



The VOTER

LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS
of BERKELEY, ALBANY and EMERYVILLE

President: Sherry Smith

February 2006

Editors: Chapman, Smith & Brandes

CALIFORNIA'S ENERGY CRISIS HOW WOULD YOU DECIDE?

COME TO THE FEBRUARY ENERGY CONSENSUS UNITS TO MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

Unit 1

Wednesday, February 15, 7 to 9 p.m., 260 The Uplands, Berkeley (*Fran Packard*)
(or) Thursday, February 16, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Albany Library

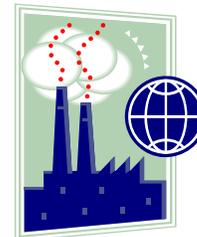
Unit 2

Wednesday, February 22, 7 to 9 p.m., 1450 Hawthorne Terrace, Berkeley (*Sylvia McLaughlin*)
(or) Thursday, February 23, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Albany Library
At the Albany Library, refreshments and drinks will be provided or bring a bag lunch

California is in an energy race to determine its short-term and long-term future. New public policy is needed yesterday to help decision makers make the right energy choices to assure that our state's ever-increasing population will continue to have dependable, reasonably-priced, and environmentally-friendly energy sources into the future.

The League of Women Voters of California believes it necessary that we have a well-thought-out set of policies that allow us to contribute to the state legislative and regulatory discussions that are currently

underway and that will result in the adoption of new public policy on energy in our state. Yet the League's present array of energy policies doesn't cover all the complex issues and decisions that we need to address on the many aspects involved and to make the League's voice heard.



So, come to the local Energy Units to help LWVBAE speak with a unified voice on what new policies we want the LWVC's Energy Position to contain. Meanwhile, to help sharpen your awareness of the conflicts and anomalies we're currently facing, consider the hypothetical situations on the next page. The decisions are not easy, as you will see. Which priorities should rule? *(continued on page 2)*

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SCENARIO 1

A big city has an aging, polluting power plant. It can only close this plant if it can get affordable replacement energy from elsewhere. This will require adding new power lines. Possible routes for the power lines are all on earthquake fault lines:

- through highly built-up communities, some poor, some rich;
- through a corridor of pristine park woodlands and open space with endangered species;
- along highways built on aging levees in a delta area with public water project canals.

SCENARIO 2

A state is running out of options for new energy sources. A coastal area with rich natural resources and scenic beauty faces proposals to build facilities that would supply the energy:

- a windmill farm off the coast with no greenhouse gases or pollution;
- liquefied natural gas wells off the coast with less greenhouse gases than current sources.

Neighbors, fishermen, and environmentalists object that the windmills will mar the scenic beauty, destroy rich fisheries and ocean environments, and that the Liquefied Petroleum Gas wells are sure to cause destructive pollution of rare coastal creatures and environmental treasures.

CALIFORNIA ENERGY CRISIS:

THE VOCABULARY YOU NEED TO KNOW

Investment-owned utilities (IOUs). Our state is served by three major IOUs: Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), Southern California Edison (SCE) and San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E).

Deregulation: In 1996, California's enactment of AB 1890 ended the protected-monopoly status of these three IOUs, which were required to sell most of their largest power generating plants and submit their transmission lines to control of the California Independent System Operator (CAISO). Competition was thus invited into the marketplace.

Three principal state agencies now regulate energy in California:

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) since 1880s has analyzed the detailed applications by the utilities for rate changes and set final rates that consumers are charged.

The California Energy Commission (CEC) was established in 1974 to forecast energy needs, license power plants, and promote conservation and alternative energy resources.

The California Independent System Operator (CAISO) was created in 1996 by AB 1890. A not-for-profit public corporation, it operates and oversees operations of transmission systems to ensure reliability of the transmission grid.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) regulates natural gas and hydropower projects; and interstate transmission of natural gas, oil and electricity.

Electricity Generation: A process for the production of electric power; or one way of referring to the output of a power plant. Hydropower was the main source of electricity for California during the first half of the 20th century and now provides 12 to 18% of the state's annual needs. Plants run by natural gas provide 57%; nuclear power provides 7%; coal-burning plants provide 6%; wind, 2%, biomass, 2% and solar, 1%.

