday, January 28	9:00 AM - 4:00 PM	CPUC Headquarters, Auditorium 505 Van Ness Avenue San Francisco	Keeping the Lights On Energy Forum. See p. 6.
Saturday, January 29	9:30 AM - 1:00 PM	Metro Center Auditorium 101 8 th Street Oakland	Bay Area League Day Bay Area Regional Planning - from Vision to Reality See p. 2.
Tuesday, February 1	10:00 AM - 12:00 noon	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Board Meeting League members are welcome. Board meetings are not open to the public.
Thursday, February 3	10:00 AM - 12:00 noon	Fireside Room Berger Center Oakmont	Oakmont Unit Meeting "Keeping the Lights On" See p. 4.
Tuesday, February 8	12:00 noon	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	International Relations Study Group "Russia Under Vladimir Putin" See p. 3.
Thursday, February 10	10:30 AM	87 Greenrock Court Santa Rosa	Book Club See p. 2.
Sunday, February 13	1:00 PM	6 th Street Playhouse 52 W. 6 th Street Santa Rosa	Theatre Party Actors Theatre and Santa Rosa Players presents <i>Mame</i> . See p. 1.
Tuesday, February 15	10:00 AM	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Action Committee See p. 4.

LINK TO CURRENT CALENDAR