



# THE VOTER

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

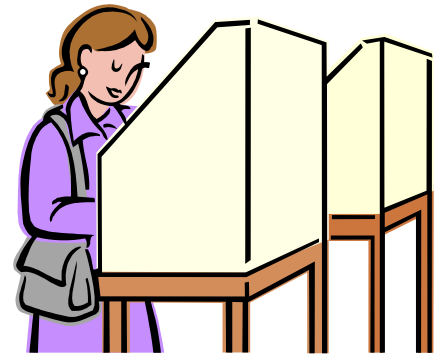
Volume 10, No. 7

October 2005

## LEAGUE GEARS UP FOR NOVEMBER 8 ELECTION

**Education and Advocacy are separate, but equally important elements in the League's mission.**

**Education**



### Pros and Cons Forum on the State Propositions

Tuesday, October 18, 6:30 – 8:30 PM  
Rincon Valley Public Library  
6949 Montecito Boulevard,  
Santa Rosa

**Refer to Pros and Cons for State Propositions at <http://ca.lwv.org/>**

### GMO Initiative Forum

Wednesday, October 5, 7:00 – 9:00 PM  
Santa Rosa City Hall  
100 Santa Rosa Avenue  
Santa Rosa

**Refer to Voter Information for Measure M on pp. 4-5.**

**Smart Voter contains all the non-partisan election information you need.** See the article on p. 7.

**Advocacy**

### Vote with the League!

Check the League's recommendations on the State propositions on pp. 6-7.

## CONTENTS

|  |     |  |    |
|--|-----|--|----|
| Forum on Measure M, the GMO Initiative | 2   | Vote Smart with Smart Voter                      | 7  |
| Hope Washburn's Legacy                 | 2   | LWVUS Disappointed in Baker-Carter Rec.          | 8  |
| President's Message                    | 3   | Nancy Richards Elected to Project Area Committee | 9  |
| International Relations Study Group    | 3   | September Board Briefs                           | 9  |
| Book Club Corner                       | 3   | New Members, Roster Changes and Contributions    | 10 |
| Voter Information for Measure M        | 4-5 | SMART Board to Release DEIR                      | 11 |
| Voters Service                         | 5   | October Calendar                                 | 12 |
| Vote with the League on November 8     | 6-7 |  |    |

**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/

**Officers:**

Corol Ann Fontana-Cary, President  
Willard Richards, VP Action  
Helen Sundergill, VP Administration  
Alexandra Benson, VP Program  
Chlele Gummer, Secretary  
Susannah Likins, Treasurer

**Directors:**

George Ellman, Transportation & Land Use  
Lucille Foster, Education  
Laurie Hall & Susan Milstein, Public Relations  
Olive Horrell, Membership  
Rosalie Gillmore & Amy Southwick, Voters  
Service

**VOTER Team:**

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

**HOPE WASHBURN’S LEGACY  
THRIVES IN MINNESOTA AND  
SONOMA COUNTY**

**Do you know Hope Washburn’s story?**

Our League benefits immensely when members of other Leagues move to Sonoma County. When they join us, they bring with them their experience, ideas and enthusiasm.

One such member was Hope Washburn, who moved here from Minnesota. The League of Women Voters of Minnesota has an annual award named for Washburn, who was its first recipient in 1956. The award is presented to the Minnesota member who has performed outstanding service to the League. After coming here, Washburn continued to serve the Minnesota League by writing letters of congratulations to subsequent winners until she died.

When she moved here, Washburn did not leave her enthusiasm for League behind in the frigid climate of St. Paul. According to Margaret Millner, Washburn was a repository of information on League history, protocols and procedures. She attended meetings, took part in discussions, frequently explained League history and structure to new members and hosted large meetings in her home. She worked on fundraising drives and staffed the office. As Millner says, “It all adds up to support in capital letters.”

When former president Jean Schulz moved here, Washburn greeted her and then remained a friend and mentor. Schulz remembers that Washburn was fond of classical music and “was a most interesting, well read and thoughtful lady.”

As a tribute to her friend, Schulz established the Hope Washburn Fund with the Sonoma County Community Foundation. The fund functions as an endowment for our local League. We receive income from it every year based on the investment results of the foundation.

