

THE VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTH SAN MATEO COUNTY

Celebrating over 50 years of service to our communities

Website: www.LWVSSMC.org Phone: (650) 325-5780 E-mail: info@LWVSSMC.org

MAY 2009

INSIDE THIS MONTH

PAGE 2

- President's Message
- Board Briefs

PAGE 3

- Book Group
- Annual Meeting Silent Auction Fundraiser
- NEW VOICES
- Beer & Democracy: MP's Connoisseurs Marketplace July 19

PAGE 4 - 5

- PROS & CONS Presentation for May 19th Statewide Election
- "Where We Stand": LWVC on the May 19th Propositions

PAGE 5

- League Info Online
- SMARTVOTER.ORG
- ANNUAL MEETING DINNER RESERVATION FORM

BACK COVER

- Upcoming Events

**VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE
ON THE MAY 19 CALIFORNIA
SPECIAL STATEWIDE
ELECTION**

**SEE PAGE 4-5 TO FIND OUT
WHERE WE STAND ON THE
PROPOSITIONS & WHY!**

ANNUAL MEETING TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2009 ♦ 5:45 PM

FEATURING



The Pulitzer Prize-winning author and Stanford University History Professor

DAVID M. KENNEDY

"Are We Heading for The Great Depression 2.0?"

We are especially honored to have Professor David Kennedy as our Annual Speaker! Renowned in his field and noted for integrating economic and cultural analysis with social and political history in his writing and teaching, Dr. Kennedy won the Pulitzer Prize for *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*, a particularly timely book. His insights into the past will certainly give us new insights into our current economic and social condition.

DO NOT MISS THIS CHANCE TO HEAR ANOTHER GREAT SPEAKER!

The Sultana Restaurant

1077 El Camino Real, Menlo Park

COST: \$35 per person includes dinner & Cash Bar

ADVANCE RESERVATIONS REQUIRED - see page 5

FROM THE PRESIDENT



May usually marks the culmination of most League activities before a well-deserved summer break. This year, we'll need it! Our Speakers Bureau is very much in demand for Pros & Cons for the Special Statewide Election. We invested considerable energy into

three terrific National Issues discussions, and gained consensus on the LWVUS study of the National Popular Vote Compact.

Many League members deserve a vote of thanks for their efforts on our collective behalf. Come to the Annual Meeting to congratulate and thank all those whom we will recognize! We'll vote on a slate of officers, many of whom will be new to a League Board - thanks to our Nominating Committee. We will also remember the past contributions of Heather Broome, who ably edited and produced this newsletter for many years. And while we're at it, we'll hear a great speaker, enjoy an excellent meal and lively conversations, hear all about the State League convention fireworks, get a chance to bid on some terrific items at the silent auction, and have some fun.

As always, we have included the Annual Meeting Kit. Please read through the proposed actions we plan to take in the year ahead. Bring it and your wallet with you on Tuesday, May 26. Better still, bring a guest or two. But make your reservations now by mail to the League Office.

Finally, we enlist your support for SB 810. Sen. Mark Leno's new healthcare bill seeks to carry the efforts of Sen. Shiela Kuehl's SB840 forward this year. Because it is a new legislative year, all former bill endorsement must be renewed. Please let our legislators know - again - that healthcare is public good to which all of us should be entitled...and which the League strongly supports. Make your voice heard and know that our strength lies in the grassroots efforts of individuals like you who take the time to become educated on the issues and both inform and encourage others to do likewise. THANK YOU!

Jamie Shepard, Board President
jamieshepard@att.net

BOARD MEETING BRIEFS

HIGHLIGHTS FROM MONDAY, APRIL 6, 2009:

Announcements:

There will be a meeting with Senator Joe Simitian May 8, 2:00pm, at his Palo Alto office. To attend, contact Palo Alto League President, Phyllis Cassell. Space is limited. The LWVC Health Care Committee has asked that we contact our representatives in favor of SB810.

Business:

At the County League Day the local leagues were asked to vote on a change to the wording of the County League's Position Statement. The change would clarify our position on the filling of vacancies on the County Board of Supervisors. Members will be asked to approve the proposal at the Annual Meeting. Director and officer liability insurance has been purchased. Confirmed delegates to the State Convention are: Jamie Shepard, Barbara Boles, and Shirley Des Marais.

Voter Service:

Kathy Armstrong reported on the Speakers Bureau for the State Propositions on the May election ballot. We have seven confirmed venues and two groups considering. Six speakers will be trained for our Pros and Cons presentations on the May 19th California Special Election ballot measures. The Redwood City Library is holding a brown bag lunch to try to pull in the downtown workers. Kathy will be out of town April 17 – May 7. (She's running the Boston Marathon!) Carole Grace will cover for her.

Advocacy:

The Board decided to place an ad in the *Almanac* to explain the League's position on the State Propositions. The Palo Alto League will be asked if they would like to share the expense.

Programs:

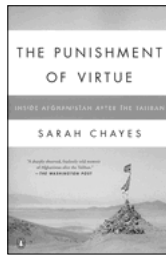
We are beginning to gather ideas for next year's programs. Contact Ellen Hope with suggestions.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, May 4, 7pm, at Lucile Spurlock's, 856 Creek Dr, Menlo Park.

Shirley Desmarais, Board Secretary
sdesmarais@pacbell.net

OUR LEAGUE READS...

Those of you who came to Jo Gilbert's incredible talk on her fascinating travels to Afghanistan will remember her talking about Sarah Chayes, the journalist-turned-Afghan-entrepreneur. We will round out our Book Group calendar with a discussion of Ms Chayes' *Punishment of Virtue*, which is now available at Kepler's. We thank Barbara Boles (*again*) for hosting us on Thursday, May 21, at 7:30 pm at her home on 964 Durlston Road, Redwood City.



Judy Orttung 234-9837 jorttung@att.net

SILENT AUCTION FEATURES ART, WINE AND MORE FOR THE CAUSE

A special feature of our May 26 Annual Meeting will be a silent auction. Here is a sampling of items to be offered for your bidding pleasure:

- ★ An autographed reproduction of a political cartoon by Paul Conrad, winner of three Pulitzer prizes, valued at \$350
- ★ An Australian Wine Duet: one red and one white of wonderful Down Under wine, a \$70 value.
- ★ A \$100 gift certificate to *Leaf and Petal*, popular California Avenue boutique
- ★ A California Classic Vintage Vertical Tasting : bottles of a 2002 and 2003 Dehlinger Russian River Valley Pinot Noir, valued at \$100

Don't miss this opportunity to add to our League coffers while taking a chance on some fabulous prizes. Bidding opens at 5:45 pm at the Annual Meeting at the Sultana Restaurant, 1149 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. Cost for dinner is \$35 and reservations are required. See the reservation form on page 5!

NEWS FROM NEW VOICES

Hard work, imagination, leadership and training have paid off! Now you can see some of the videos that New Voices for Youth students made in the Computer Academy's Junior Class at Menlo-Atherton High School. In the water quality testing video, the students worked with science teacher Lance Powell to report on drinking water

safety in their homes and neighborhoods. In their video of César Chavez's birthday, the students put their ideas and opinions into a story. To view these videos, go online to:

<http://gallery.me.com/newvoicesforyouth>. Also check out "Attention Freshman - New Voices for Youth" on *blip.tv*.

League "Advisors", formerly known as mentors, have started working with the students on their final projects. The students are well organized with topics and plans for their community issue assignments. To learn how you can be part of the fun, contact Anne-Marie.

Additionally, we want to acknowledge the support of Cable Co-op and their gift that made it possible for New Voices to purchase the excellent video cameras that the students now use to report in the field. *Thank you, Cable-Coop!*

Anne-Marie McReynolds, Project Director
NewVoicesForYouth@me.com

"IN THE SPIRIT OF DEMOCRACY"

Beer & Democracy

= 2 Great American Traditions

Menlo Park's Connoisseur's Marketplace

= 1 Great Opportunity for Our League

Our bartending skills once again are in demand for Menlo Park's Connoisseur's Marketplace on Santa Cruz Avenue Sunday, July 19, beginning at 12 noon. We have the booth nearest Fremont Park where it's shady and we



can enjoy the music from the park. Lucile will be there at noon with our red LWV T-shirts for all the worker bees. Depending on whether the Chamber of Commerce wants us for three hours or six hours, so we can use a maximum of 12 people, three 2-hour shifts of four people - *any more and we fall over each other*. Sign up quickly so you'll be ensured a spot. Training provided! It's great fun, a way to get our League name out there, collect some tips, and even register a few voters. *Contact Lucile Spurlock to sign up: 323-5358*
caspurlock@aol.com.



GET READY FOR THE MAY 19TH SPECIAL ELECTION!

