



THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF SONOMA COUNTY

Volume 21 Issue 5

Visit us at www.lwvsonoma.org

September 2015

The League of Women Voters of
Sonoma County
Invites you to come and hear
THUMBS UP - THUMBS DOWN
A look at what readers are talking about!



Featuring Paul Gullixson,
Editorial Director,
The Press Democrat

Wednesday September 30, 2015
6:00 - 7:30 pm
Santa Rosa Central Library
211 E Street

Refreshments will be served!

Study of Higher Education In California

Join Us to Help Develop
the League Position On
This Important Issue

- More information on page 8 -
and

**Two US League Studies
Planned:**

Money in Politics

<http://forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/our-work/money-politics-review>

and

Constitutional Amendments

<http://forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/our-work/constitutional-amendment-study>

We have a lot happening, but
these are very important to the
League mission.

Contact Juanita Roland
(SueRoland@aol.com)
if you can help.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:
AN EVENING WITH
CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT

As I grow older, I have more and more episodes of falling in love with people for short periods of time. Maybe it's more like a "flash infatuation" and the episodes are gender neutral. Usually these last from 15 minutes to a few hours. If it's a two-day affair, I just keep them around as imaginary friends until they are gone.

The other night, reading some documents from the early days of The League of Women Voters, my heart opened to Carrie Chapman Catt. After reading some of her letters, I kept going back to her picture and fell a little bit in love. Her thoughts were so prescient, her writing so graceful and civil, that I feel compelled to pass on a few of them to you:

In 1921 in a letter to other League leaders, she called for admitting men as members: "I wish also to make a suggestion, which I intended to forward to Atlanta [the convention] but didn't. I would like to have somebody serve notice to amend the Constitution by taking out the word "women" from the title, leaving it *League of Voters*, and that a strong and urgent invitation should be extended to independent-minded men to become members and unite in an independent political policy for the Nation. You have perhaps observed that the political

women are throwing innuendoes at the League of Women Voters as a sex-segregated institution.... Why not step boldly to the front and do away with sex segregation and beat the political women in a race of progress."

Her suggestion to change the name never did succeed, and it was 1974 before men were admitted as members.

Early after the founding of the League, the discussion among the leadership centered on the program load, a perennial issue. I quote from her statement on charges being leveled at the League at the time: "that nobody knows just what the League stands for; there is no outstanding objective; that it has a program stolen from other organizations...Our primary interest should be to work for the political development of this country largely through the removal of illiteracy, the education of the voter, improvement in political methods, the conduct of campaigns, the management of municipalities...and the first thing we should stand for is EFFICIENCY IN GOVERNMENT which should be all its name implies and not a committee, but should be the big work of the Board."



Carrie Chapman Catt

(Continued on Page 3)

Early this year I was struggling to decide whether to leave the Board. I had been Membership Chair for 3 years and felt it was not a good fit. I was “running cards” at the program that Nancy Richards and her colleagues had organized on the Juvenile Justice program in the schools. They had persevered through last minute cancellations and disruptions in the planning to present a well-rounded informational and interesting evening. Looking at all of the volunteers I had come to know, I had another opening of the heart and realized that there was no way I could leave. What could I do that would be more meaningful than to continue to work in the League?

So remembering the tasks that Carrie Chapman Catt and the founding women set us, I invite you to join us in the coming year to persevere in our efforts as they were presented so many years ago.

Nancy Burrington
President

Quotes taken from Barbara Stahler, *For The Public Record: A Documentary History of the League of Women Voters*, Greenwood Press, 2000.

LWVSC Calendar

Advocacy Committee Meeting: Wednesday, September 9th, 10:30 am.

Book Club: Thursday, 10:30 am. September 17th. See page 4 for details and book information.

Program: Thumbs Up - Thumbs Down with Paul Gullixon, Editor Press Democrat. Wednesday, September 30th, 6-7:30 pm. See page 1 for details.

Board Meeting: Wednesday, October 7th, 10 am to Noon.