The Hope Washburn Fund has meant that we could keep our dues relatively low and devote less of our volunteer time and energy to raising money to support our League and more of those resources to educating voters and advocating for our positions.

Professionally managed by the Community Foundation, the fund continues to grow with new contributions from members. Often these tax deductible contributions recognize a special event or memorialize a member.

*Lynda Hungerford*

**FORUM ON GMO INITIATIVE**

**Betty Ann Bruno to moderate October 5 forum**

The LWVSC, along with the Santa Rosa Junior College Social Science Department and the Leadership Institute for Ecology and Economy is sponsoring an educational forum on Measure M.

It will be held on Wednesday, October 5, from 7:00 to 9:00 PM, at the Santa Rosa City Council Chambers, 100 Santa Rosa Avenue.



Betty Ann Bruno

The program is free and open to the public.

Panelists will include League member Edith Mendez of SSU who will give a summary of the initiative, Lex McCorvey, Executive Director of the Sonoma County Farm Bureau, presenting the Con argument and Daniel Solnit of GE-Free Sonoma County giving the Pro argument for the measure.

Betty Ann Bruno, well-known TV journalist, will be the moderator.

Audience members will have the opportunity to submit written questions to the panel.

Please plan to join your fellow League members and guests for what should be a most informative and interesting evening.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to extend a special thank you to Sandy Benson for orchestrating our Kick-Off Social. We were treated to a delicious lunch and a very informative presentation by Mark Green from the Laguna de Santa Rosa Foundation. If you were not able to attend the meeting, I encourage you to visit their website at <http://www.lagunadesantarosa.org>.



Our calendar is quickly filling with information about our Pro and Con presentations and our forums. These activities speak to the heart of our mission statement: to encourage informed participation in the election process. Please keep your eye on our website calendar at <http://www.lwvsonoma.org> to see the latest information about these presentations.

Smart Voter is proving once again to be well received by candidates and voters as well. Lynda Hungerford always gives this project her full attention and we are all very grateful. If you have any questions about the upcoming ballot, be sure to take a look at <http://www.smartvoter.org>. I'm sure most of your questions will be answered.

At the 2003 Convention, the League of Women Voters of California approved a study to update the LWVC Energy position in light of recent developments in the electric energy industry. The Energy Study Committee has produced a Study Guide for use by Leagues as we examine the major changes in California's electric system. The study guide for this update is available at <http://www.lwvc.org>. Please take a look at this document if you want to know more about the study while our local committee is forming.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at our election events!

*Carol Ann Fontana-Cary*

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DISCUSSION GROUP



The International Relations Discussion Group will meet on Tuesday, October 11, 2005, at 12 noon at 210 Windsor Drive, Petaluma. It is a brown-bag lunch session.

The topic for discussion will be "China." China is increasingly influential

globally, but continues to face obstacles at home. As China's record economic growth continues, the country

must still contend with a growing gap between rich and poor, devastating pollution and resource shortages. What strategies can China adopt to sustain its economy while meeting the needs of its people?

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. The topics for 2006 which, according to the Foreign Policy Associate, are not firm, will mostly likely be: Iran, Brazil, Turkey and the European Union, China and India: comparison and contrast, Global Health, Energy Issues, Human Rights and Terrorism, and U.N. Reform.

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

*Rosalie Gillmore*

## BOOK CLUB CORNER

Members of the book group invite you to join them on Thursday, October 20, at 10:30 AM for a discussion of *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* by Jared Diamond. We began a discussion of this book in September and are continuing the discussion in October, examining his premises and some competing accounts of cultural evolution and conflict. The location will be announced on our website <http://www.lwvsonoma.org>.

*Guns, Germs, and Steel* expands an argument that Diamond made in "The Worst Mistake in the History of the Human Race" (*Discover Magazine*, May 1987). There Diamond presents a case for agriculture having brought starvation, warfare and tyranny. You can read the full article at <http://www.agron.iastate.edu/courses/agron342/diamondmistake.html>. For a short cut, Google "Jared Diamond Agriculture."



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 November will be posted on our website <http://www.lwvsonoma.org> shortly after the September meeting. If you have questions about the book group, please call 539-5770.

*Lynda Hungerford*

## VOTER INFORMATION ON MEASURE M

### Sonoma County Genetically Engineered Organism Nuisance Abatement Ordinance

#### The Question

Shall the "Sonoma County Genetically Engineered Organism Nuisance Abatement Ordinance" which would, for at least the next ten years: (1) prohibit the raising, growing, propagation, cultivation, sale, or distribution of most genetically engineered organisms; (2) require the Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner to enforce the ordinance by, after a hearing, confiscating and destroying the genetically engineered organisms; and (3) provide for fines and fees for each violation, be adopted?

#### The Situation

Genetically engineered organisms, also known as transgenic organisms or genetically modified organisms (GMOs), are organisms whose DNA is modified by transgenic manipulation. Transgenic manipulation means the extraction of DNA from an organism (the donor organism) followed by its introduction into the same or a different organism (the recipient organism) in such a manner that the introduced DNA can be transmitted through the reproduction of the recipient organism. Currently, the United States regulates transgenic organisms through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Food and Drug Administration, and the State of California has no further regulatory structure.

The United States is not a signatory to the United Nations Biosafety Protocol, which became international law in 2003 and is signed by 85 nations. This protocol regulates the transboundary movement of transgenic organisms and places the burden of proof of the safety of a new technology on the promoter of the technology and not on the public or governments. Many of California's trading partners either require transgenic organism food and seed products to be labeled or ban the importation or production of them.

Voters in Marin and Mendocino Counties, the Board of Supervisors in Trinity County, and the Arcata City Council have adopted similar ordinances regulating genetically engineered organisms, but voters in Butte and San Luis Obispo Counties have defeated similar measures.

#### The Proposal

- Measure M prohibits any person or legal entity (such as a corporation) from propagating, cultivating, raising, growing, selling or distributing transgenic organisms.
- The ordinance does not prohibit the purchase, sale or distribution or use of human food and animal feed which contains transgenic ingredients.
- The ordinance allows for licensed medical and agricultural research and production when the organism is physically contained following strict Federal guidelines so it cannot enter the environment.
- The ordinance does not apply to traditional breeding, conjugation, traditional fermentation, hybridization, in-vitro fertilization or tissue culture.
- The County Agricultural Commissioner is designated as the enforcer of this ordinance. There are strict enforcement time schedules following a suspected violation or complaint. Any person or legal entity in knowing viola-

tion of the ordinance will have to pay administrative and abatement costs and a \$1000 fine.

Changes or amendments to this ordinance may be made by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors by unanimous vote with all five Supervisors present and voting. The final vote must be preceded by a noticed public hearing at which the proposed changes are read aloud at least 4 weeks prior to the final vote. This allows the Supervisors to modify the ordinance to accommodate new technology, such as the use of new medical treatments or new crop varieties resistant to disease.

The ordinance expires ten years after passage, unless extended for another ten years by a majority vote of the Supervisors following the specified public hearings.

The County Counsel's analysis says that the ordinance, if approved by a majority of the voters, will be enforceable in the unincorporated areas of Sonoma County. This is a police powers ordinance, and the County does not have police power in incorporated areas.

#### Fiscal Effect

The County Auditor-Controller predicts the following costs:

- Depending on the level of activity, the Agricultural Commissioner has estimated an additional deputy agricultural commissioner for transgenic organism enforcement at \$93,000 per year after a first year of \$113,000.
- Complaint investigation that could cost \$10,000 or more per incident, possibly offset by fines/fees.
- Clean-up and restoration costs ranging from a nominal cost to as much as \$86,000 per acre, which, if there is no knowing violator, could be the County's responsibility.
- Possible legal costs from suits by those demanding enforcement or by alleged violators claiming lack of due process.

The County Auditor-Controller predicts the following revenues:

- Those who knowingly violate the ordinance are to be held responsible for administrative and abatement costs, but collection of these costs may not be possible since the "knowingly violated" must be proved.

Measure M says that any person who knowingly violates this ordinance shall be held responsible for administrative and abatement costs associated with actions taken by the Agricultural Commissioner mandated by this ordinance, including but not limited to: 1.) Costs of investigation; 2.) Costs of removing and destroying transgenic organisms, cleanup, and restoration of the environment; 3.) Cost of county employee enforcement time; 4.) Court and legal costs; and 5.) Costs of monitoring compliance. In addition, such a person will be fined \$1,000 for each violation.

