



THE VOTER

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

Volume 15, No.11

March 2011

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Special points of interest:

- League Celebrates 91st Birthday!
- LWVC Praises Honest Approach to Budget Woes
- Interview with Helen Valeska Bary

Save the Date

Health Care Forum
April 11

LUNCH WITH THE LEAGUE



Speaker - Supervisor Mike McGuire
Wednesday, March 16, 2011 at noon
SRJC Culinary Café
Corner of 7th and B Streets

Our 4th annual Lunch with the League speaker will be newly elected Mike McGuire, Supervisor for the 4th District of Sonoma County. Supervisor McGuire formerly served on the Healdsburg City Council where, when first elected, was the youngest member to have ever served on the council. He will discuss some of the major issues facing Sonoma County in 2011 and beyond.

Lunch will begin at noon and will feature a 3 course meal plus beverage. Cost of the meal is \$25.

To reserve your place for this wonderful luncheon, send a check for \$25.00 made out to LWVSC and sent to: Sandy deLorimier, 2350 Geysers Road, Geyserville, CA 95441 Seating is limited and this event has sold out in the past, so get your checks in early.

For questions call Sandy at 433-4196 or email her at : vive2@sonic.net. Deadline for checks to be received is Saturday, March 12.

There is 2 hour, metered, on-street parking on 7th Street and there is a city parking lot diagonally across 7th Street from the restaurant.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

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

*555 Fifth St., Suite 300 O
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
707-546-5943*

*league@lwvsonoma.org
http://www.lwvsonoma.org*

*See CONTACT US page to email
our directors.*

Directors on Executive Committee

*Alice Richardson, VP -
Administration
Chlele Gummer, VP of Advocacy
Willard Richards, Secretary
Nancy Richards, At Large
Susannah Likins, Treasurer*

Directors

*Anita Lytle, Voter Service Co-
Chair Muriel Smith, Voter
Service Co-Chair Shirley
Johnson-Foell, VOTER Editor
Ardath Lee, Membership Co-
Chair*

Several things have impressed me about our local League in Sonoma County. One is the number of members who take responsibility for a key task and do it well, but their work is done with almost no fanfare. Examples include our Treasurer, Susannah Likins, who takes care of all the normal tasks of a treasurer. In addition, she maintains the membership list that the State and National Leagues use to assess per member payments, files necessary forms with our insurer and the State of California, applies for grants, etc. Lynda Hungerford maintains our website, which requires frequent attention. Until recently, Lynda also managed the Smart Voter website for Sonoma County, and this job included contacting all candidates to ask them to provide their information. Nancy Richardson has managed the crew that keeps the boxes for voter registration forms full in all corners of the County. We do this under contract with the Registrar of Voters, and that work is a significant source of income. Also, Alice Richardson and Chlele Gummer have done many of the things normally done by the President to see us through a year without one.

I am also impressed by the huge demands of some positions in the local League, especially Voter Service. I was Voter Service Chair once, so I know. Arranging all the forums for candidates and ballot measures as well as arranging Pros and Cons presentations for groups is a totally consuming task for several months each election season. Recent Voter Service chairs have done an excellent job of recruiting and organizing workers, which has allowed us to expand our outreach. This year's Voter Service Co-Chairs, Anita Lytle and Muriel Smith, breathed a huge sigh of relief when Election Day arrived.

Most recently, I have been impressed by the number of new members brought in by Ardath Lee, our Membership Co-Chair. We had an unusual turnout of new members at our annual Program Planning meeting, and some found this first introduction to the League a bit daunting. However, monthly membership meetings, the new members reception in May, and other contacts will provide an opportunity for new members to learn more about opportunities related to our current activities, or opportunities to lead us in new directions. Reaching out to the Latino Community has long been a Board goal, and Ardath is doing an excellent job of leading that.

We would benefit from more League members being active in following an issue of interest to them. There are endless opportunities in Sonoma County. Some League members follow issues in their City, but we are currently less active than in the past in paying attention to the Board of Supervisors.

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If an area of government or an issue interests you, become engaged, learn the relevant League positions, and perhaps you can help the League speak out and make a difference.

As I was writing this, the League of Women Voters of California sent out a newsletter with an article on Heather Sterner, LWV San Francisco. Heather said,

As I look back on my years with the League of Women Voters I realize that there was a direct correlation between the hours I spent on projects and the friendships formed with the people I worked with. I got out of League what I put into it.

Willard Richards, Secretary

MISSION

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, 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.

BOARD BRIEFS

Membership Chair Ardath Lee described her continued participation in the Latino Service Providers organization to reach out to the Latino community. She is planning a new members reception May 11 to help new members become acquainted with and active in the League.

Ann Berens reported that Katie Sanchez plans to have a four page draft of the executive summary of the Juvenile Justice Interest Group final report ready for Board review by mid February. After approval by the Board, the JJIG plans to mail 200 or more copies of the executive summary to interested people and the public. The full report would be made available on the LWVSC website.

Stan Gold gave a presentation on Community Impact Reports, which disclose information on the effects of large projects not addressed in Environmental Impact Reports. The CIR typically includes assessments of the effects of a project on employment and job quality, housing, human needs, smart growth and livability, and fiscal effects such as effects on taxes. Stan said a CIR typically takes 60 to 90 days to complete and the \$20 to \$40 thousand cost is paid by the applicant. The Board voted to promote a requirement that a CIR be prepared for large developments in Sonoma County and its cities.

Chlele Gummer summarized the recommendations from the Program Planning meeting.

Our representative on the Sonoma County Conservation Council has resigned. Because some of the traditional functions of the SCCC are now provided by the Internet, the Board will discuss continuing membership in the SCCC in March.

Nancy Richards is working with the County Department of Health Services staff to plan a forum on Federal health care reform at 6:30 to 8:30 PM on April 11 in the Santa Rosa City Council Chambers.

Stan Gold said that State Senator Mark Leno is re-introducing the single payer health care bill. He suggested we have an educational forum on this topic. This could be the topic of our fall kickoff meeting.

Anita Lytle reported Voter Service activities, including plans to register voters at High Schools.

The February VOTER was the first issue to be sent by email instead of bulk mail. It will be sent by First Class mail on request to members without email.

Willard Richards, Secretary

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE REPORT

The meeting of January 27, 2011 was attended by Max Bridges, Ethel Schy, Stan Gold, Nancy Burrington and Willard Richards. Chlele Gummer was the Chair.

Discussion of Campaign Finance covered: capping donations at the county level, publishing donations to independent expenditure committees, and alignment of cities' election finance rules. As it stands today, the Sonoma County campaign requirements for supervisor races allow \$2500 per person, that can be raised to \$5000, if the independent expenditure committees spend \$10,000 plus. This allows a husband and wife to give \$10,000 together, and provides undue influence upon supervisorial candidates. The committee decided to focus on turning back the donation limit to \$1500—which was the limit until the Board changed it 3 weeks before the 2009 general election. It was decided that the first step is to meet with Supervisors that might be open to the proposed change. Willard agreed to talk to Mike McGuire; Ethel agreed to talk to Shirlee Zane.

Stan Gold presented material for review of the Community Impact Report. It would be an addition to the EIR and give information on the supposed impacts of a development upon social and economic aspects of a community. Stan agreed to give a short presentation of the CIR to the Board at the February meeting. Chlele agreed to find the positions to support our promoting it. The committee feels that a program on CIR for the public would be timely in September or October of our next term. A next step would be to talk to city council members and persons involved in city planning.

Other possible forums for next year:

State single payer health care bill to be introduced by Mark Leno (in September)

How to look at campaign literature as the League does

Chlele Gummer

Director of Advocacy

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



BOOK GROUP

League members and the public are invited to join the book group at 10:30 AM, Thursday, March 17 to discuss Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer's *Making Our Democracy Work: A Judge's View*. The group meets in the conference room immediately opposite the elevator on the third floor of 555 Fifth Street, Santa Rosa.

In a highly readable book, Breyer examines the history of the court and the evolution of public reaction to its decisions.

The book group meets on the third Thursday of the month, except for December. You may download the 2011 schedule for the book group from the calendar page of the local League website. If you have questions about the group, please call or send me a message.

Lynda Hungerford

lh@sonic.net

539-5770

LWVBA Natural Resources Committee

On March 14, Roberta Borgonovo, consultant on water to the state League will talk to the LWVBA Natural Resources Committee about the current situation.

All are invited to attend: 11:30 to 1:00 p.m., Monday, March 14, East Bay MUD, 375 11th Street, Oakland, 2nd floor conference room. (BART, 12th Street station).

Information available at <http://lwvbayarea.org/calendar.html>

PROGRAM PLANNING

Program Planning Meeting

Saturday, January 22, we had our annual "Program Planning Meeting" where we evaluated our League positions, both State and local. Eighteen members enjoyed wine and cheese while we broke into three groups to discuss the State's positions. After these discussions we met in our conference room to gain a general consensus of what our evaluations were.

Regarding State Positions

We recommended the position of Campaign Financing for update, to include a 'full disclosure' requirement of independent expenditure committees. All other State Positions we retained as they are currently written. The issues chosen for Education and Advocacy by the State League are 1. Constitution, 2. State and Local Finances, 3. Child Care especially Cal Works.

Regarding Local Positions

We recommended that all positions be retained as currently written. The group asked the board for special consideration on:

Position I Budget Process: Sonoma and its cities: Investigate State Positions for pension protocols

Position II Cable television franchising in Sonoma County : recommended investigation as to whether it's needed

Position IV Santa Rosa General Plan : Considered changing to include other cities

These results will be evaluated and acted upon at the League's Annual Meeting in May.

Chlele Gummer

Program Planning Chair

League of Women Voters Celebrates 91st Birthday *League of Sonoma County urges public involvement*



Happy 91st Birthday!

Sonoma County– The League of Women Voters celebrates its 91st birthday on February 14. Founded in 1920 by leaders in the women’s suffrage movement, the organization has become synonymous with elections and voting, citizen engagement and civility. According to League leaders in Sonoma County, their members are busy all year, and opportunities for civic engagement abound. “For more than 90 years, the League has stood for and worked towards the civil exchange of different points of view,” said League Vice President of Administration Alice Richardson, “Our work has helped to improve the functioning of government and bridge the gap between voters and elected officials. From serving on local commissions to holding candidate debates and town hall meetings on important – and sometimes controversial – issues, League leaders in Sonoma County are working to make our community healthy, vibrant and strong.”

“It is our hope that political leaders and citizens come together to look for common solutions to the tough challenges facing all of us. We take seriously our legacy of providing trustworthy and balanced resources to citizens and lawmakers,” continued Alice Richardson.

“The League of Women Voters of Sonoma County is one of more than 800 Leagues in all 50 states,” said Alice Richardson. “Since 1920, our goal has been to educate and inform. We respect all points of view, and we are nonpartisan. This is what sets us apart from so many organizations, and it is why we are one of America’s most trusted organizations.”

Membership in the League is open to men and women of all ages.

For more information about the League (including how to join), visit www.lwvsonoma.org.

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership in the League is open to men and women of all ages. With 91 years of experience and over 800 local and state affiliates, the League is one of America’s most trusted grassroots organizations. “Like” the League on Facebook at www.facebook.com/leagueofwomenvoters.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CALIFORNIA PRAISES HONEST APPROACH TO BUDGET WOES

Sacramento—The League of Women Voters of California applauds the balanced approach taken in the Governor’s proposed budget. Recent years have shown that California’s dire fiscal situation can’t be adequately addressed without looking at both the revenue and the expenditure sides of the balance sheet. As the legislature responds and proposals are refined, we encourage everyone involved to approach these difficult discussions thoughtfully and with an open mind.

The proposed cuts are beyond painful—they are excruciating. While we know that expenditures need to be examined, the League is concerned that these cuts will further deteriorate essential safety-net programs as well as other programs throughout the budget.

“It’s about time that we have a budget that works towards long-term solutions, rather than relying on one-time fixes and accounting gimmicks,” said Janis R. Hirohama, LWVC President. “This budget faces up to the reality of California’s structural deficit. California taxpayers want to be dealt with honestly and forthrightly.” The proposed extension of the current taxes is appropriate. It’s impossible to deal with this size of a deficit without increased revenue. California voters have indicated they want services; voters should have a clear choice and a better opportunity to see what the consequences of not passing these taxes will be. We hope that the legislature agrees that the voters should have a chance for an up or down vote on this proposal.

The governor’s budget includes major restructuring of some government programs to shift responsibility and control for many locally delivered services to local government. We will be closely following the discussion on realignment. One question that needs to be considered is how much money now provided by the state or passed through from the federal government will follow the responsibility. Local governments differ in their ability or willingness to approve local taxes for services, which could mean distinct and perhaps inequitable differences in how well local funding would match local needs in the long run.

“There will be difficult debates to come over the governor's proposals, but at least we are finally facing up to hard reality,” said Hirohama. “The picture painted by the governor’s budget isn’t pretty, but it is an honest one.”

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PUT YOURSELF IN HELEN'S SHOES. HAVE YOU FACED ELECTION RESULTS THAT DENIED YOUR BASIC RIGHTS?



Read an interview with Helen Valeska Bary (1888-1973) "The Suffrage Vote in California, 1911":

Bary

Finally, it came to the vote. On election night, the earliest returns we got were from San Francisco. And Orange County came in very early. Those were very much against us.

Parker

Against suffrage?

Bary

Against suffrage. By 11 p.m. not enough had come in to counteract it. We thought that not enough would come in so we conceded. Then everybody went home.

The next morning I went down to open up the headquarters. That was one of the most interesting days of my life. Nobody else from the league appeared; they were all flat. People streamed into the office. They were people I had never seen before. They were not our regulars. Many of them said they had never heard of the suffrage campaign; they did not know about it until they saw in the paper that it had lost.

They began to hand me money. I began to recruit people to help me. I had a couple of telephones and these people milling around and giving me money. I took in more money that day than we ever took in before, and I got all these pledges—hundreds of people came in and signed up for the next campaign. We all thought we had lost, you see. Then on Thursday morning early, around four or five o'clock, one of the newspaperwomen, who was an ardent suffragist, called me and woke me up and said that we had won. The last of the cow counties had come in, and we had won by a margin of, I think it was 240 votes out of a couple of million.

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"Many of them said they had never heard of the suffrage campaign; they did not know about it until they saw in the paper that it had lost."

INTERVIEW WITH HELEN VALESKA BARY

Continued from page 10

Parker

So the cow counties pulled you through on the suffrage vote?

Bary

Every other county voted for suffrage excepting San Francisco and Orange. You see, in San Francisco labor was not socialist. There were some socialists but San Francisco had had union labor for many years. The leaders were P. H. McCarthy and Eugene Schmits. They were labor men but they were not socialists.

They took the general viewpoint that labor was run by men, it was a man's world, and that women should be protected and rather put behind them while they carried on the fight. Also, there was a strong feeling among a great many of them that if women had the vote, they would vote for prohibition. That was not what San Francisco wanted.

Parker

There was a strong Catholic element also in San Francisco's population?

Bary

Yes, and the Catholic element was not for suffrage. A women's place was in the home.

Parker

So you found yourself with a victory. You were victorious.

Bary

Yes, we were. Well, then the women decided that we should go ahead. I stayed on. We had a huge map of California, showing every precinct, and I colored that to show where we had won and where we had lost. Where we had won outstandingly was real red; where we had won by a narrow margin got down to a pale pink; and where we had lost went the same way with blue.

Parker

What characterized the strong districts for suffrage?

Bary

The labor part. East of Main Street in Los Angeles voted heavily for suffrage. The respectable, stylish West Side voted against it; still the county came in for it. This huge map showed that every place where we had worked and sent literature and all that, we lost. We won in the places that we had neglected. It was quite wholesome and the ladies took it with interest. They did not blame me.



MARCH 2011 CALENDAR

Thursday, Mar. 3	10 AM	The Conference Room*	Board meeting. Open to members, and by invitation, open to the public.
Thursday, Mar. 10	10 AM	The Conference Room*	Voter Service Meeting
Weds. Mar. 16	@ Noon	SRJC Culinary Café Corner of 7 th and B Street	4 th Annual Lunch with the League
Thursday, Mar. 17	10:30 AM - noon	The Conference Room*	Book Group
Friday, Mar. 18	10:00 – 11:30 AM	151 Second Street, Petaluma	Petaluma Unit Meeting
Thursday, Mar. 24	10 AM - noon	The Conference Room*	Advocacy Meeting

**The Conference Room is opposite the elevator on the third floor of 555 Fifth Street, Santa Rosa.*

Check out the **League website**. <http://www.lwvsonoma.org/>
for current dates and time for meetings and for back issues of The VOTER.



New and Returning Members

Jennifer Bard
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
jenbard@sonic.net

Terry Price
Santa Rosa, CA 95409
tprice@sonic.net

John Curtis
Sonoma, CA 95476
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Deborah S. Wilkinson
Petaluma, CA 94952
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There's something special in your own backyard.

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

For Membership call Renee @579-4452, #273
To volunteer call Kristi @579-4452, #271

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



WELCOME TO THE MUSEUM AND REMEMBER WHY YOU LOVE PEANUTS

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 _____

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, 555 Fifth Street, Suite 300 O, Santa Rosa, CA 95401. Thank you.

Community Outreach _____ Website _____

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF SONOMA COUNTY
555 Fifth Street, Suite 300 O
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Return Service Requested

Time Dated Material