Take advantage of one of several opportunities to learn about the six budget-related propositions on the May 19th state-wide special election ballot. Trained League speakers will give an overview and present the “Pros and Cons” on the Propositions at the following events, all of which are free and open to the public. Come and bring a friend!

PORTOLA VALLEY: Wednesday, April 22, at 7pm at The Sequoias in Hanson Hall, 501 Portola Rd (*we will finish in time for people to attend the Portola Valley Town Council meeting*)

MENLO PARK: Sunday, May 3, at 12pm at St. Bede’s Episcopal Church, 2650 Sand Hill Rd

- REDWOOD CITY:** Monday, May 4
- 12pm at the Redwood City Main Library, upstairs in the Community Room, 1044 Middlefield Rd - *feel free to bring your lunch!*
 - 7:30pm at St. Matthias Catholic Church, 1685 Cordilleros Rd

For more information on any of these events, or to request a speaker, contact the League office (325-5780).

Kathy Armstrong, Voter Service Chair
321-3623, karmstro@conncoll.edu

WHERE WE STAND ON THE MAY 19TH PROPOSITIONS

Last March, the State League announced its opposition to and urged voters to reject Props 1A, 1C, 1D and 1E on the May 19 Special State-wide Election ballot. No position was taken on 1B.

“We oppose these measures because they are NOT the solution to our long term financial crisis, with the continuing structural deficit in the state budget and flawed budget process,” said Janis R. Hirohama, president of the League. “We would support real reform to make the state budget process more accountable and give the Legislature and Governor effective tools to ad-

vance state priorities. However, these hurriedly drafted propositions, produced at the end of a flawed process that kept both the public and most legislators in the dark, will only make our fiscal situation worse.”

NO on PROPOSITION 1A Touted by its proponents as the way to bring stability to the budget process, [1A] will *really* tie the hands of the Legislature and Governor as they face changing needs for state and local government services and keep them from taking into account the state’s changing demographics and growth in the actual cost of important services like health care. “Although some claim there is an urgency to pass 1A to resolve our state’s budget problems, we disagree,” said Hirohama. “Most of its provisions will not take effect for two years—two years that we should spend hammering out *real* solutions to our budget and fiscal challenges.”

The League believes elected officials should be allowed to carry out their responsibilities with flexibility. Years of “ballot-box budgeting” and formulas for auto-pilot spending have greatly eroded that flexibility. Prop 1A, however, adds to the problem. For example, it dictates how half the funds that must be transferred to the “Budget Stabilization Fund” are to be used; it removes the Governor’s ability to suspend transfers to the fund in difficult years; it imposes new formulas for calculating “unanticipated revenues” and specifies how they can be used in good years. And, after the deep cuts made [now], it could lock in a reduced level of services by failing to properly take account of increased caseloads and program costs. If Prop 1A passes, the Governor would be given new power to make mid-year cuts and suspend COLAs in state programs without legislative oversight. Midyear budget adjustments should require joint action of the legislative and executive branches so that checks and balances are maintained.

NEUTRAL ON PROPOSITION 1B Our State’s responsibility for public education funding is essential, and we appreciate the need to pay back the devastating cuts that our schools and community colleges have sustained. On the other hand, the Legislature will have the ability to restore school funding without Prop 1B, and it is not needed in this package of propositions. *Continued on pg 5*

NO on PROPOSITION 1C, which attempts to raise money for the short term by selling bonds that would be paid off by future lottery revenue. In light of California's poor credit rating and our current economy, those bonds would have to be sold at very unfavorable interest rates, if they can be sold at all. The Legislative Analyst says that in the long term, lottery profits probably would not be enough to cover the higher payments to education required by Prop 1C. We criticized this proposal as irresponsible last fall, and if anything, that criticism applies more than ever now.

NO on PROPOSITIONS 1D and 1E. On May 19, voters will also be asked to approve the temporary taking of funds from early childhood and mental health programs that were established by two previous initiatives. These are illusory, stopgap measures, and the League opposes these propositions as part of this objectionable package. It is ironic that these initiatives, which did what many consider "the right thing" by providing a source of funding, now face reductions.

NEUTRAL on PROPOSITION 1F. Since the League has no position on setting salaries for public officials, we take no position on Prop 1F, which would prevent pay raises for legislators and statewide constitutional officers during budget deficit years. The LWVC recognizes that California is facing the worst budget crisis in its history with the worldwide recession severely affecting state revenues and the need for state services. Moreover, our budget system is broken and in desperate need of reform. This year illustrates the need to abandon the 2/3 vote requirement for passing budgets and raising revenues, and we must also look at other budget reforms. In the meantime, a new tax commission is considering ways to broaden or stabilize our revenues. "There is much that needs to be done," Hirohama stated, "but we are certain that the propositions on the May 19 ballot are not the answer."

