



The Voter

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

New Website - New Tool for You

Our newly designed website is now up and running at the same address: <http://lwvbae.org>. The new design is sleeker, highlighting League news to keep you up-to-date faster than *The Voter* allows. It also offers easy links to a host of voting information, including *Smart Voter* and *Easy Voter*, our *Facebook* page, teams, and much more. Check it out!



Quick links at the top and bottom of each page will take you to the info you need. At the top, take a look at the very usable Calendar and the *Voter page*. At the bottom, links to info about County, Regional, State and National Leagues, our Teams/Committees and the pages and archives of Civics Education materials.

Also much easier now is joining our League and donating. Both can be done online with payment by credit card. So if you have a friend or acquaintance who may wish to join, it is easy to just send them the link at <http://lwvbae.org/join>!

The effort has been months in the making, led fearlessly by Nancy Bickel, with help from Linda Carothers, Bill Chapman and Diz Swift. Since the site is new, we ask input from all of you if you see something you'd like to improve or if there are problems. Just send an email to us at our new email media@lwvbae.org.

Frances Albrier

Celebrating Black History and Women's History Months

Frances Mary Albrier was the first African-American woman to join the Berkeley League. She was a civil rights activist, the first woman elected to the Alameda County Democratic Central Committee in 1938, and the first woman elected to the Berkeley City Council in 1939. She also took action to hire Berkeley's first African-American teacher.

In her vivid oral history, recorded in 1977-78, Frances Albrier describes the separation between the League of Colored Women Voters and the League of Women Voters. "So, in the League of Women Voters, there were no black members, until President Roosevelt ran and a

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great many black people got in on the scene to see that he was elected, because he promised to open the doors to so many things for all of the citizens of the United States... The League of Women Voters began to expand. There was one lady in the League that worked in the Democratic party with me, and she always gave me ideas to bring up in the central committee... At that time, there were women like Mrs. [Ruth] Scheer and other women in the League. She had the program of children. She was to find out all the activities and needs of children in the Bay Area. One of the needs of children had to do with the newsboy. The newsboys—a great many of the mothers had reported to her that their children didn't have insurance. The newspapers were not insuring the newsboys who were carrying the papers and delivering the papers. Any number of them had gotten hurt and there wasn't any insurance for them.

“She wanted to take it up through the League to see that these newsboys became insured. She asked me if I would join her committee. I informed her that the League does not take in black members. She said, ‘That's done away with; they will now, because I'm going to suggest that you be a member and be a member of my committee.’ She brought it up to the Board and told them, ‘Now, Mrs. Albrier is a member and has been elected to the Alameda County Democratic Central Committee. She's the only woman on that committee. I think it's time we open our doors to black members.’ So they accepted me as a member. I became the first [black] member of the League of Women Voters.”

For a brief article about Frances Albrier see <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/give/bene68/bene68story1.html>

Her oral history, **Determined advocate for racial equality : oral history transcript / and related material, 1977-1979**, is at UCB's Bancroft Library.

Nancy Bickel, Communications Coordinator

LWVBAE 2011-2012 Financials

Below is a report of our financials for the fiscal year 2011-2012 (July-June). The unexpected \$10,000 addition to the miscellaneous category of income comes from an advance allowance in our new rental agreement

Sarah Miyazaki, Co-treasurer

INCOME	Budget	Actual
Miscellaneous	\$2,300	\$12,757
Dues	\$19,770	\$18,310
Contributions	\$7,000	\$7,555
LWVB Foundation	\$9,000	\$7,921
Scrip - fundraising	\$40,000	\$10,389
Community Lunch	\$13,500	\$15,063
Transfer from Other Assets	\$6,431	\$0
TOTAL INCOME	\$98,001	\$71,994