LWVSC meetings are in the third floor Conference Room at the LWVSC office, 555 5th Street, Santa Rosa.

LWVSC Board meetings are open to all LWVSC members, and to the public upon request. All other meetings are open to the public.

Visit our [website](#) for updated calendar information.

From LWV California:

Sign up for National Voter Registration Day

In 2008, six million Americans didn't vote because they missed a registration deadline or didn't know how to register! On September 22, volunteers, celebrities, and organizations from all over the country will “hit the streets” for National Voter Registration Day (NVRD).

Check [LWVC](#) to sign up.

ADVOCACY NOTES

Advocacy Committee Report:

The president of Santa Rosa Junior College appears to be working slowly to possibly correct the college's Santa Rosa Area/District 3,4,5. Fortunately there is an active group including students that won't let the issue go away. The League supports efforts to split the area into three separate, more representative areas. On the issue of affordable housing, your League supported sending one of our members to the North Bay Housing Summit where several influential people spoke in support of developing goals and plans to address the county housing shortage.

Two committee members also attended the Bay Area Planning Open House where the housing shortage also was addressed. Debate about the living wage ordinance issue continues in Sonoma County. The League has made its positive position known to the Board of Supervisors and will follow the issue when it goes back to them later this year.

The committee meets on Wednesday, September 9, 10:30 am in the third floor Conference Room of 555 5th Street, Santa Rosa,

Gene Zingarelli
Advocacy Committee Chair
action@lwvsonoma.org

BOOK CLUB READS

September 17: Moderated by Karen Rust.

How We Got To Now: Six Innovations That Made the Modern World
by Steven Johnson, 304 pages, 2014.

In this illustrated history, Steven Johnson explores the history of innovation over centuries, tracing facets of modern life (refrigeration, clocks, and eyeglass lenses, to name a few) from their creation by hobbyists, amateurs, and entrepreneurs to their unintended historical consequences. *How We Got to Now* investigates the secret history behind the everyday objects of contemporary life.

Book Group meets the 3rd Thursday of each month. The next meeting is September 17th at 10:30 am in the third floor Conference Room of 555 5th Street, Santa Rosa.

2015 ANNUAL MEETING

About 40 people attended the Annual Meeting on May 30. All of our local positions were retained, no new local study was adopted, and a new slate of officers for the 2015-2016 Board was approved unanimously. Highlights of the meeting were the great food that all members brought to share, Janie Hawker's beautiful roses, Marsha Taylor's enthusiastic review of the California State Convention which she attended with Nancy Burrington, and a very interesting guest speaker, Alison Howard, who discussed the future of political participation among the millennials. Alison, Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Studies at Dominican University of California, led an interesting and lively discussion with the members on the topic. A guest of Dee Dee Bridges was sufficiently impressed with the whole meeting that she joined the League!

League of Women Voters California State Convention Report:

I was one of LWVSC's delegates this last May for the California State LWV Convention in San Diego along with LWVSC President Nancy Burrington. In short, the experience was completely exciting! Good energy, and wonderful ideas were shared.

At the Convention, we passed 8 bylaw changes, including a budget that will now be voted on every 2 years, instead of every year, and we approved all nominated Board Members and Programs. Also we voted to:

- Retain all existing positions
- Agreed not to add any new studies or updates for the next 2 years
- Update Ag Land Preservation Position to say "sustainable water" instead of "available" water

We adopted issues for Education and Advocacy:

- Money and Politics
- Protecting the California environment
- Election and Voting Rights
- Minimum/living wages

All the above fit within National's priorities:

- Climate and environment protection
- Money in politics
- Voting rights

There were 160 delegates from 62 California Leagues. I met so many interesting people from Leagues across the state, and we sat with the Leagues from Marin and Mendocino. We are great resources for each other. A wonderful time was had by all!

