



The Voter

“...to promote informed citizen participation in government.”

Call to League State Convention

Friday May 17 – Sunday May 19 in San Jose

Attend the LWVC convention and see how the state League makes decisions. Convention 2013 will be only an hour away at the Hayes Mansion in San Jose.

- To get details, go to <http://lwvc.wordpress.com/> and download the “First Call to Convention.”



- To register as a member observer, click on “Register Now.” Early bird rates apply until April 15.
- To become one of LWVBAE’s seven delegates, contact Sherry Smith at president@lwvbae.org right away to let her know you are interested. Delegates will vote on nominees for the LWVC Board of Directors, adopt the just-completed update of the I & R study, decide which new studies, if any, LWVC should adopt for the next two years, and adopt the proposed budget.

The state convention is also your chance to connect with Leaguers from all over the state who share your particular passion and to organize and attend caucuses on specific issues.

Intensive pre-convention and convention workshops will include:

- Taking Action in Your Community
- The Future of Voter Service...Use Smart Voter’s ‘Next Generation’ for your League
- How to Raise \$25,000 in Six Weeks
- Healthcare Reform for California and the Affordable Care Act

- Local Advocacy on State Issues
- A Citizen’s Guide to the California State Budget Community Outreach – Expanding the Mission and Galvanizing Civic Engagement

Also there will be information on how to use your League website effectively to increase attendance at events and to draw in the public; how to do video Pros and Cons; and how to use social media more effectively.

LWVBAE Health Care Team Chair Li-hsia Wang and State League members will be presenting the Health Care Reform workshop. Diz Swift, Regina Beatus and other Climate Change Team members are organizing a caucus on putting a price on carbon emissions.

There will be three outstanding convention speakers: Kim Klein, fundraising trainer; Ann Ravel, Chair of the California Fair Political Practices Commission; and Chris Hoene, Executive Director of the California Budget Project. To read more, go to <http://lwvc.wordpress.com/speakers-2/>.

We look forward to seeing you at Convention!

Nancy Bickel, Communications Coordinator

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Berkeley Climate Action Coalition

The Berkeley Climate Action Coalition, a collaboration of many local community groups, was formed in 2012 to assist in the implementation of the City of Berkeley's Climate Action Plan (BCAP). The Coalition is convened by the Ecology Center. Our League is an official member of the Coalition and members Regina Beatus and Carol Stone are active participants on the Steering Committee and in a working group.

The working groups are dedicated to carrying out a project that aligns with the BCAP. These groups include:

Energy Efficiency and Recycling in Multifamily Buildings: Reduce energy and water use, landfill waste, and greenhouse gas emissions associated with Multifamily Buildings in the city of Berkeley. Four buildings are currently enrolled for assessments, including solar assessments.

Community Choice Energy: Advocate for the establishment of a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program in the City of Berkeley to include other cities in the East Bay Municipal Water Utility District (EBMUD). If enough cities in the District are interested, EBMUD may reconsider undertaking a feasibility study on establishing a CCA with oversight and billing by EBMUD.

Urban Greening and Community Gardening: Identify and prepare a pilot site for a new community garden. Establish a clear, replicable process for accessing undeveloped land for community gardens.

Transportation: Support projects that make biking, walking and alternative transit easier for Berkeley community members. Supported the successful car-free celebration of Sunday Streets last year.

Community Outreach: Sponsor a biking tour this spring of West Berkeley sights. Reach out to our neighborhood groups as well as to individual neighbors.

Besides Working Group meetings, the Coalition has open quarterly meetings for members and the community at large. If you are interested or know of someone who would like to participate, please contact Regina Beatus at: regina.a.beatus@gmail.com.

Regina Beatus, Climate Change Team Chair

Board Briefs

Following a very successful fund raising drive, the Board is now focused on its new member drive. Reaching out to the Oakland and San Francisco Leagues, we are investigating all possible ways of increasing membership.

Our new website is up and running and the Board agreed to retain member Linda Carothers for three months to post archival materials on our website.

A Nominating Committee of Pat Day, Jane Coulter and Suzanne Chun will interview prospective candidates for Board positions.

A committee will study the findings of the Alameda County Grand Jury report on the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board.

The three "Issues of Interest," selected by members at the program planning meeting were ranked and will be sent to LWVC to be considered at the state convention in San Jose in May: Climate Change; Health Care; and Update on Natural Resource position. LWVBAE members will participate in the LWVC Convention. Issues of particular interest are: Health Care, Early Childhood Education, and Putting a Price on Carbon Emissions (see story page 1).

Angharad Jones, Secretary

What We've Learned from You, Our Members

Bringing the League into the 21st Century

- *I just love what the League does. I always read your election information and follow your advice.*
- *I work, have kids; I don't have time to volunteer.*
- *I'm in my 80's and ill; I just can't get to meetings anymore.*
- *Why don't you have evening meetings for working people?*
- *I could give a few hours now and then, but the job has to be very short, clearly defined, useful.*

These are the comments we've been hearing over the past two months as we interviewed face-to-face a big sample of our over 250 members. We wanted member advice about how to re-vitalize the League and bring it into the 21st century. What are we doing right? What is missing?

Members have pointed us in two seemingly opposite directions—toward making more personal, individual, friendly connections with each member and toward developing more effective electronic ways of communicating with members and the public.

We are acting on your advice.

- **Telephone Calls.** We will be calling you on the telephone more often to invite you to meetings—and to offer you lifts to meetings.
- **E-mails—you decide.** We're giving you new choices about what kind of e-mails you want to get from us. You may already have gotten emails to select new e-mail options.
- For a preview of "the new League" visit our website www.lwvbae.org. We post new "**League News**" items every few days to keep you up-to-date.

Nancy Bickel, Communications Coordinator

Take Action Against Gun Violence

It's time to stop gun violence. **Tell the Senate to move forward** with common sense gun legislation.

Legislation with common sense solutions to gun violence will protect our children, our citizens and help restore our public confidence. California Senator Dianne Feinstein is a major sponsor of gun control registration. She and Senator Barbara Boxer need to know we support their efforts.



Elizabeth MacNamara, President of the national League of Women Voters, [pictured at left] has been speaking out strongly on this issue. We need to join our fellow League members – and our fellow citizens – in stopping gun violence.

In the coming weeks, Congress will consider legislation to end the gun violence that is plaguing our nation. Some of the proposed solutions include closing the gun show loophole, increasing penalties for straw purchases of guns, banning assault weapons, placing limits on high capacity ammunition magazines, and funding research to report on gun violence in America.

Curbing gun violence is a critical matter of public safety and public health. Tell your Senators this issue is too important to ignore any longer and that common sense solutions to gun violence will save lives.

Membership Report

In February we welcomed three new members.

New Members

Alexandra Ellman
Margo Scheuler
Sbeyeh Viveros-Banderos

Mina Jenner, Dues Coordinator

The Climate Reality Project and How to Help

“Climate Reality” was the topic for the Natural Resources-Environmental Concerns speaker series February 11 featuring a slide show from The Climate Reality Project. Founded and chaired by former Vice President Al Gore, the Project garners global support and encourages world leaders to take urgent action to solve the climate crisis. In an update to Gore’s earlier “An Inconvenient Truth,” the new slideshow focuses on recent extreme weather events, the science of global warming, addressing climate denial, new strides being made converting a fossil fuel-based economy to cleaner, renewable energy, and how to get involved. The presentation by Gail Schickele, trained as a Climate Leader in 2012 with Gore, featured nearly 200 slides culled from the Project’s show and available through The Project’s Climate Leaders Portal. The latter is filled with information on various related subjects such as biofuels, storms and floods, fracking, and natural gas, Schickele said, making it possible to adapt slide shows for different audiences.

Stills and video of extreme weather events worldwide were juxtaposed with information about the linkage between these events and the climate crisis. The more carbon pollution we put in the atmosphere, the higher the temperature, and the more we change our climate. Most carbon pollution in the atmosphere today is from fossil fuels; other important CO₂ contributors are deforestation, agriculture (crops and livestock), and industrial processes. The higher the temperature, the more water vapor in the air (which is also a Greenhouse Gas). There is 4% more water vapor over our oceans than there was just 30 years ago. Also, the same extra heat that evaporates water from the ocean pulls moisture even more quickly from the soil.

Consequences

Impacts are seen on all continents. According to NASA, “The 2010 drought reduced the greenness of approximately 965,000 square miles of vegetation in the Amazon.” The 2009 fires in Australia inspired emergency workers to organize a 6,000-kilometer (3,700-mile) relay across Australia to raise awareness about climate change. Four months after 2010 record drought and fires, world food prices reached record highs when Russia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan halted grain exports. In July and August of 2012, more than half of the U.S. was under drought conditions with 52% of U.S. corn crops and 38% of U.S. soy crops in poor or very poor condition. In the U.S. in 2012, 1,452 counties in 32 states were declared disaster areas.

The Good News

WIND: The 1999 projection for U.S. wind capacity was 10 gigawatts (GW) by 2010, a goal exceeded by 4X; the 2000 projection for worldwide wind capacity was 30 GW by 2010, a goal exceeded by a factor of 7; the 2000 projection of wind capacity in China was 2 GW, a goal exceeded by 22X, with the potential of reaching 150 GW by 2020.