Electricity Transmission/Distribution: The process of transporting electricity over high-voltage wires from the generation source to the point of consumption or, more usually, to a substation for voltage reduction and further distribution.

Pat Kuhi, Energy Study Co-Chair



WITH LEAGUE SUPPORT, "CALIFORNIA CLEAN MONEY AND FAIR ELECTIONS ACT" IS LAUNCHED AND CAN PASS IN THIS LEGISLATIVE SESSION

"This is the reform that will make all other reforms possible", said Assemblymember Loni Hancock (D-14th Assembly District), speaking of AB 583, the California Clean Money and Fair Elections Act, which would provide competitive public financing to legislative and statewide candidates who qualify by showing a broad base of support.

The League of Women Voters of California and local leagues all over the state are supporting Assemblymember Hancock's bill, which allows candidates to compete more equitably for public office.

The League has been working closely for several years with the California Clean Money Campaign, California Common Cause, the Greenlining Institute, and other reform organizations on this approach to campaign finance reform. This legislative session's version of the bill has incorporated several concepts that were proposed by the League. It is based on the highly successful Clean Money systems in Arizona and Maine, which are allowing voters to take control of politics because voters, not special interests, pay for election campaigns.

You can learn more about AB 583 at <http://www.caclean.org/progress/legislation.php>.

At about the time you receive this issue of the VOTER, the Assembly is about to vote or has just voted on the bill. As the bill goes to the Senate side for its consideration, it is important that our State Senator, Don Perata, commit himself to its support and passage. When this VOTER was being assembled, Sen. Perata had not yet announced his support. We urge you to telephone his Sacramento office at (916) 445-6577 and leave a message asking him to co-sponsor the bill and to vote for it when it comes up for Senate consideration.

You can also sign the online petition for AB 583. It will be used to show Sacramento leaders how many people want public financing for California: <http://www.caclean.org/petition/>

POINTS TO MAKE WHEN YOU TELEPHONE OR WRITE:

- Please vote yes on AB 583, the California Clean Money and Fair Elections Act.
- Clean Money works in Arizona and Maine, and California needs it too.
- Clean money increased both voter turnout and confidence in their governments in Arizona and Maine.
- A Clean Money system lets new people with good ideas run for office.
- Elected officials don't have to worry that voters and the press will second-guess their votes based on who contributed to their election campaign.
- Clean Money is popular with voters -- in Arizona 67% of voters approve of their Clean Money system.
- Clean Money helps candidates spend time talking with voters, rather than having to concentrate on talking to donors.
- 96 percent of Clean Money candidates in Maine said they were satisfied with the Clean Money system.

As if the results of November's Special Election and the campaign finance scandals from Washington on down weren't convincing enough, there is new evidence that the public is fed up with politics as usual and campaign fundraising as usual. The corrupting influence of huge sums of money on our election system threatens the democratic process, say 70 percent of the respondents to a recent poll by the Public Policy Institute of California. Only 24 percent of the respondents trusted their government officials to represent their interests.

(continued on page 4)

(Clean Money continued from page 3)

KEEP THE CALIFORNIA LEAGUE INFORMED:
Send an e-mail to advocacy@lwvc.org to let them know what action you have taken and any responses you receive.

Everyone who has participated in rallies, hearings, and Town Hall meetings has come away convinced that this is the year California voters can buy back their government. Write and call your legislators, tell your friends around the state to do that as well, take action when requested, attend rallies, send money to supporting organizations. Get involved, and together we'll get AB 583 passed.

Sherry Smith, President

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

It has been my pleasure to serve with the truly wonderful Board of Directors and officers that you, the members of LWVBAE, have been kind enough to elect over the last couple of years.

At the Annual Membership Meeting that will be held in late May or early June this year, we will again be electing a slate of officers and Board members, and we need your help, as always.

Ruthann Taylor is the Chair of the Nominating Committee, and she has an excellent group to serve with her: *Eloise Bodine, Suzanne Chun, Barbara Nelson, and Karen Nelson*. They are now engaging in their High Season, recruiting volunteers for the myriad tasks that are performed by those who serve on the Board, and many who are not Board members.