Thank you for the opportunity, Marsha Taylor

How the LWVC Takes Action

To reach [the League's aim], study is not enough, becoming experts is not enough. Good citizenship requires not only knowledge but ability to act. Marguerite Wells, President, LWV1934-44

Leagues at all levels take action. Our advocacy can include writing letters to media or legislators, holding press conferences, speaking at hearings and public meetings, adding our voice to a ballot measure campaign or sending action alerts to our members. Taking action is always based on current program positions and/or on League Principles. Positions are developed based on member study and consensus. We have many positions, and many opportunities to act, so how does the League of Women Voters of California board determine when to take action on state legislation and statewide ballot measures, and on which items?

1. League Priorities

The LWVC has a series of priorities: the Issues for Education and Advocacy set every two years at the LWVC convention, the legislative priorities set for each legislative session by the board, and the core issues of the League that include redistricting, elections, initiative and referendum process, voting rights, campaign finance reform and reproductive choices.

2. Requests for Action

Recommendations and requests for action on issues—bills before the legislature, potential ballot measures—come from a variety of sources. Local Leagues or League members can request that the LWVC look at a potential piece of legislation for action, or we may be asked by the author of a bill for the League's endorsement. Other groups working in a particular area can ask that the League join them in endorsing a bill or ballot measure. Or, most commonly, we simply are following legislation in a particular area closely and find something that we want to address.

3. Analysis: How Does It Fit with League Positions?

These requests are first sent to the off-board Program Director and/or Legislative Consultant responsible for the issue area for analysis. Off-board Program Directors and Legislative Consultants are experts on League positions and previous League action on the positions in a particular area, and do analysis of bills and ballot measures with recommendations about potential League action. They watch legislation in their area of expertise, and they frequently are the ones that draft the letters and testimony in their issue area.

The Legislative Consultants write analyses of the measure under consideration, including a summary of the measure and how it changes current law, a summary of the related League positions, and how the League positions apply to the measure. They also give recommendations about supporting or opposing the measure and indicate how important they feel it is within their area. The Program Directors may add their comments and recommendations, including information about previous League action on similar measures.

4. Legislation Committee

Recommendations for action on legislation and ballot measures are considered by the LWVC Legislation Committee, made up of the LWVC President, VP for Advocacy and

Program, all program directors from the LWVC board, and two off-board members. The

Legislation Committee can take action for the LWVC on bills, and makes recommendations to the whole LWVC board for action on ballot measures. Whenever action is taken, that is reported to the board and the membership. Members can find a record of League action in the [Bill Status Report](#) and on our Web site, <http://lwvc.org>.

Some of the criteria that the Legislation Committee and the board use in determining whether to take action on a particular issue are:

- League positions, including previous League action
- What does the League's voice add to the debate on this?
- What will happen if the League does not speak?

Frequently, the League has multiple positions covering a single measure, and the Legislation Committee must balance these positions together – and sometimes against each other. At other times, the League supports a part of a measure, but doesn't like another part, so we must weigh the importance of the supported portion against that of the non-supported portion. All of these factors weigh in the Legislative Committee and the board discussions.

For ballot measures, we also consider what else is on the ballot for that election. That element of the decision process for ballot measures doesn't so much affect whether or not we will take a position but rather when we might take a position and how strongly we will be involved in a campaign.

5. **Endorsement Strategy**

Because the League's resources are limited, we try to be strategic about how we endorse measures. We want to make sure that it is something that we really can endorse (that it isn't still in a nebulous state), and that it isn't going to change in some way that will make us have to either withdraw our support or otherwise backpedal. If there is going to be some kind of campaign, we also want to be given a strong voice in the campaign messaging. We are involved in some campaigns from the very beginning (redistricting, clean money), but frequently wait to see whether a measure qualifies for the ballot before endorsing. Some of the other factors that we consider when looking at a ballot measure include the reality of its passage (is it really worth putting our energy into this?), who else is working on it (can we realistically be in a coalition with these organizations?), overall campaign strategy (is there a total plan, and can the League take an effective role?), and whether we want to make a statement of principle on an issue.

