



The **VOTER**

LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS
of BERKELEY, ALBANY and EMERYVILLE

LWV CALIFORNIA PROGRAM PLANNING 2005-2007 SETTING THE AGENDA FOR CALIFORNIA LEAGUE PROGRAM AND ACTION

Thursday, February 3, 2005

LWVBAE Office

7-9 p.m.

One of the major strengths of the League of Women Voters is that it is a grassroots organization. The members determine at the local level what priorities their local, state, and national boards will pursue. This is done at the Program Planning Meeting every year for the Local League, and alternately every second year for the State and National Leagues. This is the year for us to give direction to the California LWV so that program and action for 2005-2007 that reflects the consensus of the members can be adopted at the LWVC convention in May.

Come experience the fun of getting to know other members by questioning and debating the state issues of current interest among League members. By deciding which three state issues our League considers top priority, we'll be able to determine whether pursuing them requires:

- action or education on an already existing LWVC position;
- updating an existing position in order to take action; or
- a new study on a topic on which the League doesn't yet have a position.

Your voice is needed at this meeting! See you on February 3 at the office.

— Jo Ann B. Price, Program VP

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CLEAN ELECTIONS

A discussion with Robert M. Stern

Saturday, February 19, 2005

Oakland City Hall

10am – noon

See page 3 for details.

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

I am writing this on another stormy day, grateful for central heating and, so far, electricity to power our computer. So many blessings to count, especially in light of the recent devastation by the tsunami waves.

I want to tell you of upcoming League activities in the spring in the hope that you will participate.

We will be sponsoring several workshops about the City of Berkeley budget. We will work with City staff to present these at various places convenient to citizens, and the purpose will be to not only shed light on the City's budgeting process but to hear citizen opinions on budget priorities and ideas for efficiencies in light of extremely limited financial resources. Please see upcoming *VOTER* issues for details of dates, times, and places.

We are extremely happy to know that Sherry Kelly, who has recently retired as Berkeley's City Clerk, will continue in a consulting arrangement where she is charged with moving along the implementation of

Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) in Berkeley. As you know, the League was very instrumental in the overwhelming passage of IRV by voters last year. Now the devil is in the details, and there is no one better prepared and motivated to deal with technical and political obstacles than Sherry. We will be working closely with her and other advocates to bring IRV to reality, just as soon as possible.

Finally, I want to urge you to consider serving on the LWVBAE Board for the coming term that begins July 1. The Nominating Committee, chaired by *Ginette Polak*, is currently meeting and recruiting officers and Board members. There is no more interesting or important a way to learn about the League and help carry out our program to benefit the citizens of our three cities, Berkeley, Albany, and Emeryville. We are a very collegial group and there are several seats to fill—both in the officer ranks and as members of the Board. Please contact *Ginette* at 841-4546 if you would like to be considered by the Committee.

— *Sherry Smith*, President

Blythe Spirit

A Noel Coward Comedy

The League of Women Voters of Oakland's fundraising theater party will be held on January 30 at the Altarena Playhouse in Alameda.

The public is cordially invited to join League members and friends at the event which begins at 1:30 p.m. with a wine and hors d'oeuvres social time, followed by the play at 2:00 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased by sending a check for \$25 a ticket to the League Office, 1305 Franklin Street, #311, Oakland, CA 94612; for more information, call the office at 510 834-7640.

NEW MEMBERS

A very warm welcome is extended to the following new members:

Rosemary Hardy *Katherine Kocel*

DONATIONS IN NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

To the General Fund

Suzanne & Gordon Chun *Luanne Rogers*
Richard Friedman *Mary Rose Ryan*
Erika Kunkel *Sherry Smith*
Gabrielle Morris *Lassie & Lloyd Ulman*

To the LWVB Foundation

Eva & David Bradford *Marguerite Lemmon*
Klaus Dehlinger *Andrea Washburn*
Ruth Ganong *Lessly Wikle*
Erika Kunkel

To the Tribute Fund

Winifred McLaughlin
 In memory of Emma Lue Kopp

BOARD BRIEFS

JULY THROUGH DECEMBER 2004

July

- Approved supporting an event to increase awareness of the importance of K-12 education in making higher education a reality for more students.
- Voted to ask membership for approval of an increase in membership dues from \$55 to \$58 for full membership, and from \$25 to \$27 for second family membership.

August -- Board Retreat

September

- Voted to support Berkeley Measure *L*; to take no position on Measures *J* and *P*; and to support Albany's Measure *A*.
- Reluctantly accepted the resignation of the Education Committee Chair.
- Emergency Meeting - 9/21 - voted to take a stand on supporting Albany's Measure *G*, and to maintain no stand on Berkeley's Measure *M*.

October

- Voted to begin the new dues schedule on October 1.
- Voted to present one or two units of the *State Education Study*.

