

# The Voter



League of Women Voters of Berkeley • Albany • Emeryville

OCTOBER 2009

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## 10<sup>TH</sup> COMMUNITY LUNCHEON WOWS THE CROWD

Despite the dampening effect of the economic downturn on attendance, the more than 150 members and guests who filled H<sup>5</sup> Lordships' banquet room on August 20 were treated to a tasty, nutritious lunch and an inspiring, informative program.

Honored for her 66 years of League membership and her lifelong efforts to better the lives of children, *Alba Witkin* accepted her Spirit of the League award with a grace and eloquence that I am unable to capture in words. After briefly recounting her experiences as a League lobbyist in the California legislature in the 1940s, *Mrs. Witkin* ended her acceptance comments by remarking that after leaving Sacramento in the 1950s she went silent, adding that "this is the loudest I've been since." The applause that filled the room told her that she had not lost her touch.

Dave Macdonald, Alameda County Registrar of Voters, accepted our Spirit of the League award to his organization on behalf of his dedicated and hard-working staff of 27 permanent employees. With the help of many temporary workers and League members, Mr. Macdonald and his staff have conducted eight elections since the beginning of 2008 and are currently in the process of preparing

(*continued on p. 4*)

## REMINDER!!

### FALL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1  
5:30-8:00 PM

Northbrae Community Church  
941 The Alameda, Berkeley

### "WHERE'S THE COMMUNITY IN OUR COMMUNITY COLLEGES?"

#### PROSPECTIVE PANEL:

DR. NICKY GONZALES-YUEN  
DR. CY GULASSA  
DR. BETTY INCLAN

Dinner will be held from 6 pm to 6:45 pm, and will be followed by the panel discussion and question period. To reserve a dinner and/or to request a ride to this event, please call the LWVBAE office at 510.843.8824; dinner costs \$15.

PHOTO COURTESY BILL CHAPMAN



SUZANNE CHUN, LUNCHEON CO-CHAIR, AND GINETTE POLAK WELCOME LUNCHEON GUESTS

## BERKELEY CITIZEN COMMITTEE DRAFTING NEW "SUNSHINE ORDINANCE"

Sometime this fall the Berkeley City Council will have before it the product of a group of Berkeley citizens who have spent more than two years drafting a proposed "Sunshine Ordinance" that would set forth the City's policy regarding public participation in the deliberations of the City's legislative bodies, ensure greater public access to public records, and establish a mechanism for the enforcement of such policies and access.

Nearly eight years ago, the City Attorney's office drafted a substantially more limited approach to public access to records and the opportunity for public input at the meetings of the City Council and other municipal legislative bodies, including Commissions. A group of Berkeley residents who had more expansive ideas on the subject formed a committee to come up with a wider-ranging draft ordinance, and persuaded the City Council not to act on the matter until they had completed their work and submitted it to the Council for its consideration.

Two LWVBAE members, *Jinky Gardner* and *Sherry Smith*, have been sitting in on many of these meetings and have been monitoring progress. Gardner and Smith have made periodic reports to the LWVBAE Action Committee and to the LWVBAE Board of Directors regarding their observations.

Several weeks ago the citizen "Sunshine" group submitted its draft ordinance to the Council, and the draft was referred to the City Manager's office for staff comment. A comprehensive analysis by city staff estimates one-time-only start-up costs at nearly \$500,000. Going forward, they estimate adding nearly \$3 million per year to the city budget in order to comply with the ordinance's provisions. This estimated \$3 million per year would cover the additional city personnel needed to implement the ordinance: a full-time staff for the Sunshine Ordinance Review Commission, new staff positions in several city offices to comply with the proposed ordinance's requirements for timely reproduction of all documents requested by the public, and hiring lawyers to enforce compliance in court.

Because of ongoing negotiations among members of the citizens group, a couple of Council members and some City staff, the proposed ordinance is still not being circulated beyond the drafting committee. If negotiations do not result in a document acceptable to the citizen drafters, they will discuss gathering signatures for possible placement of the Sunshine Ordinance on the municipal ballot, probably in November 2010.

When the decision is made to circulate the draft more widely, the draft will be distributed to the LWVBAE Action Committee and Board members, as well as other League members who are interested in seeing it. The process is in a state of flux, and the proposed document is not likely to be "ready for prime time" before late fall or early winter.