Here are the many opportunities that exist, large, small and in-between in terms of time expenditure, for **you** (that's in boldface) to serve our League. None of this, of course, is done all alone. The entire Board and committees all work in groups and shifting commitments, so virtually all these tasks are done in a cooperative and collegial setting.

The Nominating Committee is looking for people to head the off-Board committees, like environmental concerns, annual community

luncheon, community college liaison, health care concerns, education, and the nominating committee itself. They will be recruiting people for portfolios that can be held on-Board or off-Board, like juvenile justice, women's issues, and housing issues consultants; liaison to the LWV Bay Area; communications and Web manager, and liaison to the Library.

Officers include Vice Presidents for Outreach and Development; Voter Services; Action; Program; and Administration. Also on the Board are the Recording Secretary; Treasurer; VOTER editor; and President. Each of the Vice Presidents oversees positions such as donations secretary, election services candidates' nights coordinator, speakers bureau chair, voter registration affidavit coordinator, and office volunteer recruiter. And there is some flexibility in subjects taken by consultants and committee chairs. If you have a civic interest that is not mentioned above, we can have you follow that as a member of the Board or in an off-Board position.

There are a maximum of 20 Board positions under our LWVBAE By-Laws---up to 14 (including Officers) selected by the members at the Annual Meeting, and up to six more selected by the Board. We can be most effective if we have as close to that number as possible serving on the Board.

Many of you will be receiving calls and having conversations with the various Nominating Committee folk. Say "yes" when they call, and you'll make their day and you'll have the pleasure of knowing the League from the inside out and all the way around. It is widely acknowledged that we perform a vital and well-regarded function in our communities, but we cannot be effective without your help. There are so many ways you can choose to do it!

Come to think of it, don't wait until you get the Nominating call---telephone *Ruthann Taylor* at 527-0673 (and call back if the line is busy!) to see how you can be part of the League Team.

Gratefully, *Sherry Smith, President*

"SUNSHINE WEEK" WILL PROMOTE OPEN MEETINGS AND PUBLIC RECORDS

"Sunshine Week", promoting open government and protecting citizens' "right to know", is set for the week of March 13. The Alameda County Council of the Leagues of Women Voters is joining with Californians Aware (The Center for Public Forum Rights) and other organizations to present workshops during that week on the Ralph M. Brown Act, the California Public Records Act, and other legislation enabling open government and Constitutional speech protections.

A committee comprising members from each of the seven Leagues in Alameda County is planning Sunshine Week events, all designed to familiarize citizens and public officials with open government legislation and procedures.

The March issue of the *VOTER* will provide more details about how you can get involved.

Sherry Smith, President

The League notes with sorrow the passing of Larry McLaughlin, husband of *Winnie McLaughlin*, on December 5, 2005, at the age of 81. Larry was a commercial artist, owned a sign-painting company, was an orchid grower and hybridizer, artist, poet, and a member of the San Francisco Regional Mensa.

Our condolences to Winnie and their many friends in the League.

NEW MEMBERS

Our warmest welcome to our newest members:

Joseph Bilota
Julia Craig
Julia Rossi

Helen Burke
Jerome Fishman

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER DONATIONS TO THE GENERAL FUND

<i>Diane Akers</i>	<i>Robert Arnold</i>
<i>Regina Beatus</i>	<i>Nancy & Peter Bickel</i>
<i>Virginia Blackledge</i>	<i>Linda Burden</i>
<i>Patricia Byrnes</i>	<i>Suzanne Chun</i>
<i>Marylyn Coons</i>	<i>Jane & Tom Coulter</i>
<i>Violet Feinauer</i>	<i>Edith Gladstone</i>
<i>Bruce J. Harris</i>	<i>Constance Holton</i>
<i>Mary Jacobson</i>	<i>Adeline & Stanley Kahn</i>
<i>Patricia Kates</i>	<i>Harris Kennedy</i>
<i>Helene Lecar</i>	<i>Yvonne Koshland</i>
<i>Louise Larson</i>	<i>Charlotte Lichterman</i>
<i>Linda Maio</i>	<i>Allie Norton</i>
<i>Patricia Pope</i>	<i>Luanne Rogers</i>
<i>Todd Smith</i>	<i>George Strauss</i>
<i>Ruthann Taylor</i>	<i>June Tichinin</i>
<i>Lassie & Lloyd Ulman</i>	<i>Andrea Washburn</i>
<i>Masako Yamada</i>	

TO THE LWVB FOUNDATION TRIBUTE FUND

<i>Eloise Bodine</i>	In memory of Anne Wallach
<i>Doris Fine</i>	In memory of Anne Wallach
<i>Ora Huth</i>	In memory of Harriet Nathan
<i>Miriam Hawley</i>	In memory of Anne Wallach
<i>Gabrielle Morris</i>	In memory of Harriet Nathan

TO THE LWVB FOUNDATION

<i>Barbara Alesandrini</i>	<i>Robert Arnold</i>
<i>Gilbert Bendix</i>	<i>Peter Bickel</i>
<i>Eloise Bodine</i>	<i>Eva Brecher</i>
<i>Suzanne Chun</i>	<i>Monica Eisenbud</i>
<i>Stephanie Friedman</i>	<i>Linda Gerson</i>
<i>Mary Jacobson</i>	<i>Marlyce Johnson</i>
<i>Ruth Ganong</i>	<i>Dorothy Jamison</i>
<i>Marilyn Johnson</i>	<i>Wolf & Erika Kunkel</i>
<i>Helene Lecar</i>	<i>Evelyn Light</i>
<i>Edward Nathan</i>	<i>Florence C. Pat</i>
<i>Meredith Stout</i>	<i>George Strauss</i>
<i>Ellen Turiel</i>	<i>Lassie Ulman</i>
<i>Paul Warner</i>	<i>Doris White</i>

TO THE EVA ALEXIS BANSNER FUND FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

David Coleman III

Prepared by *Lenora Young*, Donations Secretary



LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS
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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.

CALENDAR

Berkeley addresses unless otherwise indicated

JANUARY

26 Thurs. 7-9 pm League Program Planning, Office *J. Price, 548-5206*
27 Fri. 9:30-2:30 pm Bay Area League Day: "Why the Bay Matters", First Unitarian Church, Oakland *S. Smith, 548-1769*

FEBRUARY

1 Wed. 7-9 pm Board Meeting, LWVBAE Office *S. Smith, 548-1769*
3 Fri. noon Deadline for March VOTER *B. Chapman, 527-0827*
13 Mon. 7:30-9:30 pm Environmental Concerns *C. Stone, 549-0959*
15 Wed. 7-9 pm Energy Study Unit Meeting (Part 1)* *P. Kuhi, 526-6589*
260 The Uplands (*Fran Packard*)
16 Thurs. 11:30-1:30 pm Energy Study Unit Meeting (Part 1)* *P. Kuhi, 526-6589*
Albany Library, 1247 Marin Avenue
20 Mon. League office closed for President's Day
22 Wed. 7-9 pm Energy Study Unit Meeting (Part 2)* *P. Kuhi, 526-6589*
1450 Hawthorne Terrace (*Sylvia McLaughlin*)
23 Thurs. 11:30-1:30 pm Energy Study Unit Meeting (Part 2)* *P. Kuhi, 526-6589*
Albany Library, 1247 Marin Avenue

*Members should attend both Part 1 and Part 2 of the Energy Study presentations. Each part will be presented in a morning and an identical evening session, for your scheduling convenience.

MARCH

1 Wed. 7-9 pm Board Meeting, LWVBAE Office *S. Smith, 548-1769*
3 Fri. noon Deadline for April VOTER *B. Chapman, 527-0827*
13 Mon. 7:30-9:30 pm Environmental Concerns *C. Stone, 549-0959*
13-17 Sunshine Week (see page 5)

TO BE SCHEDULED IN MARCH: Unit Meetings for the Civics Education Study. For further information, *Jinky Gardner, 548-5292*