November

- Board agreed to purchase of new photocopier for the office.

December

- Voted to hold annual community lunch on August 29, at the most appropriate location in our area, and it will be a fundraiser.
- Agreed to participate in Berkeley High School's Community Service Fair on February 9.

— Jody Bush, Co-Secretary

CLEAN ELECTIONS

A DISCUSSION WITH ROBERT M. STERN

On Saturday, February 19, the Oakland League of Women Voters is presenting a program on Clean Elections, featuring Robert M. Stern, who is the President of the Center for Governmental Studies, a non-partisan research organization located in Los Angeles, which studies politics and media. He has been with the Center since 1983.

The event is co-sponsored by the LWVBAE and will take place in Meeting Room 1 at Oakland City Hall. There is free parking in the Clay St. garage behind the City Hall, and the venue is also very close to the 12th St. BART station.

Mr. Stern has written extensively on issues of campaign financing and has testified before congressional committees on this issue. He was the principal co-author of the Political Reform Act of 1974 (Proposition 9) which the California voters approved by a margin of 70%.

Mr. Stern has been general counsel for the California Fair Political Practices Commission and holds a law degree from Stanford University. He has taught courses on elections for UCLA and at the Law School.

In addition to Mr. Stern, Peggy Stinnett of the *Oakland Tribune* will be part of a panel to discuss with Mr. Stern, the elements of "Clean Elections."

An optional lunch with the speaker is available after the 10am-noon presentation.

Please call *Anne Spanier* at 510 595-6833 for further information.

VISIT THE WEBSITES OF BAY AREA LEAGUES

http://alameda.ca.lwvnet.org/	Alameda
http://www.lwvoakland.org/	Oakland
http://www.lwvpiedmont.org/	Piedmont
http://www.lwvsf.org/	San Francisco

BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY

Bay Area Regional Planning:

From Vision to Reality

Saturday, January 29, 2005

Metro Center Auditorium,
101 8th Street
Oakland, CA

(Across the street from the Lake
Merritt BART Station)

After the event there is a no-host lunch and a tour at the Fruitvale Transit Village to see how a well-planned regional transit station was achieved. Please RSVP to Martha Goralka (see next column) if you want to do the lunch and tour.

KEEPING THE LIGHTS ON

Friday, January 28, 2005

9 am to 4 pm

California Public Utilities Commission

*McAllister and Van Ness,
San Francisco
(across from City Hall)*

The LWVC Energy Study Committee Forum "Keeping the Lights On" will have the most significant decision-makers in the state as presenters.

Registration deadline: January 25.

For more details and to register, go to the LWVC website.

LWVC <http://www.ca.lwv.org/>

USEFUL WEBSITES

League Websites

LWV <http://www.lwv.org/>

LWVBA <http://www.lwvba-ca.org/>

LWVBAE <http://lwvbae.org/>

US House and Senate

<http://www.house.gov/>

<http://www.senate.gov/>

BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY PROGRAM

9:30 am Registration and refreshments

10 am — 1 pm Program

Keynote — *Making Regional Planning Work*

Ted Droettboom, Regional Planning Program Director,
ABAG-MTC Joint Policy Committee

Panel — *Alternative Models for Regional Planning*

Revan Tranter, former Executive Director of ABAG;

Will Travis, Executive Director, BCDC;

Nick Bollman, Director, California Center for Regional
Leadership

Panel — *Thinking Regionally, Acting Locally*

Four local elected officials' perspectives on the challenge
of implementing the regional vision and values at the local
level.

Sue Lampert, Councilmember, San Mateo;

Pamela Torliatt, Councilmember, Petaluma;

Nate Miley, Supervisor, Alameda County;

David Cortese, Councilmember, San José.

Cost \$10 per person. RSVP to Martha Goralka,
martha@goralka.com, or send checks payable to LWVBA
to Tam Hege, Treasurer, 80 Florada Ave. Piedmont CA

94610

COMING ATTRACTION IN MARCH

IRON JAWED ANGELS

LWVBAE is sponsoring the HBO-commissioned *Iron Jawed Angels* for a memorable League evening in early March, co-sponsored by other local organizations. This movie is about the women who in 1917 dared civil disobedience and its severe consequences to ensure that women would get the right to vote.

Hilary Swank, Angelica Houston, and Julia Ormond lead an inspired cast to tell the story of a defiant, brilliant, and unstoppable group of activist suffragists who fought for and won the right to vote for women in the United States.

See this movie and you'll never again take your right to vote for granted. Details will be in the March *VOTER*. Be sure to put this on your calendar and invite your friends.