*Sherry Smith*  
Vice President for Action

### THE VOTER

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF BERKELEY, ALBANY AND EMERYVILLE

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The *VOTER* is free to members, \$10/year for non-members. Current and past issues of the *VOTER* are posted on our website at 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.*

## HEALTHCARE COMMITTEE REPORT

The LWVBAE Healthcare Committee met over the summer months in an attempt to keep on top of the constantly changing dialogue and evolving efforts with respect to healthcare reform. The Committee has accumulated enormous amounts of information on the various healthcare reform proposals that have been disseminated throughout the country, and in the coming months we plan to share this information at a house party with the LWVBAE membership. We would like to help our membership understand the complexities which our elected officials face as they return to Washington and continue to try to reach consensus on healthcare reform.

At this September's Solano Avenue Stroll, members of the Healthcare Committee distributed information on the updated healthcare reform positions set forth by the federal government and also information on SB810, California's current healthcare bill. Our Committee plans to join other organizations in supporting "Medicare For All," which is a more easily understood and therefore a preferable descriptor to "single payer".

On Tuesday, October 6, at 12 noon, "Conversations at the League" at the Albany Public Library will feature "A Conversation Regarding U.S. Healthcare Reform," which will be moderated by *Li-Hsia Wang, M.D.*, and *Ursula Rolfe, M.D.*

The LWVBAE Healthcare Committee normally meets on the 3rd Monday of the month at the LWVBAE office. If you are interested in attending one of our meetings, please check at the office beforehand (510.843.8824) to confirm that there will be a Healthcare Committee meeting that month.

*Cathy Lynch, Co-Chair*  
Healthcare Committee

## WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON REFORMING U.S. HEALTHCARE/INSURANCE?

Participate in the Conversation with League friends at noon on Tuesday, October 6, as part of a civil, League-like discussion on proposed health care/insurance reform. LWVBAE Healthcare Committee members *Ursula Rolfe, M.D., Li-Hsia Wang, M.D.* and *Cathy Lynch* will shed some light on current proposals, on who favors which and why, and on whatever might be puzzling you: How do longtime LWVUS policies on healthcare fit into the current controversies? How do LWV-California healthcare policies differ from those of LWVUS? With which groups is LWV working to urge reforms? Come and share YOUR views on needed reforms and on strategies to accomplish them! We hope to develop a better understanding of the issues and at the same time foster new friendships within the League.

You may bring your own lunch, but water is the only beverage allowed in the Edith Stone Room of the Albany Public Library, 1247 Marin Avenue, Albany (next to BART overhead tracks by Masonic Avenue).

**Plan Ahead:** On Tuesday, November 3, Conversations At The League expects to discuss the controversies around Berkeley's lengthy process of producing a City Sunshine Ordinance.

Worthwhile reading for all thoughtful U.S. residents on U.S. healthcare and health insurance systems: "How American Health Care Killed My Father" by David Goldhill, in *The Atlantic*, September 2009. The article is available at <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200909/health-care>.

*Ginette Polak, Chair*  
Conversations At The League

## NOVEMBER ELECTIONS

On November 3, 2009 there will be local elections in two of LWVBAE's three cities. In Emeryville, two members will be elected to the Emeryville City Council and three members to the Board of Trustees for the Emery Unified School District. In Albany, the School Board approved two Parcel Tax Initiatives for the ballot. These taxes would raise funds to retain school programs and thus restore services lost due to unprecedented State budget cuts. Information about these elections can be found on [Smartvoter.org](http://Smartvoter.org).

In November 2008 California voters passed Proposition 11, establishing a Citizens Redistricting Commission. The California State Auditor has released a draft application for the position of Commissioner for public comment. The draft application may be read at <http://bsa.ca.gov/redistricting>.

*Phoebe Watts*  
Vice President for Election Services

## OFFICE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

In our attempt to have the LWVBAE office open and available to Leaguers and to the general public as much as possible, we are asking our membership to volunteer for Desk Duty! Desk Duty can be once or twice a month, in shifts of 2-4 hours, and is a wonderful way to become acquainted with the daily workings of our League and of our office.