EXPENSES		
Action	\$2,000	\$92
Program	\$2,000	\$2,511
PerMemberPayments to LWV, LWVC,LWVBA	\$13,835	\$14,175
Convention Subsidies	\$3,000	\$5,003
Election & Other Community Services	\$4,000	\$8
Smart Voter	\$500	\$500
Voter Newsletter	\$5,500	\$4,033
ADMINISTRATION		
Office Rent	\$11,316	\$11,318
Supplies , Copies, Postage	\$3,600	\$2,351
Phone, FAX, Internet	\$2,100	\$2,009
Miscellaneous	\$3,550	\$3,537
DEVELOPMENT & OUTREACH		
Community Lunch	\$9,000	\$8,287
Scrip	\$37,500	\$10,208
Product Sales	\$100	
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$64,033
NET TOTALS		
Net Ordinary Income		\$7,961
Change in Value of Investments		(\$2,172)
Net Income		\$5,789

Money in California Politics

Shortly before Election Day last November, an out-of-state nonprofit organization made an \$11 million contribution to a California ballot measure committee that clearly violated California law. The League of Women Voters is leading the campaign for California's campaign contribution disclosure laws. The League is focusing on a 'package' of bills addressing three broad areas: End the "dark money" loophole, Enforce the rules, and Improve filings and disclosure.

Read more at <http://lwvbae.org>

Andy Katz Speaks at Environmental Concerns

At the January Environmental Concerns meeting Andy Katz, Board President of East Bay Municipal Utility District, presented a firsthand report about the United Nations conference on Climate Change which took place December, 2012 in Doha, Qatar. The Qatar meeting is the most recent in a series of international meetings attempting to set internationally binding greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

The first such meeting, held in Kyoto in 1997, resulted in the Kyoto Protocol. The U.S. did not ratify the Kyoto Protocol, primarily because developed countries had specific reduction goals while the less developed countries were only required to do "the best they could". This is essentially the position the U.S. still holds. The agreements held under the Kyoto Protocol ended in 2012.

At the most recent meeting in Qatar, Mr. Katz found U.S. official representatives to be accessible and willing to talk with other delegates and observers. Reaching agreements is not easy. For example, tackling the problem of deforestation and degradation of forests requires international agreements, since forests don't always end at national boundaries. At the end, Mr. Katz described the "Outcome" – as the final document is called – as very ambiguous.

On a positive note, Mr. Katz is supportive of the current administration's actions to fight climate change with movements toward more efficient cars, cleaner fuels and power plant regulations. But his strongest hope is in developing a carbon market, i.e. putting a price on carbon emissions (see story on page 6). In California, the 2006 landmark legislation, the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32), and the resulting cap-and-trade market which went into effect in 2012, are hopeful signs.

Carol Stone, Environmental Concerns Co-Chair

LWV Bay Area League Day

The Bay Area League's excellent Forum on California water issues and politics was held in Oakland, Saturday, February 2, 2013.

Two themes were apparent. The first – there seems to be too much planning based on how much water competing interests want, and too little planning based on how much water we're likely to get in future, given global warming, increasingly extreme weather events and more. The second – although California policy now says environmental needs and other needs are equally important and must be balanced in policies and actions, an actual settlement among competing parties still seems uncertain.



Among the questions:

- Will two huge tunnels taking Delta water around the Delta and to the South be built?
- Which of the many competing interests – Southern California vs. Northern California, big industrial farmers, water providers in Westlands, San Joaquin and Los Angeles, environmental protectors, farmers, fishermen, cities, rural areas, and so on – is actually "winning"?

The meeting was a thorough introduction to the complicated issues of water management and politics in California. Slides of the talks and eventually videos will be posted at the [LWV Bay Area website](#) – watch for them.

Nancy Bickel, Communications Coordinator

Putting a Price on Carbon Emissions

The LWVBAE Climate Change Team has applied to hold a caucus at the State Convention in May. If accepted, we will explore two methods that put a price on carbon emissions, the cap-and-trade system and a direct carbon tax.

The need to curb carbon emissions is recognized as critical, but how to do it? Until very recently, there has been no cost attached to emitting carbon, yet the cost to the planet is very large indeed. What are the differences and trade-offs between cap-and-trade and a carbon tax?

Cap-and-Trade

Cap-and-trade is like a stock exchange for carbon emissions, where the biggest emitters buy the right to emit greenhouse gases. The law sets maximum allowable emissions – the cap – for the largest emitters, including refineries, power plants, industrial facilities, and transportation fuels. For every ton of CO₂ that is reduced, one allowance is awarded. Allowances (also called credits) can be bought, sold, traded, or banked for the future. Any facility that has successfully cut emissions below the mandated level can then auction their allowances to those over-emitting.