— Jo Ann B. Price, Program VP

COMMUNITY COLLEGE NEWS

New Peralta Trustees

The November elections brought a majority of new members to the Peralta CC District Board of Trustees. Both of the members representing our three northern cities are new—Nicky Gonzalez Yuen in District 4, representing Emeryville, Berkeley west of the university, and Albany; and Cy Gulassa in District 6, representing the Berkeley and Oakland hills, and a swath of Berkeley north of the university.

As we have done before, we hope to meet with all the Peralta trustees individually later this spring. If you would like to participate in the interviews, call *Helene Lecar*, 549-9719

Agreement to explore land development at Laney aborted

One of the final acts of the outgoing board was to approve an agreement authorizing the Strategic Urban Development Alliance (SUDA) to have one-year exclusive rights to explore the development of land now occupied by the Laney College parking lot and the District Administration building, for long-term occupancy by major public institutions, such as government agencies, and/or medical facilities.

The proposal was on the November 23 agenda as an item for information only, but the sitting trustees chose to act on it, over the protests of incoming board members and Laney faculty and staff, who had not been consulted.

Shortly after the new board members took office, Chancellor Harris announced that he agreed to postpone contract talks with SUDA until the new board and administration had the opportunity to consider planning issues districtwide.

Possible League participation in Peralta student government elections

In response to a series of voting irregularities in student government elections last May, the District Office of Educational

Services drew up a Uniform Code for Associated Student Body Elections, which is slated to go before the board in February. The code proposes that the elections be held, and ballots counted, "with the assistance of neutral elections observers/workers, e.g., Student Activities staff, students, League of Women Voters." We have assisted at the Vista elections for the past three years. If this proposal passes, all campuses of the District will have neutral observers and ballot counters, and our sister Leagues in Alameda, Oakland, and Piedmont may choose to participate as well.

More money for Vista students

Student governments at the three existing campuses—Laney, Merritt, and Alameda—are funded largely through profits from their bookstores. Vista's government, with no bookstore, or other means of raising money, has been limping along with an allocation of \$1,000 per year, not even enough to send a representative to statewide student government meetings.

This fall, the Peralta District student government agreed to pool its income and reserve \$20,000 for Vista until such time as it can begin to raise its own money in its new building.

Less money for poor students

Federal Pell Grants enable the poorest students to stay in school. This year, the formula used to determine how much each family can afford to pay has been recalculated to restrict eligibility. Nationwide, some 1.3 million students will receive lower grants and an additional 89,000 will lose Pell funding altogether. Here in California, in 2003-04, some 145,868 community college students received about \$564 million in Pell grants. In 2005-06, when the new definitions go into effect, about 1,500 CC students will be ineligible altogether, and another 76,200 will get only reduced funding.

— *Helene Lecar*, Community College Committee
Chair



LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS
of Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville
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Berkeley, CA 94702-1509

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CALENDAR

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Just fill in the blanks below, clip this coupon and mail it with your check for \$58 Annual Dues made out to:

LWVBAE

**1414 UNIVERSITY AVENUE, SUITE D
BERKELEY, CA 94702-1509**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel. Day: _____ Eve: _____

FAX: _____ E-mail: _____

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 extent allowed by law.

JANUARY

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|-----------|----------|--|--|
| 28 Friday | 9am-4pm | Keeping the Lights On | See www.ca.lwv.org |
| 29 Sat. | 10am-1pm | Bay Area League Day | See www.lwvba-ca.org |
| 30 Sun. | 1:30pm | <i>Blythe Spirit</i> (LWVO Fundraiser) | LWVO, 834-7640 |

FEBRUARY

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|-----------|-----------|--|----------------------------|
| 1 Tues. | 7-9pm | Civics Education Study
2339 Edwards St. | <i>Gardner</i> , 548-5292 |
| 2 Wed. | 7-9pm | Board Meeting, LWVBAE Office | <i>S. Smith</i> , 548-1769 |
| 3 Thurs. | 7-9pm | LWVC Program Planning Meeting
LWVBAE Office | <i>Price</i> , 548-5206 |
| 4 Friday | noon | Deadline for March <i>VOTER Barker</i> | 532-5773 |
| 9 Wed. | | BHS Community Service Fair | <i>Lecar</i> , 549-9719 |
| 14 Mon. | 7:30pm | Environmental Concerns
1450 Hawthorne Terr. (<i>McLaughlin</i>) | <i>Stone</i> , 549-0959 |
| 15 Tues. | 7-9pm | Civics Education Study
2339 Edwards St. | <i>Gardner</i> , 548-5292 |
| 17 Thurs. | 7:30pm | Action Committee
1419 Grant (<i>Watts</i>) | <i>Safir</i> , 524-9088 |
| 19 Sat. | 10am-noon | Clean Elections (Co-sponsored by LWVO/LWBAE)
Oakland City Hall | <i>Spanier</i> , 595-6833 |
| 21 Mon. | | LWVBAE OFFICE CLOSED FOR PRESIDENTS DAY | |