#### What a Yes or No Vote Means

A *YES* vote means that Sonoma County would enact an ordinance banning the propagation, cultivation, raising, growing, sale or distribution of transgenic organisms. This ban would expire after ten years.

A *NO* vote would mean that Sonoma County would continue current policy without any local control over transgenic organisms beyond that imposed by the United States government.

*continued on p. 5*

**MEASURE M***continued from p. 4***Supporters say**

- There has been no long-term testing of the effect of transgenic organisms.
- Neither the United States nor California provides adequate oversight for research, testing or monitoring transgenic organisms, so Sonoma County needs to join Mendocino and Marin Counties in calling for a ban on transgenic organisms.
- Local crops can be unintentionally contaminated by transgenic organism crops grown nearby. This is of particular concern to organic farmers, and to farmers, ranchers, and fishers whose international markets may ban or demand labeling of food containing transgenic organisms.
- Transgenic organisms increase pesticide use.
- The diversity of Sonoma County's ecosystems is threatened with possible genetic contamination by transgenic organisms.
- The ordinance provides exemptions for medical or agricultural research and production, as well as for the use of transgenic organisms in human food and animal feed. Traditional breeding, hybridization, in-vitro fertilization, and fermentation are not affected.

**Opponents say**

- The American Medical Association has supported the use of transgenic organisms.
- Transgenic organisms reduce pesticide and herbicide use.
- Many products you buy today contain transgenic organisms, particularly those made from soy, canola, or corn.
- Banning transgenic organisms would mean grape growers would lose a potential tool against Pierce's Disease carried by the Glassy Winged Sharp Shooter.
- Sonoma County farmers would be hurt because they would have to import transgenic organism feed from other areas rather than producing their own. The ban would put our farmers and ranchers at a competitive disadvantage, crippling Sonoma County agriculture.
- Policing this ordinance could cost Sonoma County taxpayers millions of dollars. Mendocino County has already had trouble enforcing their ban because of the resources required.

**For more information**

The Voter's Pamphlet is also available at <http://www.SmartVoter.org>. This includes analyses by the County Counsel and County Auditor, what the supporters and opponents say, and the full text of Measure M. The Smart Voter website also has links to the websites of the official supporters and opponents.

Supporters: GE Free Sonoma County sponsored by Occidental Arts & Ecology Center (707) 823-4410, <http://www.gefreesonoma.org>.

Opponents: Family Farmers Alliance sponsored by the Sonoma County Farm Bureau (707) 636-0246, <http://www.familyfarmersalliance.com>.

**VOTERS SERVICE**

The November 8 Sonoma County ballot contains several district elections as well as one countywide and eight statewide measures. A public forum is scheduled on the countywide GMO measure for October 5 from 7:00PM to 9:00 PM at the Santa Rosa City Council Chambers.

There will be a **Pros and Cons forum** on the eight State propositions on Tuesday, October 18, from 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM, in the Rincon Valley Public Library, 6959 Montecito Boulevard. This forum is open to the membership and the public, so please attend to learn about the State propositions that are on the November 8 ballot.

Janie Hawker is coordinating the Pros and Cons presentations upon request on the statewide measures. The League of Women Voters of California prepared and mailed the *Pros and Cons* publication to local Leagues and it is available in the Santa Rosa League office. The *Easy Voter Guide* is also available in the League office.

A summary of the eight State propositions and the Sonoma County GMO measure are listed separately in this issue of the VOTER. More information on the November 8 election is also available on Smart Voter, <http://www.smartvoter.org/>.

**Upcoming voting dates and deadlines**

- Sample ballots are mailed around September 29
- Absentee ballots are mailed on October 10
- Last day to register to vote: October 24
- Last day to request an absentee ballot: November 1

There will be a Voters Service meeting on Thursday, October 13, at 10:00 AM in the Santa Rosa League office. We will discuss presenting the pros and cons of the State propositions and what we learned about the GMO measure from the October 5 forum. All members are invited to attend the meeting.

*Amy Southwick and 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.

**VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE ON NOVEMBER 8**

**LWVC supports Proposition 79, opposes 73, 74, 76, 77, 78 and takes no position on 80.**



**Proposition 73. Waiting period and parental notification before termination of minor's pregnancy.**



**OPPOSE**

A constitutional amendment that would require girls 17 and younger to obtain parental or guardian permission 48 hours before obtaining an abortion, except in medical emergency or with parental waiver.