LEAGUE INFO ONLINE

South San Mateo County:
www.LWVSSMC.org
 LWV Bay Area: www.LWVBayArea.org
 LWV CA: www.CA.LWV.org
 LWVUS: www.LWV.org

MAY 19TH ELECTION CALENDAR

Monday May 4:

Last day to register to vote for May 19 election

Tuesday May 12:

Last day to apply for Vote-By-Mail



For up-to-date information on how to register and where to vote, tell others about SMARTVOTER.org!

Of course, it's the easiest, most reliable source of information. It's from the League!



ANNUAL MEETING RESERVATION FORM

REGISTER NOW FOR GOOD FOOD, A GREAT SPEAKER, A LITTLE BUSINESS, AND A WEALTH OF ITEMS IN OUR FUND-RAISER SILENT AUCTION!

Mark your dinner preference, complete this form, and return it with a check (payable to LWVSSMC) for \$35 per person no later than May 20 to the League office. There is no charge to attend the business meeting. Cash bar.

GUESTS WELCOMED!

Choice and number of entrées:

_____ **MEAT LOVERS ENTREE**

Shish Kebab with grilled vegetables and bulgur

_____ **VEGETARIAN ENTREE**

Imam Bayildi (eggplant stuffed with tomatoes, onions and pine nuts)

Names: _____

Phone: _____

Return your reservation form and check immediately to: LWVSSMC, 713 Santa Cruz Avenue, #9, Menlo Park CA 94025, Menlo Park CA 94025

UPCOMING EVENTS on THE CALENDAR

MAY

3 Sun	12 pm	PROS & CONS Presentation on May 19 CA Statewide Special Election Propositions See page 4 Location: Bede's Episcopal Church, 2650 Sand Hill Rd, Menlo Park
4 Mon	12 pm	"Brown Bag" PROS & CONS Presentation on May 19 CA Statewide Special Election Propositions Location: Redwood City Main Library Community Room, 1044 Middlefield Rd, Redwood City
	7 pm	LWVSSMC Board Meeting at Lucile Spurlock's home, 856 Creek Dr, Menlo Park (323-5358)
	7:30 pm	PROS & CONS Presentation on May 19 CA Statewide Special Election Propositions Location: St Matthias Catholic Church, 1685 Cordilleros Rd, Redwood City
15 Fri - 17 Sun		LWV STATE LEAGUE CONVENTION , Long Beach, CA
19 Tues		CA Statewide Special Election <i>Vote in person or vote by mail</i> See page 5
21 Thurs	7:30 pm	BOOK GROUP: <u>Punishment of Virtue</u> by Sarah Chayes. Location: Barbara Boles' home, 964 Durlston Rd, Redwood City. (368-4766) Info: Judy Orttung (234-9837, jorttung@att.net) See page 3
26 Tues	6-9 pm	ANNUAL MEETING at Sultana Restaurant, Menlo Park, with guest speaker DAVID KENNEDY. DINNER RESERVATIONS REQUIRED BY MAIL See Front Cover, page 5 and Insert for details

JUNE

1 Mon	7pm	LWVSSMC Board Meeting at Lucile Spurlock's home, 856 Creek Dr, Menlo Park (323-5358)
6 Sat		NEW: Summer VOTER deadline

JULY

6 Mon		LWVSSMC Board Meeting at Lucile Spurlock's home, 856 Creek Dr, Menlo Park (323-5358)
19 Sun	12-3 pm	LWVSSMC Pours Beer at the Connoisseur's Marketplace , Santa Cruz Ave, Menlo Park Info: Lucile Spurlock (323-5358, caspurlock@aol.com)

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REGISTER NOW FOR OUR ANNUAL MEETING: GOOD FOOD, A GREAT SPEAKER, A LITTLE BUSINESS, A WEALTH OF WONDERFUL ITEMS IN THE SILENT AUCTION, AND A FUN TIME! SEE PAGE 5 TO RESERVE YOUR PLACE!

Now's A Great Time To Recruit New Members to the League of Women Voters of South San Mateo County

Annual dues \$75. Make check payable to LWVSSMC. Joining at the local level makes you a member at all levels: County, Bay Area, State, and National. Dues are not tax-deductible but contributions to our Education Fund are. Keep democracy alive. Join the League!