

The VOTER

LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS
of BERKELEY, ALBANY
and EMERYVILLE



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President: Nancy Bickel

December 2001 - January 2002

Editor: Jean Safir

“Housing Policy and Progress”

Final Report on Two-Year Study Leading to New Action Positions

After a two-year study and another year of effort to complete the final report, the Housing Action team has just sent copies of the report as back-up to letters commenting on the respective housing policies and programs of each of our three cities. The reception has been most gratifying, with expressions of thanks for our efforts and compliments on the result.

Anyone who wishes to obtain a copy of the report should call the LWVBAE office and leave a message, with your address if you'd like us to mail it to you, or let us know you will pick it up. You can also read the report and the letters sent to each of the cities on our Web site under “LWVBAE AT WORK” (LWVBAE's Web site address at the bottom of this page).

If you are interested in joining the team to help design and carry out a program to see our Action Positions become city policies, please leave word at the office and we'll get back to you very quickly.

-Jean Safir, Housing Action Chair

Community Conversation

Confronting Racism

By all accounts, the November 10 gathering at Rosa Parks School was a resounding success. More than 100 people attended and participated in the team exercises designed to enable them to share their experiences of and feelings about racism. As the prime sponsor, LWVBAE paid for professional facilitators to guide us in organizing the event and to train a group of volunteers who led the individual teams. We also provided a healthy box lunch for everyone and child care for those who needed it.

The day ended on a hopeful note, with many urging follow-up meetings to continue the “conversation.” A full report will be issued by the Board and summarized in the next VOTER.

- p. 2 Support League with Holiday Shopping
October Donations
New Members
- p. 3 Join A City Commission
Election Activities
- p. 4 Speaker Series
Recent Election Results
- p. 5 Community College Study
Board Action
- p. 6 Calendar

SUPPORT THE LEAGUE WITH YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPING!

Many merchants as diverse as Barnes & Noble, Gap, Toys-R-Us, Tower Records, etc., offer us up to 15% discounts on their scrip. You can help the League at no cost to yourself by using scrip for your own holiday shopping and as gifts, whether you shop in stores or on the Web.

For a complete list of participating merchants, the available denominations and discounts, please contact me as soon as possible — by phone (527-1992), fax (527-3121) or email (evabrecher@aol.com). It takes about a week for a scrip order to be processed.

If you shop on line, there is another way to support the League, and this way is even more profitable and simpler. You can access the Web sites of most major retailers through the schoolcash.com site and designate the League under "support an organization". For further instructions, please contact me.

-Eva Brecher, Scrip Coordinator

MEETING SOME ENTHUSIASTIC NEW MEMBERS

With postcards and/or telephone calls, more than 100 new and prospective members were especially invited to meet local League leaders and discuss LWVBAE activities and goals for this year. The sixteen who gathered on Nov. 3 enjoyed a lively and sociable gathering, during which we became better acquainted, a few prospects joined, and some of the newer members volunteered to help with various League projects.

My thanks to the Membership Committee who helped with the mailings and phoning: *Evelyn Light, Nina Olson, Winnie McLaughlin, and Carol Voisin*. Thanks also to the experienced Leaguers who attended and made the event so successful: *Nancy Bickel, Lois Brubeck, Helene Lecar, Winnie McLaughlin, Sherry Smith, Mary Wainwright, and Phoebe Watts*.

-Ginette Polak, Membership Director

OCTOBER DONATIONS to General Fund

<i>Regina Beatus</i>	<i>Penelope Nellis</i>
<i>Ida Braun</i>	<i>Therese Pipe</i>
<i>Thomas Brougham</i>	<i>Elizabeth Schaaf</i>
<i>Helen Canin</i>	<i>Todd Smith</i>
<i>Ora & Kurt Huth</i>	<i>Elsa Tranter</i>

Glenda O'Donnell

to Foundation

Nancy & Peter Bickel
Babette & Herbert Maccoby

-Evelyn Light

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

<i>Virginia Bale</i>	<i>Suzanne Marr</i>
<i>Shelagh Brodersen</i>	<i>Barbara Rosenlicht</i>
<i>Ruth Deuel</i>	<i>Jodi Rymer</i>
<i>A. Garren</i>	<i>Gene W. Tanke</i>
<i>Ruth Ingram</i>	<i>Grace L. Ulp</i>

and rejoining member *Polly Rosenthal*.

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We're saddened to report the deaths of *Peggy J. Reid* in October and *Alice S. Hamburg* in November. Both had been members of our League for many years.

-Ginette Polak, Membership Director

JOIN A CITY COMMISSION

The following City of Berkeley Commissions and Boards have one or more vacancies:

- Aging
- Citizens Budget Review
- Community Health
- Disaster Council
- Early Childhood Education
- Energy
- Fire Safety
- Labor
- Loan Administration
- Mental Health
- Parks & Recreation
- Personnel
- Solid Waste Management
- Status of Women
- Waterfront

People interested in being considered for serving on these Boards and Commissions should contact the City Clerk to determine in which Council districts these vacancies exist, and then contact the appropriate City Council member about possible appointment.

The City Clerk can be reached at 981-6900, or you can visit her office on the first floor of the Civic Center Building at 2180 Milvia. Boards and Commissions typically meet one evening monthly, and there are additional meetings of committees within each group.

-Sherry Smith, V.P.,
Community
Outreach/Development

ELECTION ACTIVITIES

The *VOTER* schedule requires that this be written before we know what local measures will be on our ballots in March, 2002. But we're certain that there will be an election in March, 2002 — and it is very likely that there will be local measures on the ballots. So, although the topics are not yet known, we can foresee the tasks ahead of us: write and edit Pro and Con statements on all local measures; publish and distribute statements; train speakers to explain the measures to local groups, on request; possibly sponsor meetings about measures on the ballots; distribute literature about the measures; help people register to vote; help keep the "Smartvoter" Web site up to date; and more.

If you are willing to help a little, or a lot, with any of these tasks, please contact me, through the office, as soon as possible. We need to start writing the Pros and Cons in December, as soon as we have information on the ballot measures.

Another way to help with elections is to be a poll worker. Sometimes the long hours make people hesitate to apply. But it is possible for two people to share the work, each working a half day. The Registrar of Voters asks that the two people apply together, however. So if you are able to work a half day, and can find a partner, or would like to work a full day, please contact the Alameda County Registrar of Voters at (510) 663-8683.

-Phoebe Watts, V.P., Election Services

Speaker Series

Thursday, January 10, 12 Noon
Albany Public Library, Edith Stone Room
1247 Marin Avenue

Arnold Chavez, the Executive Director for the Alameda County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program, will speak to us about how this program works to defend the rights of children. These are children who have committed no crimes but, due to circumstances beyond their control, are in the juvenile justice system.

Come hear how the program began, what impact it can have on the lives of these children, and how you can help make that a positive impact. The building is wheelchair accessible, and parking and bus service are readily available. Bring lunch if you'd like; LWVBAE will provide juice. Call the office if you need a ride or more information..

Thursday, February 14, 12 Noon

Jim Lindsay, League member and Albany resident, will be the principal speaker on the topic of "Instant Runoff Voting." He will be joined by a colleague in describing the mechanics and advantages of IRV.

At the September 2000 LWVBAE general meeting, our League adopted the local action position that follows: "Instant Runoff Voting should be used in all elections in which the final result will be a single winner." Jim was a member of the study group that proposed this position. He is also a technical advisor to the Center for Voting and Democracy, known as a "think tank" on good government issues.

Those who attended the **November 15, 2000**, Speaker Series were treated to music by a trio of flutists and a quartet of clarinetists from Berkeley's Longfellow School, and

(Continued in next column) ☞

Recent Election Results

On November 6, Albany voters went to the polls to decide whether to amend their City Charter to provide for an appointed Police Chief, to replace the elected Chief they now have. This was "Measure C," which won by 58.4% of those voting, against 41.5% voting "no."

It was a relatively small turnout — not surprising, with only one issue to decide — with just 2,400 voters casting a ballot, out of a total of about 9,500 registered to vote. That is only 25%; whereas, in presidential elections Albany has one of the highest turnout rates in this area. The new Charter provision will go into effect in November, 2002, when the current term of the present Chief expires.

Emeryville residents voted to elect members of the City Council and School Board, and on two ballot measures. Two Council members ran unopposed for reelection and will both serve new 4-year terms. Three out of four candidates for School Board were also elected. Both ballot measures passed — one to increase the transient occupancy tax from 10% to 12%, and the other to revise the business license tax. Both of these will provide more resources for the City's general operations. Turnout was less than 20% of registered voters.

enjoyed learning a lot about the music program in Berkeley schools. Thank you, Jan Davis, teacher of these earnest middle-school students.

-Barbara Nelson & Evelyn Light

Community College Study on to Redistricting Consensus

Our League's study of the Peralta Community College District culminated in the Consensus Units presented October 24 and 25. Both meetings were very well attended and discussion was lively.

Our interest in this issue was also in evidence at the October Speaker Series. Vista's new president, Dr. John Garmon, and its immediate past president, Dr. Ione Elioff, presented an update on progress toward constructing the new Vista building, offering the architect's renderings of what the new building will look like and how it will enable the college to better serve the community.

The twenty-six members who attended the meeting asked many pertinent questions about library space, transportation, downtown parking, effects on curriculum of the new building, and how soon the building will be ready for use. The 21 members who attended our consensus units also asked important questions about the working conditions for part-time faculty members and preserving programs that serve non-academic students who take studio courses, such as community orchestra or ceramics, which require on-going practice time rather than the typical academic progress from simple to more advanced courses. Members had thoughtful ideas about ways to improve the District's community outreach and its ability to monitor more closely its financial dealings, stressing the importance of structures and procedures to ensure that policies are followed.

The consensus we reached in October will be taken up at the December Board meeting, after this VOTER's deadline, and we will be getting those approved positions back to you in February. Final action will still need to be taken at the Annual Meeting in June 2002.

In the meantime

Like every other public body whose officers

are elected by geographic district, the Peralta Board gets redistricted once a decade, after every new US Census. This year's redistricting hearings will be taking place through the months of November, December and January. The first draft of the proposed new trustee area boundaries will be presented at a public meeting in January. Neither the time nor the place of that meeting have been determined as we go to print.

Since our winter issue is a double one, for both December and January, we won't be able to report back in the Voter until after the meeting has taken place. Nevertheless, we have been assured that maps of proposed changes, along with all the information about time and place, will be available in the League office after the first of the year. We encourage you to get a copy and come to the meeting. Current expectations are that it will take place some time after January 15. For further information, or for an update on the Redistricting hearing, call me at 549-9719.

-*Helene Lecar*, Vista Study Chair

Board Action

- **November 16, 2001** -

Community Conversation: The Board agreed that the Saturday, Nov. 10 meeting was successful and that follow-up events will be planned. A full detailed report will be available in the near future.

ASUC Election: LWVBAE will be asked to work at the ASUC election in April; more details at next meeting.

Election Services: *Eloise Bodine* has volunteered to chair the Speakers Bureau.

Redistricting in Berkeley: The Board agreed to continue to do research on the redistricting controversy, and to write a possible ballot argument to be submitted if the issue is on the March 2002 ballot.

-*Jane Barrett*, Board Secretary

- Berkeley addresses unless otherwise indicated -

December

17 Mon. **LWVBAE Office will close for the Holidays, until Wednesday, January 2, 2002**

January

2	Wed.	Noon	Speaker Series Comm.	LWVBAE Office	<i>Laurence, 526-4758</i>
4	Fri.	4pm	Deadline for Feb. Voter	LWVBAE Office	<i>Safir, 524-9088</i>
9	Wed.	4-6p	Board Meeting	LWVBAE Office	<i>Bickel, 526-4055</i>
10	Thurs.	Noon	Speaker Series	Albany Public Library Edith Stone Room, 1247 Marin Ave., Albany	<i>Laurence, 526-4758</i>
10	Thurs.	7-9p	Housing Action Group	Call for details	<i>Safir, 524-9088</i>
14	Mon.	7:15p	Environmental Concerns	1340 Arch Street	<i>Bansner, 849-2154</i>
17	Thurs.	7-9p	Action Committee	1419 Grant St.	<i>Brubeck, 526-5139</i>
21	Mon.	5:30-7:30p	Education Committee	LWVBAE Office	<i>Saunders, 981-8072</i>

February

6	Wed.	4-6p	Board Meeting	LWVBAE Office	<i>Bickel, 526-4055</i>
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Flash: Bulk Mail Slowdown

The Post Office has advised us that henceforth bulk mail — i.e., future issues of the VOTER — may take from one to two weeks longer to arrive in your mailboxes. Therefore, we will try to list calendar items and announcements at least that far ahead. Please call the office for more information; we will keep you posted.

- *Jean Safir*, Editor