Desk duty includes answering the office phone, fetching and processing the mail, and doing whatever else needs doing. Now that we have three new, up-to-date computers in the office, there will certainly be other tasks that desk volunteers can perform. Please respond to this call and sign up for a shift or two by contacting me, *Jane Barrett*, at 510.845.8055 or [janebarrett@onebox.com](mailto:janebarrett@onebox.com). Desk Volunteer training is available!

*Jane Barrett*  
Office Volunteer Coordinator

LWVBAE 2009-2010 OFF-BOARD PORTFOLIOS	
ALBANY ACTION CO-CHAIRS	JEAN SAFIR ALAN MARIS
CIVICS EDUCATION CHAIR	JINKY GARDNER
CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION CO-CHAIRS	JAN BLUMENKRANTZ REGINA BEATUS
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WEB MANAGER/COMPUTER CONSULTANT	BILL CHAPMAN
WOMEN'S ISSUES	CHARLOTTE LICHTERMAN

## 10<sup>TH</sup> COMMUNITY LUNCHEON WOWS THE CROWD

(continued from p. 1)

for one more (Albany and Emeryville) on November 3 of this year. The work of democracy never ends, but in Alameda County, at least, it is in good hands.

Luncheon speaker Jane Wales, President and CEO of the World Affairs Council of Northern California and President of the Global Philanthropy Forum (<http://www.philanthropyforum.org>), spoke on the changing role of philanthropy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. After describing her personal experiences in politics and philanthropy, Ms. Wales explained that contemporary philanthropic organizations (under the leadership of such political, business and cultural figures as Bill Clinton, Bill Gates and Bono) are moving from a focus on helping people and nations recover from human-caused and natural disasters, to one where they've taken on intractable world problems – AIDS, poverty, education, global warming, etc. Following her prepared remarks, Ms. Wales took written questions from the audience. As is usual in League forums, the questions were thoughtful, and the answers were to the point. Those wanting a fuller idea of Jane Wales' thoughts on the state of contemporary global philanthropy are encouraged to read a June 25, 2009 *Financial Times* article on Ms. Wales and the Global Philanthropy Forum; the article is located online at [http://www.philanthropyforum.org/forum/Presidents\\_Corner.asp?SnID=2](http://www.philanthropyforum.org/forum/Presidents_Corner.asp?SnID=2).

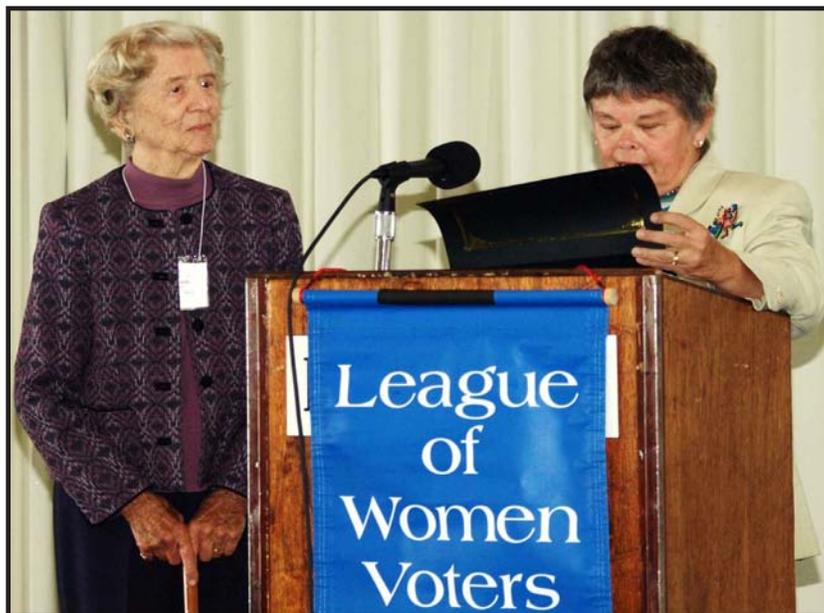
Finally, on behalf of all LWVBAE members and the guests who attended this year's Luncheon, big thank yous are in order to the members of our Luncheon committee: *Suzanne Chun, Sherry Smith, Angharad Jones, Jane Barrett, Rainey Sykes, Ruthann Taylor, Jinky Gardner, Bill Chapman and Karen Nelson*. Without the committee's tireless efforts beginning last spring and continuing through August, we could not have put on an event such as this. And the Luncheon itself would not have come off as smoothly as it did without the help of *Diane Akers, Barbara Alesandrini, Regina Beatus, Lois Brubeck, Tom and Jane Coulter and Ginette Polak*, who greeted guests, collected question cards, placed flower arrangements and programs, and executed the many other tasks that make our two-hour annual Luncheon the joyful experience it is. And last, but by no means least, we want to thank those who, unable to attend the Luncheon, made donations instead.