SOLAR: The 2002 projection was that the solar energy market would grow one GW per year by 2010, the market is now growing 17X faster. The 1996 projection of solar for China was 500 megawatts (MW) by 2020; nearly double that amount was reached by 2010. The amount of installed photovoltaic energy in the U.S. more than doubled between 2009 and 2010. Worldwide production capacity for solar photovoltaic cells grew 70% between 2009 and 2010. And in 2010, for the first time ever, global investment in new renewable energy projects (\$187 B) exceeded investment in new fossil fuel projects (\$157 B).

>Climate Reality from previous page**What You Can Do**

Don't let climate denial go unchallenged. Use social and traditional media to get the word out. Use the #Reality hash tag, write to the editor, call TV and radio stations. Make consumer choices that reduce energy use. Consider the environmental impact of items you buy. Make political change by telling your leaders this matters to you, and never be angry or unpleasant!

About Climate Reality

Schickele was among 800 people from 47 states and 58 countries in the North American 2012 training with Mr. Gore in San Francisco last August. In an update to his earlier "An Inconvenient Truth" show, Mr. Gore presented some 250 slides in a guided presentation, often linking to his desktop wallpapered with slide icons from which he would adeptly pick to answer individual queries.

From the Project's website www.climatereality.com: Despite overwhelming international scientific consensus on climate change, the global community still lacks the resolve to implement meaningful solutions. The Climate Reality Project exists to forge an unwavering bedrock of impassioned support necessary for urgent action. With that foundation, together we will ignite the moral courage in our leaders to solve the climate crisis.

Gail Schickele, Environmental Concerns Co-chair

Donations to Our League

February 2013

To the LWVBAE General Fund

Berkeley Community Media
Nancy and Peter Bickel
in memory of Fran Packard

Johanna Clark
Bruce and Heidi Gillies
in memory of Wilma Jordan

Juanita Peterson
Margo Schueler
Dorothy Walker
in memory of Fran Packard

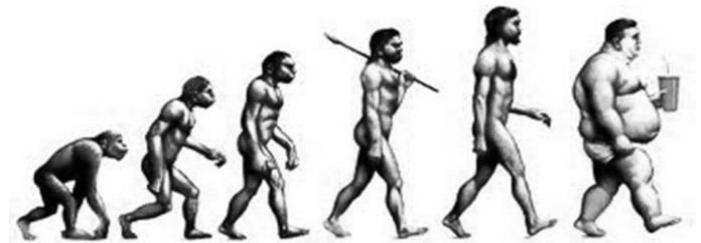
Many thanks for remembering our League.

Louetta Erlin, Donations Secretary

Sugary Drinks Very Unhealthy

Scientific evidence is clear: too much sugar leads to obesity, type 2 diabetes and more, reported Dr. Jeffrey Ritterman, retired cardiologist and former Richmond City Councilmember, at the League's March Conversation.

Sugar intake in the U.S. has been consistently rising – from about 50 lbs/year/person in 1900 to double that – 100 lbs/year/person – in 2000. Almost half of added sugars in the American diet are from sweetened soft drinks and fruit drinks. Strong evidence supports an association of sugar intake and weight gain. Less than 15% of adults were overweight or obese in the late 70s, and now nearly 35% are.



Graphic from Dr. Ritterman's presentation.

A recent Richmond initiative proposing a 1 cent per ounce tax on sugary sodas was defeated by 2 to 1, with strong opposition by industry groups and by some community groups. Another setback was the recent decision by a judge in New York City to strike down Mayor Michael Bloomberg's ban on 16 oz. or larger cups of sodas. Nevertheless, interest in the dangers of drinks with high sugar content seems to be growing around the country.

Diz Swift, Voter Editor

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Current and past issues of the *Voter* are posted on our website <http://lwvbae.org>

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages active and informed participation in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Calendar – Locations are the LWVBAE office, 2530 San Pablo Ave, Suite F, Berkeley, unless otherwise noted

March

26 Tues 1:30-3:30p **Climate Change Team** R. Beatus 524-6904

April

2 Tues 1:00-3:00p **LWVBAE Board Meeting** S. Smith 548-1769

5 Fri 6:00p **Voter Deadline** N. Bickel 684-6302

8 Mon 7:00-9:00p **Environmental Concerns** C. Stone 549-0959

1174 Euclid Ave, Berkeley

9 Tues 12:00-2:00p **Conversation** C. Stone 549-0959

Edith Stone Rm, Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave

12 Fri 1:30-3:30p **Civics Ed Team** J. Gardner 548-5292

13 Sat 9:00-12:00p **Alameda County Council** S. Smith 548-6904

15 Mon 3:00-4:00p **Health Care** L. Wang 848-5765

18 Thurs 4:00-5:30p **Using New Media Q&A** N. Bickel 684-6302

23 Tues 1:30-3:30p **Climate Change Team** R. Beatus 524-6904

May

4 Sat 10:00-12:00p **LWV Bay Area Council** S. Smith 548-1769