



THE VOTER

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SONOMA COUNTY

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WATER CRISIS

Recently the plot of Sonoma County's water crisis saga has thickened in two areas: water supply management and waste water disposal. Our May meeting will deal with both of these. Here's the scoop.

WATER SUPPLY

On March 19, the Sonoma County Water Coalition (32 organizations concerned with water, hereafter "the coalition") filed a court petition to force our water provider, the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) to take a hard look at its future water supply and the permits recently issued for further development in water deficient areas.

California's SB 610 requires a valid water supply assessment as part of an environmental impact report for new development projects. This water supply requirement can legally stop a planned project in a water depleted area if it is upheld by the courts. Such assessments routinely rely on the Urban Water Management Plan.

The coalition calls the promised water delivery in the SCWA Urban Water Management Plan "paper water," because much of it seems to exist only on the paper of the plan. For example, the plan mandates the use of groundwater to supplement SCWA deliveries to its contractors, but there is no groundwater management plan, as required by AB 3030, that evaluates groundwater resources or the impacts of present and

anticipated use of groundwater for such supplements. In addition, at this time, SCWA lacks the approvals and permits required to take the additional water from the Russian River, the Eel River, or Lake Sonoma as anticipated by the plan.

Our League is a member of the coalition and many LWVC positions on water support the coalition's petition. A favorable outcome would put "teeth" in SB 610 and mandate responsible water management. You can learn more about the coalition and the petition at the coalition website, <http://scwatercoalition.org>; you can access the LWVC positions on water at its website, <http://www.lwvc.org>.

Water Crisis Meeting
Saturday, May 12, 10:00 AM to NOON
Rincon Valley Regional Library
6959 Montecito Blvd., Santa Rosa

Our board has voted to support the court action by encouraging member contributions. If you want to support the coalition action, you may send a donation to: The Sonoma County Water Coalition, %Kathy Pons, P.O.

Box 632, Kenwood, CA 95452. Please note that you are associated with the League of Women Voters of Sonoma County.

WASTE WATER DISPOSAL

Santa Rosa's Board of Public Utilities as well as other Sonoma County districts responsible for waste water treatment is planning for the future. Critical issues include the quality and quantity of recycled water and its use and destination.

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of Sonoma County**

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Our book for the June 21 meeting will be William Easterly's, *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and So Little Good*. Some reviewers have seen this book as an "antidote" to Thomas Friedman, two of whose books we have read in the past.

The book group will not meet in July or August. In September it plans to begin with some LWVUS recommended books and articles on immigration.

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, May 8, at 12 NOON at 95 Marshall Avenue, Petaluma. It is a brown-bag lunch session and lasts about 1-1/2 hours.

The topic for discussion will be "**International migration in a globalizing economy.**" The movement of people across international borders can be initiated by conflict, economic reasons or the chance to achieve political freedoms. Migration issues have taken center-stage in the U.S. and EU as citizens increasingly worry about job security and terrorism. What are the advantages and disadvantages for countries that are affected by migration?

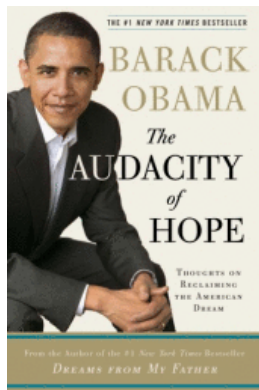
The group meets the second Tuesday of the month. The topics are selected from the Great Decisions briefing book published by the Foreign Policy Association in New York City. All members and friends are welcome to join the group discussion, with or without the briefing book. We also refer to the most 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

BOOK GROUP CORNER

League members and the public are invited to join the book group at 10:30 AM on Thursday, May 17, for a discussion of *The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream* by Sen. Barack Obama. The group will meet in the League office, Suite 209, 100 E Street, Santa Rosa.



The Audacity of Hope is Obama's second book, and it is more policy oriented than his earlier memoir, *Dreams from My Father*. *Audacity* outlines Obama's "vision of how we can move beyond our divisions to tackle concrete problems," including growing economic insecurity, racial and religious tensions in politics and terrorism.