An advantage of this system is it puts a declining cap on emissions. However, the initial allocation of allowances and the rate of decline of the cap need to be strict enough to actually result in a decrease of emissions. A disadvantage is that cap-and-trade needs to create elaborate new markets, institutions and regulations to oversee. Some also argue that with changing economic conditions, cap-and-trade could lead to price volatility.

California began implementation of cap-and-trade by holding its first auction in November, 2012. Cap-and-trade systems are in the early stages of implementation – with guarded success – in the European Union, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, parts of Canada and the northeastern U.S.

Carbon Tax

Advocates of a tax on carbon emissions, a carbon tax, state that this is the simplest, most direct and efficient way to charge for emissions. A carbon tax could be levied at the first point of sale after extraction. An advantage of a carbon tax is flexibility. It's easier to adjust the tax to adapt to changes in the economy. Also our country already has a mechanism to deal with taxes.

The problem is that new taxes are a tough sell in Washington. To make a carbon tax more appealing, the tax could be “revenue neutral”. This means that any revenues collected from the tax would be used to reduce taxes elsewhere, such as payroll or income taxes. Alternatively a carbon tax or “energy tax” could be used to reduce the deficit, while at the same time transforming our nation’s energy. The federal government is currently looking at some form of a carbon tax as a way to reduce emissions. The biggest political objection to a carbon tax is that it is regressive. Costs would be passed on to consumers with poorer Americans suffering disproportionately. However, appropriate tax exemptions might level the field.

Carbon taxes have been implemented in some areas, including the U.K., Costa Rica, Finland, Sweden, and Boulder, Colorado – with varying permutations. It is early to weigh the results, but preliminary data look promising.

Regina Beatus, Climate Change Team Chair

March Conversation

Join us on Tuesday, March 12, 2013 at the Edith Stone Room of the Albany Public Library for a LWVBAE Health Care Team-sponsored Conversation with Jeff Ritterman. Dr. Ritterman is a cardiologist, a former member of the Richmond, California, City Council, and a leader in the proposal to institute a penny-per-ounce soda tax in Richmond. The tax measure was defeated. We will discuss the public health and personal health implications of such a tax as well as the political and public policy implications.

Carol Stone, Program Coordinator

SUNSHINE WEEK

Open Government is Good Government

The week of March 10 - 16 is Sunshine Week (Your Right to Know) for 2013. For those of us who live in Berkeley we can celebrate that after more than 10 years, we have an Open Government Ordinance (OGO). Although the OGO has no enforcement powers and only recommends solutions to the City Council, it is one step closer to having open government in our city and an open political process. Other cities around California have similar sunshine laws and the hope is that one day all of them eventually will.

Getting open government laws enacted is a long and difficult process, mainly due to resistance from elected officials and their staffs. For the most part, I believe they think that citizens just don't need access to records and that they themselves follow existing open laws. Too many don't realize that government belongs to the people and denying access to information leaves citizens with no place to go except to the courts. Few individuals can do this because of the time and cost involved. A good sunshine law would eliminate this problem and result in a strengthening of trust between a government and its people.

As our electronic age evolves, it will be easier, and little cost, to have more openness in our government. Records are made every time an e-mail is created and sent, reports are generated and meetings are held. By indexing all of this, the public would be able to find the information they want and to more effectively participate in matters that concern them.

As of this writing there are forty-three organizations around the United States planning programs to celebrate Sunshine Week. You can get more information by going to www.sunshineweek.org

Dean Metzger, Membership Coordinator

Dean Metzger Honored for his Fight for Sunshine Ordinance

Dean Metzger, LWVBAE Board Member, will be honored as a citizen champion of open government and the First Amendment by the Society of Professional Journalists, Northern California chapter, at the organization's 28th annual James Madison Awards banquet on Tuesday, March 12. Most of the other honorees at this event are professional journalists and organizations. Congratulations, Dean!

