



# *The Voter*

The League of Women Voters of Western Nevada County

July/August 2011



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- **ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**
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- **A LOOK BACK AT 2010-2011 PROGRAMS**

... AND MUCH MORE !

Summer  Edition

July/August 2011

## PREZ SEZ

The League board members met on July 12 for our annual Retreat. Every year board members from the previous year's board and the incoming board members meet to reflect on what we've accomplished in the past year and what we hope to accomplish in the year ahead.

We spent the day considering everything the League stands for: supporting grass roots citizen participation in the political process at the local, state and national levels; providing nonpartisan information about political candidates and issues; actively supporting positions on issues that we've studied carefully, and more.

We took pride in the excellent programs we offered last year and started planning programs for the year ahead. We based our program planning on the ideas that our membership provided at last year's Speak-In and the Annual Meeting, plus new ideas our board members generated.

We examined each facet of how our local League is operating and discussed ideas for improving what we offer to our members and the community at large. We discussed ideas for serving our membership better and what we can do to expand membership.

Beyond all the topics and details covered at the Retreat, we recognized and confirmed again that maintaining our integrity as a trusted organization is our most important asset. Trust is built on our commitment to honesty and adherence to a transparent process which allows every member to be heard, yet reserves decision power for our League board. In the wider community, that trust is based on the knowledge that the League is dedicated to providing nonpartisan information that voters can trust in deciding how to fulfill their civic responsibility. In an age of shrill ideology and name calling, the League continues to be dedicated to our responsibility to provide open discourse and respect for all citizens.

Soon you'll be receiving a membership renewal letter that will also offer some possibilities for you to get more involved in the League. Consider how you can get more involved. I guarantee you'll enjoy it.

Karen Schwartz, President

## Meet The Member *Karen Schwartz, President*

Think for a moment about when you first got involved with the League of Women Voters.

Here's my story: My husband, Larry, and I had grown up in the Midwest and arrived in California during a period when social unrest was erupting. I grew up in Cleveland in a home with a Republican business executive father and a Democratic stay-at-home mother, so I discovered early in life that there is more than one side to any issue.

Now I was the mother of two young daughters, living in the Oakland hills, and feeling starved for stimulating conversation with bright, informed adults who were comfortable considering new ideas.

At the first League meeting I attended, I listened closely and heard articulate women who seemed well informed about issues at the local, state, and national levels. I decided to join the League and learn more. I slowly got more involved, editing *The Voter* in the days when we literally used scissors and paste to assemble each issue. I even tried moderating a League Candidates' Forum, a frightening prospect for someone who panicked in public speaking situations. Though I'd tried either of these activities before, I experienced a surprising number of successes and only a few failures. More importantly, I grew more confident in taking on new challenges because I survived moving out of my comfort zone.

Years passed. We left Oakland for greener pastures and a move to Nevada County. Once again I found myself feeling starved for stimulating social interaction with informed, questioning adults. I rediscovered the League, and once again the League gave me so much more than I expected.

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## Meet The Member

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Now it's time for me to try to give back to the League, and thus, this year, I'll be president. Once again, I'm taking on something new, moving out of my comfort zone and risking failure. I'm confident, however, in the combined talents of our League board members, a fine team who'll work with me to make this another successful year for the League.

I'm also very confident in our membership. Please continue to attend meetings, ask questions and express your opinions. Let your League board know what you're interested in. Support us by contacting government representatives when action is called for and by donating your time and money when it can make a real difference.

Together we can make this a year to remember!



### This Month in History July/August Anniversaries

**30 years ago**—Calling her a "person for all seasons," President Ronald Reagan nominates Arizona appeals court judge Sandra Day O'Connor for the U.S. Supreme Court.

**60 years ago**—J.D. Salinger publishes *The Catcher in the Rye*. A critical success, the book rides the best-seller list for seven months and today is considered one of the 20th century's top novels.

**130 years ago**—Failed lawyer and office-seeker Charles Guiteau, convinced that new president James Garfield will be the ruin of the Republican Party, shoots him in the back and arm in a Washington, D.C. train station July 2, 1881. Garfield dies September 19.

## ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES HIGHLIGHTS

June 11, 2011

- The meeting was called to order by President pro tem Arlene Robertson at 10:45 a.m.
- Anne DeWitt gave her report as a delegate to the LWVC Convention in Ventura, California.
- Sue Nepstead, Treasurer, distributed copies of the 2010-2011 Budget Report as of June 1, 2011.
- Edi Silverman, Parliamentarian, introduced two proposed LWVWNC by-law changes. Both were unanimously approved.
- Mary Dreifuss reviewed our local positions and asked for reaffirmation of said positions. All were unanimously reaffirmed.
- Polly Bacich, Action chair, mentioned SB 810, Single Payer Bill, now sitting in committee awaiting legislation on this subject.
- Sharon O'Hara was nominated and unanimously approved as chair of the Nominations Committee for 2011-2012
- Madelyn Helling proposed a letter of support for AB438 which places restrictions on local governments outsourcing their public library to a commercial company.
- The proposed slate of officers and directors for the upcoming League year was presented and unanimously approved by the membership.
- President Karen Schwartz asked the membership present for program suggestions for the 2011-2012 LWVWNC monthly meetings.
- The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m. followed by lunch.

Respectfully submitted,  
Madelyn Helling, Secretary



## League of Women Voters of California®

### Issues

The following specific issues were selected for emphasis within California at LWVC Convention:

for the period through June 30, 2011:

[Redistricting Implementation](#)  
[Government Reform](#)

for the period July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2013:

[Redistricting Implementation](#)  
[State and Local Finances](#) (including California's financing of [education](#))

[Initiative and Referendum](#)

After issues for emphasis are adopted by our members, and [legislative priorities](#) are adopted by our board, we [take action](#).

The following specific issues were selected for emphasis for 2007-2009 within California:

[Budget](#)

[Education](#)

### Why We Chose These Issues for Emphasis

In the winter of even numbered years, members across California begin the **program planning process** by reviewing all existing positions and current issues with their local League members. After discussion, each local League chooses **positions** to be retained, reviewed, updated, and/or deleted as well as those that the LWVC should emphasize for the following two years. In spring, the LWVC board of directors evaluates the responses from local Leagues along with current state issues and available financial and human resources. The board develops a proposed League program. The proposed program could include issues for emphasis using existing positions or possible development of new or updated positions through the study process. In May, **delegates to the LWVC Convention vote** not only on the issues for emphasis, but also on: retention, update and deletion of positions; proposed studies; and the budget for these activities.

Our issues are selected through this **grassroots process**, with some modifications by the board over time (in order to be responsive to the changing needs of our state).

## *A League* OF THEIR OWN

### DOTTIE SCHMIDT



At the recent convention of the California State Federation, National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE), long-time League of Women Voters member, **Dottie Schmidt**, was elected unanimously by the almost 300 NARFE delegates attending the convention in Ontario, California. She will hold the position of President for the next four years.

Her friends and fellow Leaguers all wish to congratulate Dottie, who has been co-president of our League in 1995, president in 1999, and again in 2004, on her recent election to the NARFE office.

### POLLY BACICH



League member, **Polly Bacich**, after serving as State President of the California Retired Teachers Association since 2007, is now the Past President of that organization. Polly held many offices within CalRTA prior to being elected State President and Legislation Chair and had been a member of the State Legislation Committee and Area II Legislation Platform Committee.

Polly has been our League's Action/Legislation Director since 2004 and is responsible for being the public advocate (Action) for the policies of the League, and the primary educator dispensing information (Legislation) to our members and to our community.

### BETTY FORD (1918-2011)

*(In Memoriam)*



**Betty Ford** a self-proclaimed "ordinary" woman, died Friday, July 8, at the age of 93. To the surprise of some and the consternation others, she evolved as an activist first lady whose non-threatening manner coupled with her newfound celebrity provided the women's movement an impressive ally. Undaunted by critics, she campaigned for the ill-fated Equal Rights Amendment, spoke up without apology for abortion rights, taking a position contrary to the president's. "Having babies is a blessing, not a duty," Mrs. Ford said, and lobbied her husband to name more women to policymaking government jobs. She said things that first ladies just didn't say, even today, and America of the 1970s loved her for it. We still do!



## “ Grow the Future ”

### LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CALIFORNIA CONVENTION 2011

Thank you for sending me as your delegate to this year’s State Convention in Ventura. I was able to stay with friends and, of course, enjoyed my evenings with them. My days (Saturday and Sunday) were spent at Convention in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, where Saturday afternoon I found myself on the 35th floor looking down at surfers off the same beach I had surfed over 50 years ago!

I was able to attend two workshops, hear three speakers and attend four plenary sessions. In the plenary sessions we adopted all positions recommended by the State Board and elected the slate of proposed officers. The speakers and workshops were more interesting.

What a pleasure it was to see and hear Fiona Ma, Assembly Speaker pro tem. She is young, beautiful and impressive. When asked her opinion of term limits, she answered that she wouldn’t have gotten into the Assembly if Willie Brown had not been termed out. But now she will soon be termed out. Assemblyman Katcho Achadjian gave a speech on civility in politics, for which he is well known. Janice Hirohama, President of LWVC, chaired the Convention and gave a speech on leadership. She is a very strong and very positive leader.