The book group selected this book more than six months ago, well before Obama announced his candidacy for the Democratic nomination for President. The selection of his book in no way implies the group or the League's support of or opposition to his candidacy.

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

The Juvenile Justice Town Forum last month was a smashing success! This event, initiated by our juvenile justice interest group, is an example of the positive impact a small, focused, enthusiastic group of our members can have in the community. Many issues arose at the forum and the committee will continue to follow these.



This is a good time to review the process that league uses to develop our positions.

As stated on the LWVC website, "Positions result from a process of thorough study. Any given study, whether it is National, State or Local, is thorough in its pursuit of facts and details, both positive and negative. As the study progresses, a continuing discussion of pros and cons of each situation occurs. Study committee members fashion consensus questions that are then addressed by the membership.

Additional discussion, pro and con, takes place as members (not part of the study committee) learn the scope of the study. After the members reach consensus, the board forms positions based on that consensus.

It is the consensus statement — the statement resulting from the consensus questions — that becomes a "position." Firm action or advocacy can then be taken on the particular issue addressed by the position. Without a position, action/advocacy cannot be taken.

Consensus is the overall decision-making process by which substantial agreement among members is reached on an issue."

Remember that our annual meeting is coming up June 9th. Your Annual Meeting Kit will be mailed to you. **Please pay special attention to information about our bylaws update and bring the kit with you to the meeting.**

See you in June.

Carol Ann Fontana-Cary

BOARD BRIEFS

APRIL 3, 2007

Treasurer Susannah Likins reported that we made over \$1,000 from the Theater Party in February.

After discussion of the 2007-2008 budget, the Board agreed to present it to the Annual Meeting in June.

George Ellman presented the Financial Audit of the past year and the board accepted it.

Katie Sanchez reported on the success of the Juvenile Justice Forum held on March 24 at CHOPS. She estimated about 150 – 175 in attendance, which included about 30 youth. The Board agreed to pay \$200 towards the rental of the auditorium and 100 chairs.

Eve Roberson announced that she is interested in building a committee for League monitoring and running of local elections in the business and "common interest developments" such as homeowners' groups and community associations.

George Ellman reported the creation of new bylaws, which follow the California League model. These will be presented in the Annual Meeting Kit and voted at that time.

Liz Hawthorn reported that the April 21 meeting, featuring Trudy Schaeffer, would be followed with a lunch at Gary Chu's.

In May, the League will provide a forum on Water Issues at the Rincon Valley Library with David Keller speaking. The annual meeting will again be at Canine Companions with Assemblymember Noreen Evans speaking on issues of immigration and health care.

The Board decided on December 2nd for the Annual Silent Auction event. They wanted the Theater Party event to be in February or March of 2008.

The Nominating Committee reported that they had completed their work and had every position filled.

Chlele Gummer
Secretary

WATER CRISIS

(continued from front page)

The quality of the recycled water is of particular interest to agricultural growers and has an impact on "green building" as some communities are now considering purple piping for recycled water use. Our local League's position on sewage treatment, waste water, and sludge reads in short, "we support policies to ensure that public systems for the treatment and disposal of wastewater and sludge protect public health and the environment. Such systems should be financed equitably and should be designed to be easily modified, expanded, updated." The full position can be downloaded from our Web site, at <http://www.lwvsc.org>.

THE MEETING

On Saturday, May 12, former Petaluma City Councilman David Keller, a knowledgeable member of the SC Water Coalition, will update us on the background and actions taken by the coalition and other current water issues. Carol Dean, a member of the Santa Rosa Board of Public Utilities, will discuss water issues from a different perspective. There will be an opportunity to ask questions and follow up on the latest happenings. The meeting is from 10:00 to 12:00 at the Rincon Valley Regional Library, 6959 Montecito Blvd., Santa Rosa.

ELECTIONS AS A BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY

How would you like to do something worthwhile that you love to do and that would make money for a cause that is important to you? Our League members may now have that opportunity.