*Bill Chapman*  
Treasurer

**DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER JANE WALES EXPLAINS  
HOW 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY PHILANTHROPY  
SEEKS TO ADDRESS GLOBAL PROBLEMS**



**ALBA WITKIN LISTENS AS LUNCHEON CO-CHAIR SHERRY SMITH READS  
ALBA'S SPIRIT OF THE LEAGUE AWARD**



**EVELYN LIGHT REFLECTS ON THE DAY'S EVENTS**



**BARBARA ALESANDRINI LOOKS AT THE SELECTIONS ON THE MRS. DALLOWAY'S BOOKS TABLE**



**KAREN MONTE AND ANGHARAD JONES,  
LWVBAE BOARD SECRETARY**



**ALAMEDA COUNTY REGISTRAR DAVE MACDONALD ACCEPTS  
THE SPIRIT OF THE LEAGUE AWARD ON BEHALF OF HIS STAFF**



## JODY BUSH

JUNE 25, 1936 – JUNE 14, 2009

*Jody Bush* joined our League in 2003, after she had retired from her formal library work. I say "formal" work because, of course, being *Jody*, she continued to be interested in library affairs as well as expanding her involvement with other interests, like the League.

We were just forming our Civics Education committee, and *Jody* became an active and enthusiastic member. When she first started attending the meetings, she would introduce herself as "*Jody Bush*, no relation!"; referring jokingly to the then-President of the United States. Not only did *Jody* join up with the Civics Education project, but the League's Nominating Committee was looking for new Board members and she agreed to join the Board as Secretary. She said later that it was quite a "crash course" in learning from the inside out all the many functions and activities of the League.

The mission of the Civics Education committee was to study how and in what grades Civics was taught in our three school districts – Albany, Berkeley and Emeryville. Members looked up the State Education Code requirements and, in interviews with superintendents, principals, teachers and students, compiled a report on just what was actually going on in our schools. They then moved into their "action" phase, to try to bring Civics education to a more front-and-center position of priority in our public schools.

*Jody* was enthusiastically involved with all of that, along with her Secretarial duties for the League Board. Even after a horrendous car accident, she continued to volunteer to do what she could, helping with the Mock Elections at Berkeley High. Legions of friends made in the League, during her work at the Library, and through other aspects of her busy community life rallied to assist *Jody* in all aspects of her recovery. But the lung cancer diagnosis that had preceded her accident finally took her life.

Throughout everything, we admired *Jody's* wit, intelligence, pluck and commitment to community service. We feel so very lucky that when *Jody* was considering things to do after she left full-time work with the Library, she chose the League as one of her interests. We are a better organization for that, and want to thank her family and friends for being the sorts of people who would shape the person that *Jody* became. We sorely miss her.

*Jody's* family has asked that friends wishing to honor *Jody's* memory donate to organizations that support her beliefs.

*Sherry Smith*  
Vice President for Action

## DONATIONS JUNE 10 - AUGUST 31

### TO THE LWVBAE GENERAL FUND

*Barbara Beatty*  
*Regina Beatus*  
*Judith Bloom*  
*Eloise Bodine*  
*Mary Breunig*  
*Gretchen Carlson*  
*Suzanne Chun*  
 in memory of *Georgia Babladelis*  
*George and Ann Crowe*  
*Nora Davis*  
*Judith Dunham*  
*Louetta Erlin*  
*Doris Fine*  
*Andrea Foley*  
*Elaine Grossberg*  
*Bonnie Hamlin*  
*Virginia Havens*  
*I. Michael Heyman*  
*Ruth Hinkins*  
*Ann-Marie Hogan*  
*Patricia Kates*  
*Yvonne Koshland*  
*Pat Kuhi*  
*Cathy Lynch*  
*Allie Norton*  
*Kathrina Ostrander, Bayer Healthcare*  
*Sally Outis*  
*Juanita Peterson*  
*Patricia Pope*  
*Susan S. Pownall*  
*Louise B. Rasmussen*  
*Sarah Robinson, California Senior Leaders*  
 Alliance  
*Ursula T. Rolfe*  
*Sherry Smith*  
*Meredith Stout*  
*Elsa Tranter*  
*Renate Tubman*  
*Lassie Ulman*  
*Tami White*

### TO THE LWVB FOUNDATION

*Eloise Bodine*  
*Mary Lou Breiman*  
*George and Ann Crowe*

Many thanks for remembering your League.

