



THE VOTER

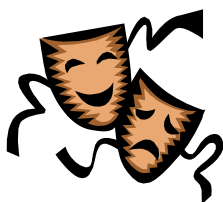
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SONOMA COUNTY

Volume 12, No. 2

March 2007

LAST CALL!

Reserve your seats now for *The Big Bang* theater party at 6th Street Playhouse, 52 West 6th Street, Wednesday, March 7, 7:15 PM for wine, beverages, and dessert, 8:00 PM curtain.



Send your check (\$25/person) made out to LWV Education Fund to the League Office, 100 E Street, Suite 209, Santa Rosa, 95404. A list of attendees would be helpful.

Lynda Hungerford

539-5770

info@lwvsonoma.org

JUVENILE JUSTICE TOWN FORUM

The League's **JUVENILE JUSTICE INTEREST GROUP (JJIG)**, co-sponsored by the Juvenile Justice Commission, is presenting:

a **SONOMA COUNTY OPEN FORUM**

on **Saturday, March 24 from 9:00 AM – 12 NOON**

at **CHOPS, 509 Adams Street. Santa Rosa's Railroad Square.**

See p. 4 for details.

REMINDER

Trudy Schafer, Program Director of LWV California, is coming to Sonoma County!

Saturday, April 21

Tentative time is 10 AM – 12 NOON.

CONTENTS:

International Relations Study Group	2	Santa Rosa Specific Plan	5
Book Club Corner	2	Job Opportunities	5
President's Message	3	California Legislature to Debate Health Care Reform	6
Program Planning Report	3	Board Briefs	6
Update on the Bay Area League Day	4	Roster Changes	6
Juvenile Justice Forum	4	March 2007 Calendar	8

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

100 E Street, Suite 209
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
707-546-5943
info@lwvsonoma.org
<http://www.lwvsonoma.org/>
<http://www.lwv.org/>
<http://www.lwvc.org/>

Officers:

Corol Ann Fontana-Cary, President
Willard Richards, VP Action
Jane Ernsberger, VP Administration
Chlele Gummer, Secretary
Susannah Likins, Treasurer

Directors:

George Ellman, Transportation & Land Use
Liz Hawthorne & Sandy de Lorimier,
Program
Laurie Hall, Public Relations
Olive Horrell & Ethyl Schy, Membership
Amy Southwick, Voters Service
Carol Adams, Voter Outreach

VOTER Team:

Helen Sundergill, VOTER Editor
Marsha Vas Dupre
May Huddleston
Betty Keefauver
Caroline Ramberg
Nancy Richards

BOOK GROUP CORNER

League members and the public are invited to join the book group at 10:30 AM on Thursday, March 15, for a discussion of *The Broken Branch: How Congress is Failing America and How to Get It Back* by Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein. The group will meet in the League office, Suite 209, 100 E Street, Santa Rosa.

According to Robert R. Kaiser in the Washington Post, "The authors are members of what, sadly, may be a disappearing breed in Washington: independent-minded, knowledgeable experts whose concern for process is stronger than their desires for particular outcomes. They are means guys in an age dominated by ends." You will recall that League, in conducting its own business, has valued the integrity of means above ends.



The Broken Branch considers the intent of the framers of the Constitution, the historical back and forth shift in the distribution of power between the legislative and executive branches, and the elements that have, since 1980, led to the current impasse.

The book list for the coming months can be downloaded in PDF format from the [calendar page](#) of the LWVSC Web site, <http://www.lwvsonoma.org>. Check The Voter or the Web site for the place of a particular meeting, since, although the group usually meets in the office, occasionally it meets elsewhere.

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

Lynda Hungerford
539-5770
info@lwvsonoma.org

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS STUDY
GROUP**

The International Relations discussion group will meet on Tuesday, March 13, at 12 NOON at 226 Windsor Drive, Petaluma. It is a brown-bag lunch session and lasts about 1-1/2 hours.

The topic for discussion will be "**Climate change and Global Warming**". "How much are human practices contributing to substantial and irreversible changes to the environment? What effect are changes to the climate having in different areas of the planet? What response can the international community adopt to lessen the impact of dramatic climate change?"

The group meets the second Tuesday of the month. The topics are selected from the Great Decisions briefing book published by the Foreign Policy Association in New York City. All members and friends are welcome to join the group discussion, with or without the briefing book. We also refer to the most current news items and articles pertaining to the discussion topic. There is no homework involved and everyone is invited to come with ideas, opinions and suggestions or just to enjoy the discussion.