6. **For More Information:**

League of Women Voters of California, [Issues](#) (LWVC position statements and action policies as well as our current priorities for education and advocacy) and League of Women Voters of California, [Legislative Priorities](#)
 League of Women Voters, [Issues](#) (LWVUS statements of position and priorities) League of Women Voters, [League Basics](#)

(More Information listing continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page.)

We also have extensive resources on League members only Web sites: League of Women Voters of California, [Action Resources](#)
 League of Women Voters of California, [Action Policies and Positions](#), 2011
 LWV of California, [How to...Take Action: Guidelines for Local Leagues](#), 2006
 League of Women Voters, [Impact on Issues](#), 2010-2012
 Submitted by Lynda Hungerford



2015-16 LWVSC Board:

(From the left)

Mary Lou Velasquez, Gene Zingarelli, Marsha Taylor, Susan Novak, Nancy Burrington, Rebecca Jones, Anita Lytle, Carrie Anabo, Terry Wall.
 (not pictured) Shirley Johnson-Foell, and Juanita Roland. Positions on pg 9.

Study of Higher Education In California Join Us to Help Develop the League Position

Higher Education, and especially its burgeoning cost, has been in the news frequently of late. While education is very important to the League, an educated electorate being essential to a functioning democracy, we do not currently have a League position on California's public higher education system. This study is aimed at remedying that; we must first study the issues and develop a consensus in order to form a position. You can be part of that process.

We will be organizing our part of this study starting in mid-September. We are looking for members who can help us delve into the topics of the study and help inform our League as a whole in preparation for a consensus meeting that will take place in early Spring. If you are interested in learning more about the study, the main site is

<https://lwvc.org/study/education-0> [Note: The last character is a zero]

If you can join us, please contact either Edie Mendez, edithmen@sonic.net, or Juanita Roland, sueroland@aol.com We look forward to hearing from you.

LWVSC Board of Directors

Nancy Burrington, **President**

Maggie LaRue, **VP Administration**

Gene Zingarelli, **VP Advocacy**

Rebecca Jones, **Secretary**

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Shirley Johnson-Foell, **Media Outreach**

Susan Novak, **Voter Service**

Anita Lytle, **Program**

Juanita Roland, **Member-at-large**

Marsha Taylor, **Editor**

Because of privacy concerns, we do not include email addresses for the Board in the Voter. Readers can find email addresses in the directory or they can send email to Board Members from the contact us page of the LWVSC website. www.lwvsonoma.org

Connect with the League



LWVSC www.lwvsonoma.org
www.facebook.com/lwvsonomacounty

LWV of Bay Area <http://www.lwvbayarea.org>

LWV of California www.ca.lwv.org

LWV of the United States www.lwv.org
<https://www.facebook.com/leagueofwomenvoters>

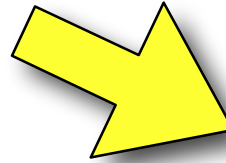
SmartVoter www.smartvoter.org

Addresses of Members Only websites are in the front of the LWVSC directory.

Remember to sign up for email alerts and newsletters when you visit these websites.



*Become a Member of the
LWV of Sonoma County*



**Make a
DONATION**

or

Fill out the form below and mail it to us at:

League of Women Voters Sonoma County
555 5th Street, Suite 300 O
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SONOMA COUNTY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM**

Name _____
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City _____ Zip _____
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Memberships Levels

<i>Susan B. Anthony</i> Individual Membership	\$60
<i>Student/ Limited Income</i> Individual Membership	\$40
<i>Amelia Bloomer</i> Household Membership	\$90
<i>Elizabeth Cady Stanton</i> Membership	\$100
<i>Carrie Chapman Catt</i> Membership	\$200 or more

**Membership dues and donations
are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law**

I am interested in the following areas:

Program	Membership	Speakers Bureau
Social Policy	Natural Resources	Voter Service
Newsletter	Fundraising	CableTV
Smart Voter	Community Outreach	Website

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government 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.

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