*Parents rightfully want to be involved in their teenagers' lives and all parents want what is best for their children. But good family communication can't be imposed by government. Mandatory notification laws may sound good, but in the real world, vulnerable teenagers who can't talk to their parents may resort to unsafe, illegal abortions.*

**Proposition 74. Public school teachers. Waiting period for permanent status. Dismissal.**



**OPPOSE**

A teacher tenure initiative that would increase the time required for public school teachers to gain tenure from two complete consecutive school years to five.

*The League supports fair, rigorous and effective teacher evaluation and tenure procedures. However, this measure raises questions of due process rights and may limit the use of dismissal for cause. It does nothing to encourage teachers to enter and remain in the profession.*

**Proposition 75. Public-Employee Union Dues. Restriction on public-employee contributions.**



**OPPOSE**

An initiative that would prohibit public-employee labor unions from using union dues or fees for political contributions unless their members provide written consent.

*The League supports fair, even-handed campaign finance reform, but this measure is bad policy. It restricts public employee unions' use of member dues for political activity but has no similar constraint on corporations.*

**Proposition 76. State spending and school funding limits.**



**OPPOSE**

A constitutional amendment that changes state minimum school funding requirements (Proposition 98), permitting

suspension of minimum funding, but terminating re-payment requirement and eliminating authority to reduce funding when state revenues decrease. Excludes above-minimum appropriations from schools' funding base. Limits state spending to prior year total plus revenue growth. Shifts excess revenues from school/tax relief to budget reserve, specified construction, debt repayment. Requires Governor to reduce state appropriations, under specified circumstances, including employee compensation, state contracts. Continues prior year appropriations if new state budget delayed. Prohibits state special funds borrowing. Requires payment of local government mandates.

*This constitutional amendment changes the state's spending cap, increases the governor's power to make budget cuts, and revises the Proposition 98 minimum guarantees for state support of education. It reduces flexibility to address changing needs and will cause cuts in essential services. School funding will be permanently reduced by \$4 billion per year. Our system of checks and balances will be undermined by giving this and all future governors the power to make cuts unilaterally. This is not budget reform!*

**Proposition 77. Redistricting.**



**OPPOSE**

A constitutional amendment that changes the way the state draws its congressional and state legislative district lines. It requires a three-member panel of retired judges, selected by legislative leaders, to adopt new district lines to be set right after this initiative passes and then after each 10-year census. These districts define the area and people a lawmaker represents.

*California needs to reform the way legislative and congressional district lines are drawn, but this flawed measure doesn't measure up. The makeup of its redistricting panel and its neglect of communities of interest in drawing plans are bad policy. This proposal calls for an immediate redistricting that would ignore three million new Californians, and it requires a cumbersome, wasteful ratification of every set of plans by the people.*

**Proposition 78. Discounts on prescription drugs.**



**OPPOSE**

A prescription drug discount initiative that enables Californians with low- and moderate-income (up to \$28,000 for an individual or \$56,000 for a family of four) to purchase prescription drugs at reduced prices. Imposes \$15 application fee, renewable annually. The State Department of Health Services is authorized to contract with pharmacies to sell prescription drugs at agreed-upon dis-

counts negotiated in advance and to negotiate rebate agreements with drug manufacturers.

*There are two prescription drug initiatives on this ballot. Drug companies have contributed over \$50 million to support Proposition 78, an inferior program that depends on their voluntary participation.*

### **Proposition 79. Prescription drug discounts. State-negotiated rebates.**



#### **SUPPORT**

Another prescription drug discount initiative for Californians with low and mid-level incomes (up to \$37,000 for an individual or \$75,000 for a family of four) to be funded through rebates from participating drug manufacturers negotiated by California Department of Health Services. Prescription drugs by companies who do not offer discounts could be barred from the State's Medi-Cal program.

*Proposition 79 offers deeper drug discounts to nearly twice as many Californians as Proposition 78. It has an enforcement mechanism to hold drug companies accountable for providing discounts.*

### **Proposition 80. Electric Service Providers Regulation**

#### **NEUTRAL**

This initiative would subject electric service providers, as defined, to control and regulation by the California Public Utilities Commission. Imposes restrictions on electricity customers' ability to switch from private utilities to other electric providers.

*LWVC is remaining neutral because League positions do not cover the issues in this proposition.*

## **LEAGUE CO-SPONSORED FORUM FOCUSED ON COMMUNITY IMPACTS**

On September 14, on the SRJC campus, a forum was held to discuss the development of the SMART property in Santa Rosa's Railroad Square. The goal of the forum was to educate the public about next generation Smart Growth principles and apply this format to the Railroad Square SMART project in Santa Rosa. The primary sponsor was the Accountable Development Coalition (ADC) of Sonoma County.

## **VOTE SMART WITH SMART VOTER**

Increase your voting IQ and help your friends to do the same. Everything you need for a cram course on the items on your November 8 ballot will be in Smart Voter, <http://www.smartvoter.org>. Once there, enter your name and address, and your ballot will come up. For most of you, that will consist only of ballot measures—eight state propositions and the one local measure.

For each state measure, you will find a wealth of material, including information from the Legislative Analyst, the League's Pros and Cons, the League's *In Depth* analysis and links to other available sites, pro and con. Similar information will be available for Sonoma County's Measure M, the measure that would ban transgenic organisms from Sonoma County. You will be able to download the pros and cons on M that have been developed by our local League members.

For a select few in the county, there will be a list of candidates. If you live in a part of Sonoma County served by the Mendocino County Board of Education (Area 5 or 6), or if you live in the Shoreline School District or the Monte Rio Recreation and Park District, then you will have a slate of candidates. Smart Voter has contacted all of these candidates to ask for information, and we will provide as much information as possible about these contests.

Smart Voter is a non-partisan voter education site. As such, Smart Voter does not provide any information about League positions, nor does it link to that information. To learn the League's positions, you need to go to the League of Women Voters of California website, <http://www.lwvc.org>.

Our local League is not taking a position on Measure M, but check our local website, <http://www.lwvsonoma.org> for the latest schedule for our forums, including television rebroadcasts.

*Lynda Hungerford*



LWV member and SRJC Trustee Marsha Vas Dupre welcomes attendees to the campus. Panel members are Bill Scott of the Sonoma-Mendocino-Lake Building and Construction Trades Council, Sonoma County Supervisor Mike Kerns, Petaluma City Councilman Mike Healy, Tim Frank of the Sierra Club, Sebastopol City Councilman Craig Litwin and Marty Bennett, SRJC Professor and Coordinator of ADC.

# LWVUS DISAPPOINTED IN CARTER-BAKER ELECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

September 19, 2005

Washington, D.C. – The League of Women Voters of the United States today expressed “disappointment” in the recommendations of the private Commission on Federal Election Reform released this morning in Washington, D.C. “We had hoped for better,” said Kay J. Maxwell, League President. “Instead of a set of well-reasoned, progressive ideas, the recommendations are a grab bag of recycled proposals.”

The Commission on Federal Election Reform was chaired by former President Jimmy Carter and former Secretary of State James Baker, and included many distinguished citizens. “While it is a good commission,” said Maxwell, “the recommendations miss the mark. We need to focus on the real needs in election reform,” Maxwell said.

“We need better elections management,” according to Maxwell, “and that means we need to build better institutional arrangements. We need to professionalize management. We need to instill a service focus into elections. We need to ramp up research and development on voting technologies and processes. And we need more federal and state resources and steady funding for elections in this country,” stated Maxwell.

“We don’t need another long list of 87 detailed changes just when election officials are working hard to comply with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA),” Maxwell said. “We need stricter enforcement of existing election laws, not a hodge-podge of old proposals. We certainly don’t need proposals that will make it harder for eligible citizens to vote,” concluded Maxwell.

Last month the League issued a new report – Next Steps on Election Reform – that explores issues central to reforming our election system and implementing the Help America Vote Act. You may find this report on the LWVUS website at: <http://www.lwv.org/>.

Contact: Sara Conrath  
202-263-1332  
sconrath@lwv.org

## SEPTEMBER KICK-OFF EVENT FEATURED MARK GREEN OF THE LAGUNA DE SANTA ROSA FOUNDATION

The importance of the Laguna and the work that is being done to restore it were discussed at LWVSC’s kick-off event on September 17. For information, visit the website at <http://www.lagunadesantarosa.org>.



A special thanks to our hosts Phyllis and Bob Clement and event organizer, Sandy Benson.

## PAST LWVSC PRESIDENT NANCY RICHARDS ELECTED TO PROJECT AREA COMMITTEE FOR GATEWAY REDEVELOPMENT



Nancy Richards

Nancy Richards was elected, as the League representative, to the Project Area Committee by citizens residing or doing business within the Project Area.

The proposed purpose of the Gateway Redevelopment Project is to eliminate and prevent blight in the outlined area through the assistance and encouragement of public and private rehabilitation and redevelopment efforts. The

purpose of the project area committee is to discuss the project plans and to advise the redevelopment agency concerning policy matters which deal with the planning and provision of residential facilities or replacement housing for those to be displaced by project activities. The proposed project area covers an area from as far north as the Bicentennial Interchange to south of Yolanda Avenue, and includes land on both sides of the freeway. The committee is composed of 15 members representing renters, homeowners, businesses and community organizations within the designated Gateway Redevelopment Project area.

Congratulations, Nancy!

## VOTERS SERVICE: PREPARING BALLOT INFORMATION FOR VOTERS

The state League (LWVC) bases its publications on the official State agencies' descriptions to produce source material for local League use in making Pros and Cons presentations. The November 8 election has been a cliffhanger as far as knowing what would really be on the ballot, since the governor called this special election and had the option of canceling it.

The ballot's history started officially five months before the actual election date. Deadlines for district elections and nominations were in July. After the August 12 deadline for consolidating State measures, tax rates for any bonds, etc., a letter or numeric identifier was assigned to each measure. Official wording was due on August 15, the deadline for amendments or withdrawal was August 17, and midnight August 18 was the deadline for the Legislature to cancel the special election. August 22 was the deadline for arguments at the Secretary of State's Office and for the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office's impartial analysis, which addresses the fiscal impact of each measure.

Our contact for official information is the Registrar of Voters, who in turn gets the final official wording from the Secretary of State's Office. Arguments pro and con and rebuttals are submitted by each initiative's author, supporters and opponents to

the Secretary of State's Office. From that publication, the LWVC prepares its nonpartisan voter education materials.

At the County level, there is an analogous process for county-wide initiatives. The impartial analysis is written by the County Counsel and the financial analysis by the County Auditor-Controller. Arguments and rebuttals must be submitted by a specified date in order to be included in the ballot material that the Registrar of Voters mails to all voters before the election. Court challenges and countersuits are also permitted and must be resolved before the ballot is printed.

*Amy Southwick,*

## BOARD BRIEFS

### September 2005

At the September 6 meeting of the LWVSC board, the following key items were covered:

- The Board approved Item 20 of the budget as follows: A contingency fund of \$2000 shall be maintained. The contingency fund is for 3 months rent, phone, office expenses and moving expenses. A 3-month reserve fund of \$6000 shall be maintained for operating expenses.
- Susan Gorin reported that the Windsor and Healdsburg 'Welcome Wagons' are willing to include the League's flyers and the government guides. Other members agreed to check their community's newcomer groups to see if they, also, will include our promotional material. George Ellman agreed to check the Sonoma Valley area and Susan Gorin will check the Petaluma area.
- Susan and the board discussed the planned panel discussion surrounding issues of the development west of Railroad Square on September 14 and the planned debate over Propositions 75 and 76 on September 26.
- Sandy Benson reported on the upcoming debate over the Genetically Modified Organisms Measure on October 5. The Farm Bureau and GE Sonoma County will represent the two sides of the debate.
- Amy Southwick announced the next two voter service meetings on October 13 and November 10. Thirteen members attended the September meeting. A list of election monitors was created and the League supervised an election of directors at the radio station KBBF.
- The board approved the following policy change: Updates to the roster will be published in the paper copy of the VOTER. This information will also be included in an email to LWVSC members so that this information is available to members who elect not to receive a paper copy. Addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses will be deleted in the version of the VOTER posted on the LWVSC website.

Respectfully submitted,

*Chlele Gummer*

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

### Local

William Alexander  
Priscilla & Joe Vivio

### National

Margaret Haywood

For privacy considerations, members' addresses,  
telephone numbers and email addresses are not  
provided in the web version of the VOTER

## THANKS TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

### Education Fund

|  |                            |
|--|----------------------------|
| Audrey Ayers   | William and Lucy Kortum    |
| Barbara Biebush  | Susannah Likins            |
| Ellen Brosbe   | Edith Mendez               |
| Phyllis and Bob Clement                                  | Nancy and Willard Richards |
| Lucy Foster (in Honor of Harold<br>and Lynda Hungerford) | Sigrun Seifert             |
| Susan Gorin  | Patricia Spicer            |
|  | Irene and Roger Stewart    |

### General Fund

|                       |                              |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Anne Therese Ageson   | Zelma Gordon                 |
| Margaret Alt          | Laurie Hall                  |
| Joanne Argyres        | Liz and Bob Hawthorne        |
| Ann Baumann           | Eva Hoffman                  |
| Ruth Belmont          | Lynda and Harold Hungerford  |
| Carole Bennett        | Marlene Kaulum               |
| BarbaraBiebush        | Louisa Leavitt               |
| Ellen Brosbe          | Nancy Lewis                  |
| David and Myrtle Cox  | Hilda Mansfield              |
| Linda Curry           | Edith Mendez                 |
| William Dacus         | Maurine Olson                |
| Joan Demitz           | Jean Schulz                  |
| Jack and Marsha Dupre | Ethel and Stuart Schy        |
| Jane Ernsberger       | Irene and Roger Stewart      |
| Jewell Ford           | Leonard and Adrienne Swenson |
| Jean Gilmore          |                              |

### SMART BOARD TO RELEASE DEIR

The Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) District Board expects to release the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the startup of passenger rail service by the time you read this. The public comment period will end 60 days after the DEIR is released. Then SMART will approve the Final EIR before the beginning of the political campaign for the quarter percent sales tax measure on the November 2006 ballot.



We need to be knowledgeable about the contents of the DEIR and adopt some policies relating to them. I encourage any of our members interested in this important rail transportation system to participate in this activity. If you would be willing to devote some time to this project, please call me at 996-0601 or send an email to [georgeellman@cs.com](mailto:georgeellman@cs.com).

*George Ellman*

**Join the Gang –  
Become a member of the  
Charles M. Schulz Museum**



We have a world-class museum as an attraction in our county. Memberships are important to sustain the museum, and every membership level rewards YOU!

Call Maite @ 579-4452 ext. 108  
or visit the Museum web site:  
[www.SchulzMuseum.org](http://www.SchulzMuseum.org)  
Click on Membership.



PEANUTS © United Feature Syndicate, Inc.



### 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.

## OCTOBER 2005 CALENDAR

*Unless otherwise noted, meetings are open to the public.*

| Date                   | Time                  | Place  | Description   |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--|---|
| Tuesday<br>October 4   | 10:00 AM - 12<br>Noon | League Office<br>100 E Street, Suite 209<br>Santa Rosa   | <b>Board Meeting</b><br>League members are welcome. Board meetings are not open to the public.                |
| Wednesday<br>October 5 | 7:00 - 9:00 PM        | Santa Rosa City Council<br>Chambers<br>100 Santa Rosa Avenue<br>Santa Rosa                                     | <b>Forum on Measure M, the GMO Initiative</b><br>See p. 2.  |
| Tuesday<br>October 11  | 12:00 Noon            | 210 Windsor Drive<br>Petaluma  | <b>International Relations Study Group</b><br>China<br>See p. 3.  |
| Thursday<br>October 13 | 10:00 AM              | League Office<br>100 E Street, Suite 209<br>Santa Rosa   | <b>Voters Service Meeting</b><br>See p. 5.  |
| Tuesday<br>October 18  | 10:00 AM              | League Office<br>100 E Street, Suite 209<br>Santa Rosa   | <b>Action Committee</b>   |
| Tuesday<br>October 18  | 6:30 - 8:30 PM        | Rincon Valley Public Library<br>6949 Montecito Boulevard<br>Santa Rosa   | <b>Pros and Con Forum on State Propositions</b><br>See p. 1.  |
| Thursday<br>October 20 | 10:30 AM              | To be determined.<br>Consult the website at<br><a href="http://www.lwvsonoma.org">http://www.lwvsonoma.org</a> | <b>Book Club</b><br><i>Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies</i> by Jared Diamond<br>See p. 3. |

**LINK TO CURRENT CALENDAR**