



# The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

September, 2009

Jane Person, President

Charlene McAllister, Editor

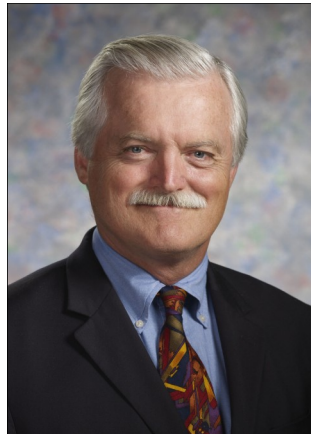
## LOCAL LEADERS, OFFICIALS TO LOOK AT IMPACT OF STATE BUDGET AT LEAGUE OPENING MEETING

By Barbara Matheson

California First District Assemblyman Wes Chesbro (D) is the featured speaker at the League's opening meeting Tuesday, September 15 from 9:30 a.m.—noon at the Harbor Lite Lodge, Fort Bragg.

League members asked Chesbro to discuss the recent state budget crisis and his talk will be followed by a panel discussion about the budget's impact on Mendocino County.

County School Supt. Paul Tichinin, Fort Bragg City Manager Linda Ruffing, Sheriff



**CA Assemblyman Wes Chesbro (D) District 1**

Tom Allman and Assistant Director for County Health and Human Services Susana Wilson will sit on the panel.

League members also asked Chesbro to comment on the single

payer health plan and ocean protection issues.

Chesbro, a strong supporter of environmental protection, is serving the first term as First District assemblyman. He previously served 8 years in the California Senate (District 2). He is a former Arcata City Council Member, Humboldt County Supervisor and member of the California State Waste Management Board.

The meeting opens with a brunch at 9:30 a.m. See page 4 for details.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	2
B. STAVELY AND J. MORLEY HONORED	3
CALENDAR OF EVENTS	4
SINGLE PAYER HEALTH ISSUES	5
STATE CONVENTION REFLECTIONS	6
BOARD BRIEFS	6
SACRAMENTO LEAGUE WORKSHOP FLYER	7

**Dues Are Due  
Please See Back  
Page for Details**

## CA LEAGUE PRESIDENT URGES ACTION ON "HARMFUL BUDGET"

*Editor's Note: League President Jane Person received this letter August 17, 2009 from Janis Hirohama, LWVCA president.*

On July 24, our legislators left Sacramento for a little rest and relaxation, but not before handing Californians a revised budget that does not reflect the desires and pri-

orities of the majority of the people.

This harmful budget erodes the California dream of a thriving society and a better future for our children. The League of Women Voters of California urges you to tell your legislator Cali-

formians deserve better.

The blame for the failure of our finance system rests partly on the requirement of a two-thirds vote to pass the budget or raise revenues. The two-thirds requirement gives a minority the power to dic-



*"This harmful budget erodes the California dream of a productive society and a better future for our children." Janis R. Hirohama*

*Continued on page 3*

2009-2010

## Officers and Board of Directors

<b>President</b>	<b>Jane Person</b>
964-6351	<a href="mailto:janeperson@hotmail.com">janeperson@hotmail.com</a>
<b>1st Vice President</b>	<b>Barbara Matheson</b>
937-5164	<a href="mailto:ken@mcn.org">ken@mcn.org</a>
<b>2nd Vice President</b>	<b>Patricia Marien</b>
994-4942	<a href="mailto:paprika@mcn.org">paprika@mcn.org</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>open</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Lee Tepper</b>
964-2781	<a href="mailto:eel@mcn.org">eel@mcn.org</a>
<b>Rachel Binah</b>	<b>Director</b>
937-3227	<a href="mailto:rachel@mcn.org">rachel@mcn.org</a>
<b>JoAn Blackstone</b>	<b>Voter Service</b>
937-2481	<a href="mailto:joanblackstone@comcast.net">joanblackstone@comcast.net</a>
<b>Pat Dunbar</b>	<b>Director</b>
937-3409	<a href="mailto:pdunbar@mcn.org">pdunbar@mcn.org</a>
<b>Susan Eveleth</b>	<b>Director</b>
937-3877	<a href="mailto:eveleth@mcn.org">eveleth@mcn.org</a>
<b>Carol Ann Falk</b>	<b>Membership</b>
962-9070	<a href="mailto:carolann@royfalk.com">carolann@royfalk.com</a>
<b>Babs Levine</b>	<b>Director</b>
937-0629	<a href="mailto:babs@wildblue.net">babs@wildblue.net</a>
<b>Dorine Real</b>	<b>Director</b>
964-2781	<a href="mailto:dorine@mcn.org">dorine@mcn.org</a>

## Off Board Chairpersons

<b>Charlene McAllister</b>	<b>VOTER editor</b>
937-4463	<a href="mailto:charmac@mcn.org">charmac@mcn.org</a>
<b>Doris Hammer</b>	<b>Budget Committee</b>
<b>Becky Bowen</b>	<b>Nominating Committee</b>

VOTER Staff-- Barbara Auerbach,

Becky Bowen, Susan Eveleth, Louis Hough,  
Susan Mitchell, Jane Person

**President's Message**—As I wrote last year in this column, August seems to be the month where brains as well as bodies go on vacation, and what stays around (and gets on TV, blogs, etc) is enough to make you rethink humankind's reputation for being the smartest critter around.



Writing in the LA Times (August 8, 2009), Meghan Daum coins a new term: August personality. This is in contrast to the one we all know—august personage-- referring to someone worthy of respect. Daum writes, “August personalities tend to have both an ax to grind and a chip on their shoulders ... (and) it being August, August personalities wind up on prime time.” This August's media darling is the woman behind the campaign to keep alive the issue of where President Obama was born. Orly Taitz has been on Fox News, CNN, and the Colbert Report asserting that she has the real proof of Obama's birthplace that no one else in the world has and also claims to have documents proving that Obama's Social Security number was issued in Connecticut and shows him to be 190 years old.

Okay, we all need to laugh and maybe need some time away from serious issues.

But these won't go away (as Taitz might, one can hope), and the League of Women Voters is the place to learn about, discuss, sift through arguments, and evaluate issues facing our coastal community, and our nation. We begin with our program for our Kick Off meeting. See Barbara Matheson's story about what the program will entail.

Also coming up this fall are propositions on the November ballot. One of them concerns the disposition of the Masonite property in Ukiah. The League is considering sponsoring a Town Hall forum on this important proposition which seeks to overturn the vote of the Ukiah City Council and to circumvent environmental impact legislation.

2010 is census year, and LWVUS and CA are involved in supporting the timely return of the census materials. Much federal money is involved here.

And finally, in 2010 the League celebrates its 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Be with us this year to celebrate it!

*Jane Person*

## LETTER URGING ACTION FROM LWVCA PRESIDENT HIROHAMA *CONTINUED FROM P. 1*

tate terms to the majority by forcing budget stalemates that lead to partisan bickering, and opportunities for “budget blackmail” demands by swing-vote legislators.

The result?

While the legislature was on vacation, painful cuts were beginning to have severe impacts on the most vulnerable Californians:

- Cuts to welfare, health care, and in-home services for the disabled and elderly are leaving families without the care they rely on in hard economic times
  - Slashed funds for schools are forcing layoffs of librarians and nurses, cuts to arts and sports programs, and the elimination of summer classes
  - Funds siphoned from local governments are making it impossible to maintain basic services like public buses and clean parks
- Our legislators return from their summer break today. Act now to tell your legislator to get back to work and support real reform through reduction of the two-thirds requirement to pass the budget or raise revenues. There are bills

now that would reform the two-thirds vote requirement but are stuck in committee.

We are at a turning point in California. Without reform, we will continue the constant, draining budget battles, leave systemic problems unsolved, and shatter the California dream. Together we can make democracy work—please contact your legislator now. *Janis R. Hirohama*

### 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 PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES, AND INFLUENCES PUBLIC POLICY THROUGH EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY.

### League Members Receive Recognition and Honor At College of the Redwoods



**League members Betty Stavely (left) and Jean Morley** were honored at College of the Redwoods at the school's April 23 Scholarship Ceremony. An anonymous donor funded the \$500 scholarship in honor of the two women “who have distinguished professional careers and have contributed graciously to our community for many years.” Both have served as League members for more than 50 years. Connie Sanchez, the scholarship recipient, is a second-year student majoring in early childhood education.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### **Tuesday, September 15, 2009: General Meeting: 9:30 a.m. – noon**

Location: Harbor Lite Lodge, Fort Bragg

Speakers: Assemblyman Wes Chesbro, County Schools Superintendent Paul Tichinin, Sheriff Tom Allman, Fort Bragg City Manager Linda Ruffing, and Susan Wilson, Assistant Director of County Health & Human Services Agency. Story on Page 1.

Topic: State Budget – Local Consequences

A light brunch will be served at 9:30 a.m.

**Board of Directors Meeting 12:30 – 3 p.m.** (board members bring sack lunch)

### **Tuesday, October 13, 2009: General Meeting: 9:30 a.m. – noon**

Location: St. Michael's Church, Fort Bragg

Topic: "Healing Hospital" Wellness Program for Coast Hospital

Guest Speakers: MCDH CEO Raymond Hino and Kelly Mathers, Harmony Healing House

**Board of Directors Meeting 12:30 – 3 p.m.** (board members bring sack lunch)

### **Tuesday, November 10, 2009: General Meeting: 9:30 a.m. – noon**

Location: St. Michael's Church, Fort Bragg

Topic: Seniors and the Law

Presentation by League member JoAn Blackstone

**Board of Directors Meeting 12:30 – 3 p.m.** (board members bring sack lunch)

### **Tuesday, Dec 1, 2009 (Note date change): General Meeting and Luncheon**

Location: TBA

Time: 10:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Topic: Education

Guest Speaker: Fort Bragg Superintendent of Schools Donald Armstrong

### **Please Save These Dates for 2010**

**Tuesday, January 12, 2010: General Meeting: League Orientation, Local and National Program Planning**

**Tuesday, February 9, 2010: General Meeting: League's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration, forum on 2010 Census**

**Friday, March 12: Fifth Annual Meet and Greet Your Elected Officials Event**

**Tuesday, April 13, 2010: General Meeting: Discussion of State Ballot Measures**

**Tuesday, May 11, 2010: ANNUAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON**

## State, National League at Odds Over Single Payer

*By Jane Person*

A new wrinkle has emerged in the single payer health care issue, this time a difference of opinion between LWVUS and LWVCalifornia.

At its state convention in May LWVC passed unanimously a resolution sponsored by LWV Berkeley, Albany, and Emeryville asking LWVC to actively support the principle of single payer health care insurance. Further, the resolution called for “vigorously advocating that a single payer legislative proposal be included in deliberation of health care reform” and “insisting that side-by-side comparative analyses of single payer proposals with other proposals” be part of deliberations.

This resolution was based in part upon LWVUS positions on health care calling for a system “which is universal, comprehensive, equitable and affordable” and supporting a “national health insurance plan financed through general taxes in place of individual insurance premiums.” (See [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org))

These Leagues received a letter from Mary Wilson, LWVUS President, in which LWVUS defends its position to lobby for parts of the health care package it feels has a better chance of success in Congress than single payer.

Wilson writes that the LWVUS position is broader and more expansive than just favoring single payer approach. She says that even when the health care position was adopted in 1993, the League recognized that

The letter states further, “But the fact is that for economic and political reasons, now is not the time to be able to achieve single payer health care reform—the Administration is not supporting moving to it at the present time and even members of Congress who signed onto single payer bills last session recognize that it has no chance for passage this session.”

Therefore, Wilson concludes, the LWVUS Board has decided to advocate at this time for those parts of its health care position what it terms “key building blocks” for the single payer approach: universal coverage to include disease prevention, include primary care, acute care, long-term care, mental health care, and prescription drug coverage. Other such building blocks include, in part, allowance for pre-existing conditions and computerization of medical records.

The LWVUS strategy doesn’t prevent state Leagues from lobbying their state legislatures for single payer, however. The restriction on lobbying for a national single payer approach is only on lobbying members of the US House and Senate. Also, state and local leagues may sponsor educational forums that include discussions of the single payer approach.

Wilson says that “in order to have our voices taken seriously we cannot couple our message” on the areas the League has chosen to advocate for “with lobbying activity at this time for the single payer approach.”

Wilson’s letter sparked a reply from LWV Berkeley, Albany, and Emeryville asking LWVUS to reconsider its decision. This reply acknowledges that single payer may not pass this summer, but that is not a justification for not supporting it. The letter asked Wilson and the Board to “step forward, reminding the public and Congress that after careful study we stand for universality and affordability in healthcare, and there is no way for a public option to provide either one.”

So far LWVUS has not reconsidered its decision not to actively support single payer at this time but to actively support those elements it feels should be included in health care reform.



## Reflections on the 2009 SWVC Convention

*By JoAn Blackstone*

The California League of Women Voters met this year in Long Beach just before the May 19 Special Election. In this state, we truly live in an interesting time and place! It was my privilege to participate as your delegate, and to have the opportunity to gain a better understanding of League procedures and of several current issues. I found the processes through which issues are presented and adopted for education and advocacy to be both thorough and thoughtful. As a “newbie” and the only delegate from our local League, I got to meet a lot of people from other Leagues. All were welcoming, encouraging and helpful. No one person could possibly attend all the events that were offered. That said, I must have come as close to that “goal” as possible, beginning with Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder Dean Logan’s pre-convention after dinner speech. Imagine serving more than 500 political districts and more than four million registered voters. Caucuses and workshops began at 7 a.m. and continued each evening after plenary sessions and dinners until 10:30 p.m.

The workshops in Initiative and Referendum (described as a double edge sword of direct democracy), the state Legislative Process and Potential Reforms and the Redistricting Caucus were especially interesting to me. Former Assembly Speaker Robert Hertzberg, now co-chair of the California Forward Leadership Council, shared some of the strategies for reforming our state government that are being developed as a possible alternative to a proposed citizen’s initiative to enable California voters to call a constitutional convention and ultimately seek a complete revision of our state Constitution. Further information about specific actions taken and resolutions adopted at the California League’s convention can be found on its website: [www.lwvc.org](http://www.lwvc.org).



*County Counsel Jeanine Nadel, at the invitation of the LWV of Mendocino County, taught a Brown Act and Ethics Training class at Dana Gray Elementary School on April 24. Some 25 participants who serve on or work for special districts or commissions, attended the free presentation.*

### Board Briefs

**The Board voted to donate \$300** to support Smart Voter, agreeing that this online voting aid is indispensable to voter education.

**The Board accepted the resignation of Pat Black as secretary**, and the position is open. Contact Becky Bowen, Nominating Committee Chair, if you are interested in serving in this capacity on the Board.

**The position of Action Chair is also open.** Contact Becky for further information.

**Voter Services Chair JoAn Blackstone** offered to set up candidate forums with special attention to the races involving CR Board of Trustees and the County Board of Education.

**The Board established a committee to examine relevant LWVUS and LWVCA positions that could allow LWV Mendocino to take a position against Measure A** (disposition of the Masonite property) which will appear on the November ballot.

**League members are needed to serve as poll workers** for the November Elections. Contact the County Recorder’s Office at 463-4376.

## LWVC REGIONAL WORKSHOP



### **The Sacramento County League invites you to learn what the League does and how it does it!**

**Date & Time:** Saturday, October 17 - Registration 9:30 am—2:30 P.M.

**Location:** USC School of Policy, Planning & Development

State Capital Center, Room E

1800 I Street, Sacramento CA 95811

**Price:** \$25 /person; \$30 after October 9 (\$15 if bring own lunch)

**Topics:** **“Political, YES; Partisan, NO!**

**Walking the Fine Line”**

**“Tools You Can Use: A Guided Tour  
of the League’s Members’ Only Web Page  
Plus Examples of How Leagues Use  
Facebook, YouTube and Twitter**

**“Redistricting and Constitutional Reform:  
What’s Happening and What You Can Do To Make It Happen”**

**Please register (and pay by credit card) at the LWVC website By October 9**

[www.lwvc.org](http://www.lwvc.org)

**or write check payable to LWVC & mail with form to**

**LWV Sacramento County, 1107 9<sup>th</sup> St. #300, Sacramento 95814**

**If you have questions or need additional information please call**

**(916) 447-8683 or Email [lwvs@lwvsacramento.org](mailto:lwvs@lwvsacramento.org)**



*The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County would like to thank the following people for their \$30.00 donations to the Spring 2009 Virtual Garden Tour:*

*Heidi Altvater, Geri Anderson, Barbara Auerbach, Rachael Binah, JoAn Blackstone, Becky and*

*Win Bowen, Colleen Cleary, Kathleen Cameron, Barbara Christensen, Susan Eveleth, Ann Eaton-Kemp, Karen Havlena, Doris Hammer, Shirley and Don Kirkpatrick, Charlene McAllister, Jean Morley, Carl Moore, Susan Mitchell, Patricia O'Reilly, Kendall Smith, Mary Scott, Sharon Valenti and Ilene Weeks. In total, we have raised \$1399.00*

*The "virtual" part of this garden tour seems to work well for everyone. The League decided two years ago to forgo the all the preparation including map making, ticket sales and schedules, lining up gardens, cookie baking, parking and serving as docents etc. Instead, we asked our membership to buy the equivalent of two \$15.00 tickets. Many members bought more than two. Our carbon footprint is smaller this way and we still raise money for our many League activities such as hall rental for Candidates Forum and other events, postage, Voter Services, Meet and Greet – in other words, all our operating expenses. A big THANK YOU to you all.*

**The League of Women Voters**

**Of Mendocino County**

**P.O. Box 1128**

**Fort Bragg, CA 95437**

**707 937-4952**

**[www.mendo.ca.lwvnet.org](http://www.mendo.ca.lwvnet.org)**

**[www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)**

**[www.ca.lwv.org](http://www.ca.lwv.org)**

**[www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org)**

**Library of Congress—Legislation Status**

**[www.thomas.loc.gov](http://www.thomas.loc.gov)**

**Membership in The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County is a bargain and a statement. You will be saying that you are committed to the ballot as a means for change and to providing non-biased information to voters. The issues your League follows are those that affect every resident's family and community. Get involved in the League of Women Voters.**

**\$55 One Year individual membership, \$80 two-person household membership**

**Please send me more information:**

**Name/Names: \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_**

**City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_**

**Please make checks payable to: League of Women Voters of Mendocino County**

**And mail to: Carol Ann Falk**

**45575 South Caspar Drive**

**Mendocino, CA 95460**