LWVBAE and Sunshine

The League has long supported letting sunshine into government and defended citizens' right to access to government information as the "cornerstone to a healthy democracy."

And yet, our League opposed Measure U, the Sunshine Initiative, that Dean Metzger worked so hard to draft and get on the ballot. How and why did that happen? The decision to oppose Measure U, the Sunshine Ordinance, was taken after an Action meeting last summer attended by about 60 members. They recommended that we oppose Measure U; the board agreed. On behalf of LWVBAE, Sherry Smith and Diz Swift participated in drafting the ballot arguments against the measure and the League campaigned against it. For the League, the strongest argument against the Measure was that an appointed board would have, as Dean mentions in the adjacent article, "enforcement powers" to over-rule the elected City Council.

Before the initiative actually came before the voters in November 2012, the City staff prepared and brought to the City Council an Open Government Ordinance. The Ordinance contained many sound proposals adopted from or suggested by the Sunshine Ordinance. So the filing of the Sunshine Initiative—and Dean as its author and supporter—did push the City Council to adopt an Open Government Ordinance — something no

>Continued next page

>Sunshine from previous page

one else had been able to accomplish. A real victory for Dean and his colleagues—and for citizens.

The League supported and worked with the City to adopt the Open Government Ordinance.

Even before the adoption of the Open Government Ordinance, the City Clerk's office and the IT Department, have given Berkeley citizens access to a great and increasing array of agendas, minutes, staff reports and other important City records and documents on the City's website. Thanks to the creation of the City Council Agenda Committee some time ago and the Open Government Ordinance, citizens usually have ample notice of and time to respond to issues coming before the City Council and other City boards and commissions. The Council and these bodies have failed to comply with the Open Government Ordinance a few times, judging by the small number of complaints that have been brought to the attention of the Open Government Commission, which has reported on the violations to the Council and made some recommendations. We will continue to follow the work of the Commission. We welcome your suggestions.

Nancy Bickel, Communications Coordinator

Program Priorities for 2013-14

A good turnout of about 20 League members discussed proposals and ideas for LWVBAE and LWVC's programs and issues for emphasis on January 8. The Board ranked these proposals at its February meeting.

LWVBAE Priorities and Activities

Climate Change will continue as our top priority for the coming League year 2013-14; Health Care will also continue as a major priority.

Rent Board Informal Review: The 2011-2012 Alameda County Grand Jury reported some concerns about the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board; the Rent Board has responded. A League committee will follow up to see whether further research or a study might be appropriate.

Albany Voting: A Charter Review Committee in Albany is considering different voting methods, including Ranked Choice Voting for multiple seat selection. Preston Jordan, who sits on the committee, and Nancy Bickel will follow up.

Longtime League expert Gil Bendix suggested that we do a local study of fire protection because disaster response times, communication and coordination have not been adequately addressed, but no follow-up was planned.

LWVC Priorities and Activities

An Update Study of the state position on Natural Resources was proposed as one of our League's three priority proposals to LWVC.

Our other two proposals focused on activities that LWVBAE would like to present and participate in at the upcoming state convention this spring in San Jose.

The Health Care Team, which has been working very actively with the state League and with the state-wide coalition supporting a "single payer" option for California, has applied to LWVC to give a **Health Care Workshop** to educate and train convention attendees. The LWVBAE Board approved the proposal.

A Climate Change Caucus at the state convention was proposed by the Climate Change Team and supported by the Board. It will be called "Putting a Price on Carbon Emissions" [see page 4].

If you would like to become involved with any of these efforts, contact Diz Swift at action@lwbae.org.

Membership Report

In January we welcome one new member and regret the loss of another.