*Louetta Erlin*  
Donations Secretary

## NEEDED: A NEW VOTER EDITOR

*Alice Kisch*, our award-winning *Voter* Editor, has served us remarkably well for three years, both as Editor and Board member, and we have all greatly benefited from her good ideas in print and in conversation. *Alice* will be stepping down as *Voter* Editor at the end of June 2010, and we now look for her successor. The new Editor will need to be in place in June 2010 in order to take over management of the September 2010 issue, which will be produced in August. As is our tradition, membership of the *Voter* Editor on the LWVBAE Board is optional.

The *Voter* Editorship benefits from the many dedicated individuals who assist in its production, so the new Editor will have many people – including *Alice* – upon whom to call for advice, counsel and support. If the job interests you but you'd like to have more specific information about it, please give *Alice* a call at 510.985.0651 or contact her by email at bambi323@sbcglobal.net; she will be happy to fill you in on matters such as time commitments and other aspects of the *Voter* Editorship. Experience is not as important as interest. 2010 will be a year with very important elections in June and November, so our newsletter will be a resource for the entirety of our three cities – Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville.

For the past two years the software that has been used to prepare the *Voter* is InDesign, an Adobe product which is easy to learn. The Berkeley Adult School (BAS) offers an excellent 9-week class in InDesign for \$80. The next BAS InDesign class is scheduled to start on November 3 and will run through January 21 (presumably with 2 weeks off during the December holidays); LWVBAE will cover the cost of BAS tuition for our new Editor. InDesign classes are offered at BAS throughout the year, including summer, so there is plenty of time to learn and practice the application. There is a library of *Voter* templates from the past two years, so it will not be necessary for the next Editor to create a new format. And, of course, if the new Editor and the Board choose to use an alternative software to create *The Voter*, that is also a possibility.

If you are interested in being our next *Voter* Editor, please contact LWVBAE Office Manager *Cheryl Nichols* at the League Office, 510.843.8824, or by email at office@lwvbae.org.

The LWVBAE Board

### LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BERKELEY, ALBANY AND EMERYVILLE

#### BOARD 2009-2010

Recording Secretary:	ANGHARAD JONES
Treasurer:	BILL CHAPMAN
Vice President-Action:	SHERRY SMITH
Vice President-Administration:	DIANE AKERS
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Conversations at the League:	GINETTE POLAK
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Environmental Concerns: (CO-DIRECTORS, ONE VOTE)	CAROL STONE/ GAIL SCHICKELE
Healthcare Director:	URSULA ROLFE
Directors at Large:	MIM HAWLEY JEAN SAFIR

### LWVBAE WISHES TO ESPECIALLY HONOR OUR 50-YEAR MEMBERS:

*Joyce Baldwin*  
*MaryBelle Campbell*  
*Ora Huth*  
*Elizabeth Schaaf*  
*Alba Witkin*

### NEW MEMBERS

Our Warmest Welcome  
To Our Newest Members:

*Priscilla Myrick*  
*Cheryl Webb*

And To Rejoining Member  
*Yvonne Koshland*

### LWVBAE OFFICE HOURS

*Cheryl Nichols*, LWVBAE Office Manager, is in the office on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm. LWVBAE members may be staffing the office at other times.



**League of Women Voters**  
 Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville  
 1414 University Avenue, Suite D  
 Berkeley, CA 94702-1509

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## how to join

fill in coupon below and mail with your check in the amount of \$75 (\$40 for each additional household member; \$40 for a student membership) to the order of LWVBAE,

1414 University Avenue, Suite D  
 Berkeley, CA 94702-1509

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. Day: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. Eve. \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Joining at the local level makes you a member at all levels: LWVBAE, Bay Area, State and National. Dues and contributions to the League are not tax deductible. Contributions to the LWVB Foundation are deductible to the extent allowed by law.