We all know that honest elections are essential to our democracy. These elections are traditionally administered by government agencies. But administering other types of elections can be a profitable business opportunity. For example, Sierra Club's current election for its National Directors is being handled by **Election Services Corporation of Garden City, NY**. IBM's election for Directors and ballot propositions is being administered by **Proxy Services of Farmingdale, NY**.

The League of Women Voters, pursuant to 2006 legislation, is now able to provide election services for business clients. This would mean actually administering the elections, not just monitoring them. The League is uniquely qualified to provide these services as it has the credibility of assuring election integrity. It would provide good visibility in the community as well as being an on-going fundraiser for the League.

The legislation providing for conduct of these elections is in California Civil Code Chapters 310 and 450, effective July 1, 2006. These Codes require that "common interest developments" such as homeowners groups and community associations select an independent third party to act as Inspector to conduct their elections.

These new laws were passed as a result of various homeowners' allegations that their elections have been biased. These Code sections specify how the elections shall be conducted. As I reviewed them, it struck me how similar they were to the California Elections Code which is the guide for government-conducted elections.

Conducting these elections would be a major project for our League as we would essentially be providing a new and unique business service. In addition to planning and coordinating each election for our clients, it would require recruiting League volunteers and backups for each position and providing on-going training for each task. Some start-up funding would be required.

Fortunately, other Leagues have already broken ground on this. Metropolitan Phoenix, AZ has copyrighted a 43-page booklet entitled *We Run Elections*. It contains sample checklists, letters, forms, cost calculations, worksheets, etc. It suggests "scouting letters" to professional organizations, local organizations or clubs and condominium home owner associations. It even offers Internet sites for locating clients.

Our League representatives who participated in the California Regional Workshop last fall viewed the 16-page Power Point presentation entitled *Running Local*

Elections. It notes that there are 41,000 organizations in California that would qualify for these services. They range from a few units to thousands but the law applies to ALL no matter how small. Sonoma County has a huge number of condominium complexes that would need this service for their elections.

It has been said that to be successful in business, you must find a need and fill it. These special elections are a need. Now it is up to our membership to decide whether it is ready to fill it. This project will be discussed at our League's Annual Meeting on June 9. We hope all our members can attend as your input is needed if we are to move forward with this very important Elections Business Opportunity.

If you would like more information, or if you would like to be involved in this project, please give me a call at 537-6760.

Eve Roberson
Member
Voters Service Committee

POTLUCK LUNCHEON AT JUNE 9 ANNUAL MEETING

LWVSC members come to the ANNUAL MEETING each June because it is stimulating and informative, offering a wrap-up of the years action and activity and projecting what lies ahead for the League in 2007-2008. Members also enjoy the social and very tasty potluck luncheon that follows the morning session.

If you are going to attend, please call Janie Hawker, Hospitality Coordinator at 584-5210. She will help keep tabs on the variety of salads, desserts, breads, etc. that will grace the buffet table.

2007-2008 ANNUAL KIT

The Annual Kit including the agenda, proposed budget and the new by-laws will be sent to you soon. Please bring the Annual Kit mailing with you to the June 9 Annual Meeting.



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"




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.

MAY 2007 CALENDAR

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are open to the public.

Date	Time	Place	Description
Tuesday May 1	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.
Tuesday May 8	12 NOON	League Office 95 Marshall Avenue Petaluma	International Relations Study Group <i>International migration in a globalizing economy</i> See p. 2.
Saturday May 12	10:00 AM - 12 NOON	Rincon Valley Regional Library, 6959 Montecito Blvd. Santa Rosa	Water Crisis Meeting See p. 1.
Tuesday May 15	10:00 AM	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Action Committee
Thursday May 17	10:30 AM	League Office 100 E Street, Suite 209 Santa Rosa	Book Club <i>The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream</i> by Sen. Barack Obama See p. 2.
Saturday June 9	9:45 AM	Canine Companions for Independence 2965 Dutton Ave. Santa Rosa	Annual Meeting and Potluck Luncheon See p. 4.

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