If anyone has a question about the group, please contact me at 769-8826.
Rosalie Gillmore

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.

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

I’m looking forward to seeing you at the Theater Party. This is an important fundraising event for us so I hope you will attend and bring your neighbors and friends!



In May LWVC will hold our state convention in Bakersfield. We are entitled to five delegates. This is a great way to learn more about how LWVC functions. We can see how input from local league program planning meetings impacts the actions of the State League. There is always a lot of energy in the air with speakers and workshops covering areas of interest at the state level. Please consider joining me at this convention. Most of the cost for this is covered in our budget. The deadline for registration is in mid April. Those of us who attended the last convention thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Our nominating committee is very hard at work! Please respond positively to their request to serve on our board. I’m sure you will find the experience very fulfilling!

Carol Ann Fontana-Cary

PROGRAM PLANNING REPORT

Our program planning meeting on February 10th was well attended. After we took the time to consider all of the LWVC positions we agreed that we should retain all of them. We selected Health Care with an emphasis on Mental Health, Redistricting and Education as the three areas for emphasis for the next two years at the state level.



For our local program planning we did not find interest in undertaking a new local study. We suggested topics that we think will work well for planning meetings and programs, such as forums, to help inform our members and the community at large about important local issues. These issues include Juvenile Justice System, Water, Housing and Information Technologies (including local media).

We will be participating in the new LWVUS study of Immigration. Information about this study is presented in the latest issue of the National Voter and may be accessed online at <http://www.LWV.org>. Select “For Members” then “LWVUS Immigration study” under “Quick Links”.

Carol Ann Fontana-Cary

RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING EXISTING LWVC POSITIONS

Government						
Campaign Financing	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Constitution	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Election Systems	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Initiative and Referendum Process	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Intergovernmental Relationships	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Public Libraries	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Redistricting	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
State and Local Finances	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Voting Rights	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Natural Resources						
Agriculture	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Air Quality	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Energy	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Hazardous Materials	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Land Use	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Solid Waste	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Transportation	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Water	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Social Policy						
Child Care	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Community College System	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Education, Pre-K thru 12:	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Housing	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Juvenile Justice/Dependency	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Legal Aid	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update
Mental Health Care	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Keep	<input type="radio"/>	Drop	<input type="radio"/>	Update

UPDATE ON THE BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY

BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY – VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE BAY AREA: FOCUS ON HOUSING

Held on Saturday, January 27
– San Mateo City Library



John King, Urban Design Columnist, San Francisco Chronicle gave his perspective on development in the Bay Area – the region is so large and diverse there is no common vision, and certainly no regional decision making. Successful future development will be infill, particularly in the already-urban areas such as San Jose, Oakland and San Francisco, building more density near transit and in inner suburban cities, and thoughtful reuse of older buildings (even changing uses from industrial, to office, to housing, etc). He views the City of Portland as an example of a successful region (except for some recent state-wide land use laws).

The Bay Area “Focusing our Vision” project was explained by Ken Kirkey, Planning Director of the Association of Bay Area Governments, in which a technical advisory committee and sophisticated mapping techniques are attempting to focus on the best potential areas for future housing growth. Only those communities that want to increase density and add housing will receive incentives for participating in target projects. Bettina Ring, BA Open Space Council, explained their project with Greenbelt Alliance to identify key habitat and resource areas that should be protected and remain undeveloped, as well as working on urban park needs. Gwen Regalia talked about how Walnut Creek was able to provide fairly dense housing in the city center, while still having growth and height limits.

The latest round of State-required Housing Element updates are coming again, and Gillian Adams of ABAG explained the criteria for Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) to assign housing targets, by income categories, to each city and county throughout the region. Duane Bay, San Mateo County, and Paul Peninger, Non-Profit Housing of Northern California mentioned various obstacles to building affordable housing, and also ways to be successful.

The League of Women Voters of the Bay Area will keep local Leagues informed as these projects move forward, to help to advocate League positions for regional planning concepts and affordable housing.

Linda Craig
President@lwvbayarea.org

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SONOMA COUNTY HOLDS TOWN FORUM – JUVENILE JUSTICE IN SONOMA COUNTY

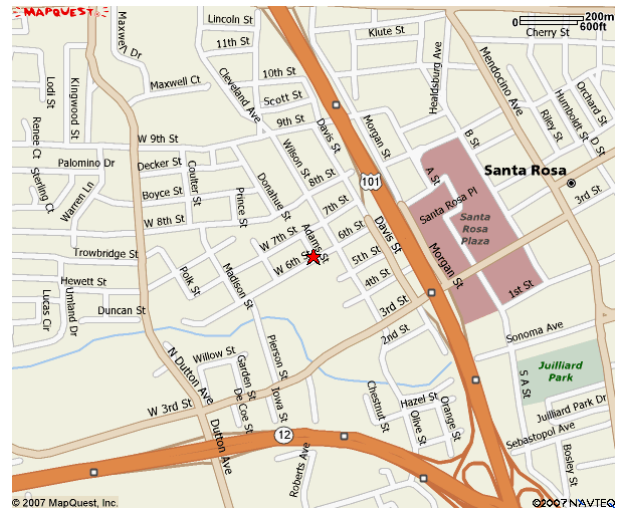
The League of Women Voters of Sonoma County is holding a Town Forum – Juvenile Justice in Sonoma County on Saturday, March 24, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 NOON, at CHOPS, 509 Adams Street in Santa Rosa’s Railroad Square.

Betty Ann Bruno will moderate a discussion including questions and answers with our panelists: Sheriff Cogbill, DA Stephan Passalacqua, Education Liaison Tom Joynt, Judge Mark Tansil, and representatives from Juvenile Hall, Probation and Mental Health. The discussion will highlight our current system and its effectiveness as well as possible improvements by answering these questions: What is our current system? What works? What does not? What is missing? The Juvenile Justice Commission of Sonoma County is cosponsoring the event.

Refreshments will be available.

Saturday, March 24, 2007
9:00 AM – 12:00 NOON
CHOPS
509 Adams Street, Railroad Square
Santa Rosa

For more information, contact Ann Berens at 836-9822 or Katie Sanchez at 579-5141.



SANTA ROSA SPECIFIC PLAN

The Action report last month indicated that the Santa Rosa Downtown Station Area Specific Plan is available on the website <http://www.stationareaplan.net> under Project Documents. The Environmental Impact Report for this Specific Plan became available on the same website on February 5, and the 60-day comment period will end on Friday, April 6. The Specific Plan describes significant changes in the Railroad Square and Downtown areas in Santa Rosa, so many citizens and organizations will submit comments. It would be appropriate for the League to submit a letter during the public comment period.

The process of preparing comments will begin at the 10:00 AM, Tuesday, February 20 Action Committee meeting in the LWVSC office. People with high-speed Internet connections are encouraged to skim these documents before attending, but that is optional. Alternatively, they can be viewed at the Central Library. Willard Richards can mail a CD containing these documents to anyone with a computer that can read a CD. This CD also contains many other documents on issues such as water, energy, and transit in Sonoma County. Telephone calls for information about the CD or Specific Plan are welcome.

Issues that the League may select to focus on include strengthening the requirements in the Specific Plan for affordable housing, bicycle paths, and the provisions for transit. There are also opportunities to comment on streetscapes, building height limits, building setbacks, and recommended densities – provided the comments can be supported by League positions. To help gather information about the Specific Plan and options for comments, it is planned to invite representatives from organizations interested in issues such as housing to explain ways that, in their view, the Specific Plan could be improved.

The Action Committee meeting on March 20 will include additional discussion of the Specific Plan and preparation of a draft of the comments, if any. If comments are prepared, they will be refined by email and then reviewed by the Board of the LWVSC at its monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 3.

There is time in these Action Committee agendas to discuss other items of interest. Please contact me if you wish to recommend a topic for discussion or study.

Willard Richards
Action Chair

INTERESTING JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The nominating committee is meeting and working toward a plan to spread out League jobs so that more of us can participate.

Are you interested in content-oriented activities such as **Programs** and Studies?

Would you like to make plans to take **Action** on positions the League has studied and supports or opposes? Some current issues that the Action Committee is considering are discussed on this page in the left-hand column.

Do your interests lie in the fields of communication, working on the **Administration** of League activities – membership, VOTER, publicity, hospitality and many others?

Or **Community Services**, such as Voter Services, Pros and Cons, Speaker's Bureau, Voter Outreach?

There are many jobs to be filled, large and small, continuing or one-shot. Since we don't know the talents of many of our members please call before March 10 to let us know what way of helping the League would be of interest to you.