The Membership Workshop gave me some ideas to pass on to our Membership Director, but I think I learned most from the Health Care Workshop. First there is the Federal Affordable Care Act which created for each state a Health Benefit Exchange. The California Exchange aims to be operational by 2014. Also, there are various bills proposed in California to tweak the current healthcare systems to better serve most of us.

The great energy and enthusiasm I felt from the convention delegates, however, was about the single-payer bill SB810 or Medicare For All Californians. Recognizing that California is the “big boy on the block”, if we become a single-payer, we can drive down healthcare costs while providing healthcare for all. Many Leagues in California have already taken positions supporting SB810. It has moved from the Senate Health Committee to the Appropriations Committee. Hopefully, it will continue its journey to the floor of the Senate and then on to the Assembly!

The League of Women Voters of Western Nevada County has a good reputation around the state. Some delegates, however, as I was amused to learn, were bemused at the word “Nevada” in our name. Some thought we were a Nevada League—even though we were at a California state convention, and some had no idea that there was a Nevada County in California!

It was a great experience. Thanks again.

Anne DeWitt, Delegate

**THIS WAS THE LEAGUE YEAR THAT WAS  
2010 - 2011 PROGRAMS**

- **SEPTEMBER 2010 - Political Reform and the Initiative Process**  
Kimberly L. Nader, Assoc. Professor, Government Department  
California State University, Sacramento
- **OCTOBER 2010 - Pros & Cons of the Ballot Measures**  
The Pros & Cons Team of LWVWNC Voter Service Committee
- **NOVEMBER 2010 - Speak Out at the Speak-In**  
Members and Guests of LWVWNC
- **DECEMBER 2010 - Holiday Party**  
Members and Guests of LWVWNC
- **JANUARY 2011 - Nevada County—How Are We Doing?**  
Richard A. Haffey, Nevada County Chief Executive Officer
- **FEBRUARY 2011 - Eat Local**  
David Benson, Produce Manager, BriarPatch Coop Community Market  
Andrew Meyers, Farmer, Four Frog Farm  
Chris Maher, General Manager, BriarPatch Coop Community Market  
Wesley Nicks, Director, County Environmental Health Agency
- **MARCH 2010 - MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS FALLING THROUGH THE SAFETY NET !**  
Representative from Nevada County Sheriff's Department  
Capt. David Remillard, Grass Valley Police Department  
Representatives from the local Crises Team  
Michael Haggerty, Director, County Behavioral Health  
Representatives from SNMH Emergency Room
- **APRIL 2011 - SCHOOLS - TRADITIONAL AND CHARTER**  
Holly Hermansen, Nevada County Superintendent of Schools  
Peter Sagebiel, Director, Forest Charter School  
Holly Pettitt, Director, Nevada City School of the Arts  
Laura Kerr, California Charter Schools Association
- **MAY 2011 - BE LOCAL AND BUY LOCAL**  
The APPLE Center for Sustainable Living  
Grass Valley Downtown Association  
Mill Street Clothing Co., Grass Valley  
Mountain Pastimes, Nevada City

## Membership Renewal Time is HERE!

You know the League's Mission Statement: "The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy."

You understand what this means, AND you also understand that we could not fulfill our mission without your continued support.

**Now is the time to renew your commitment to these principles.** Please return your Membership Renewal Card by September 1, 2011, with current information and check made payable to LWVWNC in the envelope provided. Renewal letters have been sent out; let us know if you don't receive yours. The dues remain the same at \$60 for an individual and \$30 for each additional household member. Membership dues are not deductible.

As you know, our obligations to State and National Leagues have increased, but we are managing, with careful budgeting, to keep our membership dues the same. Maintaining our current membership is vital to us. **This will be an important and exciting year, and we need you with us!**

Cleo Gibson  
Marcy Elliott  
Membership co-chairs



## SEPTEMBER MEETING

## Your Money or Your Life !

If, like Jack Benny, you're "thinking—you're thinking", isn't it time you decided about what other options are really available?

Join us on September 10 and explore all the other, less drastic measures that are involved when planning your family's future. We'll have some experts at this meeting to explain the sometimes perplexing world of financial and real estate transactions.

Knowledge is power. So, bring your questions and concerns to our September 11 meeting. Let's change the headline to: **YOUR MONEY AND YOUR LIFE !**



# Thank You

for your support this past year

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Hours: 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily [www.briarpatch.coop](http://www.briarpatch.coop)

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