## calendar

### OCTOBER

- |          |              |  |  |
|----------|--------------|--|--|
| 1 THURS. | 5:30-8 PM    | <b>FALL GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING</b> (SEE P. 1)<br>NORTHBRAE COMMUNITY CHURCH, 941 THE ALAMEDA                                 | LWVBAE, 843-8824                                 |
| 2 FRI.   | 5:00 PM      | <b>DEADLINE FOR NOVEMBER VOTER</b>   | A. KISCH, 985.0651                               |
| 6 TUES.  | 12-2 PM      | CONVERSATION ON HEALTHCARE/INSURANCE REFORM,<br>EDITH STONE ROOM, ALBANY PUBLIC LIBRARY,<br>1247 MARIN AVENUE, ALBANY (SEE P. 3) | G. POLAK, 841.4546                               |
| 12 MON.  | 7:30-9 PM    | ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS, HOME OF WENDY<br>MARKEL, 2811 CLAREMONT BLVD   | C. STONE, 549.0959<br>G. SCHICKELE, 415.922.5826 |
| 17 SAT.  | 11-12:30 PM  | MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CTE, LWVBAE OFFICE  | J. COULTER, 524.0525                             |
| 19 MON.  | 1:30-3:30 PM | HEALTHCARE CTE, LWVBAE OFFICE (SEE P. 3)   | C. LYNCH, 527.21730                              |
| 20 TUES. | 3-5 PM       | ACTION COMMITTEE, LWVBAE OFFICE  | S. SMITH, 548.1769                               |
| 21 WED.  | 1:30-3:30 PM | CLIMATE CHANGE TEAM, LWVBAE OFFICE   | J. BLUMENKRANTZ, 548.3845                        |
|          | 3:30-5 PM    | LWVB FOUNDATION BOARD, LWVBAE OFFICE   | S. SMITH, 548.1769                               |
| 27 TUES. | 7:30-9 PM    | CIVICS EDUCATION ACTION CTE, LWVBAE OFFICE   | J. GARDNER, 548.5292                             |
| 28 WED.  | 3-5 PM       | BOARD MEETING, LWVBAE OFFICE   | D. AKERS, 527.1288                               |

### NOVEMBER

- |          |              |  |                           |
|----------|--------------|--|---------------------------|
| 3 TUES.  | 12-2 PM      | <b>ALBANY AND EMERYVILLE ELECTIONS</b><br>CONVERSATION ON BERKELEY'S PROPOSED "SUNSHINE<br>ORDINANCE," EDITH STONE ROOM, ALBANY<br>PUBLIC LIBRARY, 1247 MARIN AVENUE, ALBANY | G. POLAK, 841.4546        |
| 6 FRI.   | 5:00 PM      | <b>DEADLINE FOR DECEMBER-JANUARY VOTER</b>   | A. KISCH, 985.0651        |
| 9 MON.   | 7:30-9 PM    | ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS, LOCATION TBA   | C. STONE, 549.0959        |
| 16 MON.  | 1:30-3:30 PM | HEALTHCARE CTE, LWVBAE OFFICE (SEE P. 3)   | C. LYNCH, 527.2173        |
| 17 TUES. | 3-5 PM       | ACTION COMMITTEE, LWVBAE OFFICE  | S. SMITH, 548.1769        |
| 18 WED.  | 1:30-3:30 PM | CLIMATE CHANGE TEAM, LWVBAE OFFICE   | J. BLUMENKRANTZ, 548.3845 |
|          | 3:30-5:30 PM | BOARD MEETING, LWVBAE OFFICE   | D. AKERS, 527.1288        |
| 21 SAT.  | 11-12:30 PM  | MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CTE, LWVBAE OFFICE  | J. COULTER, 524.0525      |
| 24 TUES. | 7:30-9 PM    | CIVICS EDUCATION ACTION CTE, LWVBAE OFFICE   | J. GARDNER, 548.5292      |
| 26-27    | THURS.-FRI.  | <b>THANKSGIVING DAY HOLIDAY - LWVBAE OFFICE CLOSED</b>   |                           |

BERKELEY ADDRESSES UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED