

**Hungry? Homeless? Hope!**  
**League of Women Voters Western Nevada County**  
**February 13, 2010**

*"I learned so much." "This meeting really did show the passion of the community to work together. " "I am so glad I came." All comments heard at the end of our February 13 Meeting about the homeless right here at home.*

**Martha Sheppard, Captain of the Salvation Army**, here only since last fall, is thrilled to work in a County with so many caring people and collaborating agencies. She is enthusiastic about the increasing ability of the Salvation Army to fill in many gaps, but stressed that all these efforts only treat **symptoms** of homelessness. It is up to all of us to identify the **causes** and develop solutions.

**Sandy Schmidt, founder and executive of the Women of Worth**, shared her powerful story of the founding of WOW. She explained how they help their clients, victims of domestic violence and abuse, regain independence by providing whatever is needed for as long as needed. A new Fresh Start Community Warehouse accepts donated new furniture which it shares with other non-profits. Their present goal: To establish "Hetty"s Haven", a 30 - 60 day emergency shelter.

**Mary O'Brien of Hospitality House** told of the remarkable change in the community attitude from the time Hospitality House was first planned in 2005. From small beginnings their partners now include 29 faith communities, the Grass Valley Police Dept. and numerous volunteers, all working together. Because of this strong community support, they were awarded a new two-year grant enabling them to stay open two months longer.

Listening to their enthusiasm and passion as they each described the "stubborn optimism" which has created these programs, instilled in us all a renewed appreciation for living in a place where so many are working together for the good of all.