Phyllis Clement
823-0925
pvclement@aol.com



VOTER REGISTRATION



CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE TO DEBATE HEALTH CARE REFORM

Health care is at the forefront of issues before the legislature this year. To date, more than 15 health care coverage bills have been introduced. The chief new contenders are bills introduced by Senate President pro Tem Don Perata and Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's plan. The Governor is currently seeking a legislator to author his plan.

Update on the Kuehl bill: Senator Sheila Kuehl will reintroduce her single payer bill (SB 840 of 2005-2006), which was vetoed by the Governor last September. According to a staff member, the senator is still "enthusiastic and committed" to the single payer bill and hopes to keep the same bill number for the 2007-2008 legislative session. As chair of the Senate Health Committee, she also will sign on to some bills that are, in effect, competing with SB 840. Kuehl sees the competition as an opportunity to contrast the benefits, costs and savings of SB 840 with those of the new reform proposals.

Kuehl plans to release a set of principles as a guide to judging all health care bills and will provide a comparison of the new reform proposals to SB 840. To date, she has released two essays that comment on some differences between SB 840 and other health care bills or plans. Visit her Web site, <http://www.sen.ca.gov/kuehl>, to read her essays.

BOARD BRIEFS February 6, 2007

President Corol Ann Cary said the legislative reviews have been scheduled for the various Leagues. Nancy Richards is arranging the Santa Rosa League interview with Noreen Evans. Ethel Schy and Laurie Hall have agreed to preside over it.

The State League Convention is scheduled for May 18, 19 and 20 in Bakersfield. We have 4 delegate positions available plus the president.

Program events coming up:

Katie Sanchez, from the Juvenile Justice Action Committee announced that on March 24th, an open forum would be presented to the public, at CHOPS, focusing upon the Juvenile Justice system in Santa Rosa. The board agreed to invite the Juvenile Justice Commission to cosponsor the event.

On April 21, from 10-12 am, at the Central Library in Santa Rosa, Trudy Schaeffer, Legislative Advocate for the State League, will speak about the issues that she is currently working on, one of which is the redistricting protocols.

Action Committee:

Willard Richards reported his work on the Government Guide. Olive Horrell, membership chair, offered to update the telephone numbers of newly elected people.

Willard also reported that he arranged for the video taping of the January 18 Forum "Creating Great Communities Near Transit," sponsored by the Accountable Development Coalition, Greenbelt Alliance, and Conservation Action Education Fund.

Bills expected to return in the current legislative session: SB 840 (Kuehl) California Health Insurance Reliability Act and California Clean Money Campaign.

Members who have an interest in downtown development of low cost housing units may check the website, StationAreaPlan.org, to view the Santa Rosa Downtown Station plan and read the EIR.

Transportation:

George Ellman reported that the Sonoma County Transportation Authority discussed the Green House Gases issue that has become important since the worldwide meeting. Also, the proposed project of building a pedestrian bridge crossing over Highway 101 near the Santa Rosa Junior College has been postponed to 2008-2009.

Fundraisers:

The fundraiser Theater Party on March 7:00 PM is planned. Tickets are \$25 and the membership is asked to make reservations early. We are responsible for 90 seats in the theater. If all were sold we could make \$2000 for the event. Janie Hawker asks for donations of finger food and workers to pour the coffee and the wine. A clean up crew is called for as well.

Chlele Gummer

Secretary



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! © 1997



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.

MARCH 2007 CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are open to the public.

Date	Time	Place	Description
Tuesday March 6	10:00 AM – 12 NOON	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Board Meeting League members are welcome. Board meetings are not open to the public.
Wednesday March 7	7:15 PM	6 th Street Playhouse 52 West 6 th Street Santa Rosa	Theater Party <i>The Big Bang</i> See p. 7.
Tuesday March 13	12 NOON	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 <i>Santa Rosa</i>	International Relations Study Group Climate Change and Global Warming See p. 2.
Thursday March 15	10:30 AM	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Book Club <i>The Broken Branch: How Congress is Failing America and How to Get It Back</i> by Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein See p. 2.
Tuesday March 20	10:00 AM	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Action Committee “Continued discussion of SRDSA Specific Plan issues such as bicycle paths and affordable housing.” See p. 5.
Saturday March 24	9:00 AM – 12 NOON	Chops 509 Adams Street Santa Rosa	Juvenile Justice In Sonoma County Town Forum See p. 4.

Please consult the web calendar - <http://www.lwvsonoma.org/calendar.html> for any additional meeting times and locations.