New Member

Ruth Grimes

In Memorium

Gordon Gains

Mina Jenner, Dues Coordinator

Donations to Our League

January 2013

To the LWVBAE General Fund

Diane Akers

in memory of Fran Packard

Suzanne Chun

in memory of Fran Packard

Stephanie Friedman

Bruce and Heidi Gillies

in memory of Fran Packard and Wilma Jordan

Mim Hawley

Preston Jordan

Ruth Maguire

Madeline Mixer

Patricia Powers-Risius

Sherry Smith

Elizabeth Warrick

Phoebe Watts

To the LWVB Foundation

Berkeley Food and Housing Project

Violet Feinauer

Stephanie Friedman

Mim Hawley

in memory of Wilma Jordan and Fran Packard

Ann-Marie Hogan

Yvonne Koshland

in memory of Fran Packard

Weldon and Jeanie Rucker

in memory of Fran Packard

Marion Shapiro

Sherry Smith

Phoebe Watts

Many thanks for remembering our League.

Louetta Erlin, Donations Secretary

Bansner Award to Johanna Hoffman

The League of Women Voters of Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville announces that Johanna Hoffman is the recent award winner of the Eva Alexis Bansner Prize for Sustainable Communities. Ms. Hoffman will spend her award on her work to introduce networks of people to ecological approaches to defending the Oakland coast from flooding.

The development of wetland systems, both constructed and natural, will provide crucial buffers to flooding and storm surge, as well as water filtration, recreational space, wildlife habitat, and opportunities for environmental education.

This award will assist in Ms. Hoffman, a Masters candidate in the UC Berkeley Department of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning, as she seeks to develop a framework for designing spaces with multiple benefits to humans and surrounding ecosystems.

Ms. Hoffman is carrying out her project on the former military site in West Oakland which is adjacent to and includes the proposed Gateway Park. Her project is in keeping with the Eva Bansner Sustainable Communities' mission to further the integration of natural resource, land use, and economic development planning. The award is in honor of the League and Bansner's work for beautiful, healthy, urban environments, sustainable land use planning, responsible stewardship, visionary leadership and good government.

Carol Stone, Environmental Concerns Co-chair

Be a Part of Health Care

The Health Care Team has submitted through the LWVBAE Board a proposal for a Health Care workshop at the State Convention in May. We will hear in the Spring whether our application is accepted. The proposal has been endorsed by seven other local Leagues. If it is approved, we will be working on its structure and implementation.

We are also working on developing information for local California Leagues on "Single Payer/Improved Medicare for All" as part of our share of work for the statewide single payer coalition, "Campaign for a Healthy California". The next meeting of the Health Care Team is Tuesday, March 18 at 1:30pm in the League office. Please join us.

Li-hsia Wang, Health Care Team Chair

Board 2012-2013

President	Sherry Smith
Secretary	Angharad Jones
Treasurer(s)	Sarah Miyazaki/ Jan Blumenkrantz
Action	Diz Swift
Communications	Nancy Bickel
Program	Carol Stone
Membership	Dean Metzger



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The Voter is published 9 times a year by League of Women Voters Berkeley Albany Emeryville 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite F Berkeley, CA 94702-2000 Telephone: 510-843-8824 Email: office@lwvbae.org

Editors: Diz Swift, Nancy Bickel
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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

February

25	Mon	1:00-3:30p	Initiative and Referendum Consensus (Part 1)	C. Stone	549-0959
25	Tues	1:30-3:30p	Climate Change Team	R. Beatus	524-6904
26	Weds	1:00-3:30p	I&R Consensus (Part 2)	C. Stone	549-0959

March

1	Fri	1:30-3:30p	I&R Consensus Decision	C. Stone	549-0959
5	Tues	1:00-3:00p	LWVBAE Board Meeting	S. Smith	548-1769
8	Fri	1:30-3:30p	Civics Ed Team	J. Gardner	548-5292
8	Fri	6:00p	Voter Deadline	N. Bickel	684-6302
11	Mon	7:00-9:00p	Environmental Concerns 1174 Euclid Ave, Berkeley	C. Stone	549-0959
12	Tues	12:00-2:00p	Conversation Edith Stone Rm, Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave	C. Stone	549-0959
18	Mon	3:00-4:00p	Health Care	L. Wang	848-5765
19	Tues	4:30-5:30p	Action Meeting	D. Swift	548-4808
21	Thurs	4:00-5:30p	Using New Media Tools	N. Bickel	684-6302
26	Tues	1:30-3:30p	E-mail, Calendar, Web, Facebook Climate Change Team	R. Beatus	524-6904