

# The VOTER

LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS  
of BERKELEY, ALBANY  
and EMERYVILLE



1414 University Avenue, Suite D, Berkeley, CA 94702-1509 Tel. 510/843-8824

President: Jo Ann B. Price

March, 2000

Editor: Bob Hawley

Vote on March 7! Vote on March 7! Vote on March 7!  
California Presidential Primary  
20 State Ballot Measures - 2 Alameda County Ballot Measures

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League of Women Voters of California  
Rolls out Smart Voter Website for March 7 Primary

State- of- the- Art Citizenship from LWVC

LWVC's award-winning comprehensive **Smart Voter** election web site is online for the March primary. This nonpartisan information includes a brief biography of each candidate, along with their three top priorities, position papers, endorsements, and their photos. **Smart Voter** also has the League's widely-acclaimed nonpartisan and impartial Pros & Cons on the state ballot measures and local polling locations. **Smart Voter** is located at

<[www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org)>.

An established election-oriented site since 1996, **Smart Voter's** partners include the California Secretary of State's office and county election officers. Smart Voter links to many diverse election sites and newspaper articles. Election results will be available, too. Smart Voter, a user-friendly site, is truly one-stop shopping for the voter.

Voters ask: "Which candidates will be on my ballot?", "What measures will be on my ballot?", and "Where do I go to vote?" With a quick click of the mouse, Smart Voter's "My ballot" feature displays candidates and ballot issues unique to the entered address. Click on <[www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org)> and see for yourself. The candidates running in this March election are those running in national, state, local, and judicial races, although the offices vary from place to place. -Compiled from LWC by *Phoebe Watts*, Voter Service

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Fax: 510/843-8828 E-mail: [lwvbae@pacbell.net](mailto:lwvbae@pacbell.net) WebSite: [home.pacbell.net/lwvbae](http://home.pacbell.net/lwvbae)

## President's Column

### Register Voters & Provide Nonpartisan Information!

- and

### The Importance of Voting With the League!

Given that the League never supports or opposes candidates, the League of Women Voters has two distinct missions at election time: 1. register voters and educate them with accurate, clear, nonpartisan information on the issues; and 2. mount action on behalf of those issues the League has studied, has a position on, and has decided to take a stand on. These two sets of activities are and must be kept completely separate. How is this done?

The League has a longstanding tradition of researching, writing, and making available the pros and cons of all state and local measures on a given ballot. This service to California's voters has been well-received for many years and is highly respected. Based on this information and on an in-League publication called "In Depth", each local League Speakers Bureau trains and assigns Leaguers to speak to community groups, when requested, about the current ballot measures. It is a challenge at each election to find enough Leaguers who have the time to be trained and then go out on speaking assignments. LWVBAE has been fortunate to find members who have shouldered this responsibility at each election. This March we are grateful to *Eloise Bodine* and *Jane Coulter* for taking up the mantle of *Meda Rechen* and organizing this effort, and to our members who are fulfilling the speaking engagements. For the first time, this California Primary 2000 League information will be available statewide on a county-by-county basis on LWV's Smart Voter web site (see page 1).

As for the measures the League has taken a stand on, that comes under our Action wing. LWVBAE's Action Vice President organizes members to make the League's stands in support or opposition to ballot measures known to the voters. This is done by letters-to-the-editor, speaking to community groups, attending rallies, distributing literature, and joining with other like-minded groups to take action and let the voters know the League's concerns and reasons for doing so. During this Primary election, we thank

-(continued in next column)

## Board Briefs

The Board met at the Emery Bay Clubhouse on Wednesday morning, February 2. Opening announcements included a report that many guests came to the 2000 League Open House on January 29. Mention was also made of both the Women in Action Lobby Day in Sacramento on April 11 and the Mothers Day 2000, "Million Mom March", in Washington, D.C. on May 14.

The Treasurer's report was discussed and that we have a healthy cash balance was noted.

Interviews have been held with some city council members in each of our three cities and more are planned.

It was decided to buy a small television set and VCR so that video tapes about local governmental functions that we made for our TV/Video Project can be used for educational purposes such as small group discussions.

The Board approved the National Programming Report that was prepared following UNIT meetings and it has been sent to the LWVUS office.

-*Violet Feinauer*, Board Secretary

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*Lois Brubeck*, Action VP, and the members who are championing the League's stands on the March ballot measures.

LWVBAE is proud of the role the League of Women Voters plays at election time to help make democracy work for everyone. If you, as a Leaguer, want to play a more active role in the November Presidential election, we welcome your input and your involvement. Please suggest new locations to register voters, both on an ongoing and temporary basis; and new groups for the Speakers Bureau Leaguers to address. We also need computer data entry volunteers for the Alameda County Smart Voter web site, and members who want to become League activists on the issues we support or oppose.

Thank you all who have been working hard for the League on this March Primary, and welcome all who want to get involved for November. We need you and encourage a call from you at any time!

-J o A nn

## Environmental Concerns

**Monday, March 13, 7:15 pm,  
1340 Arch Street, Berkeley  
Recycling in the 21st Century**

Recycling has become second nature to most of us, but are we as effective as we can be? What progress has been made since the League's 1975 study that spurred on the first Berkeley recycling program? What about compost, yard debris, wood waste, window glass, batteries and other items?

From her days as Sierra Club recycling editor and Denver Public Schools recycling program teacher to her present days of learning how to avoid compost rodents in the city, *Gail Schickele* will present an update on Bay Area recycling, with a focus on local collections.

*-Gail Schickele, Environmental Concerns,*

## Berkeley General Plan Workshops

The following public workshops are being held on the Berkeley General Plan, all on Wednesdays at 7 pm. Members are encouraged to attend.

- February 23, **Housing**, Trinity Methodist Church, 2362 Bancroft Way
- March 8, **Economic Development**, West Berkeley Senior Center, 1900 6th Street
- April 12, **Transportation**, South Berkeley Senior Center, 2939 Ellis Street
- May 10, **Land Use**, Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda
- June 14, **Urban Design, Historic Preservation and Community Safety**, St. Clements Episcopal Church, 2837 Claremont Boulevard.

*-Lois Brubeck, Action VP*

## Part-time League Job Opening

We are looking for a part-time Administrative Assistant for the LWVBAE office ten hours per week (Monday to Friday between 9 am and 5 pm). Key duties are maintaining the office in good order, including equipment, supplies, and computer (Windows 95), helping League members produce documents and mail the *Voter*, and responding effectively to members of the public. To apply, send a brief resume to the LWVBAE office by mail or FAX.

*-Ginette Polak, Administrative VP*

## Speaker Series

**Thursday, March 16, 10:15 to noon  
Economic Development in Berkeley  
Albany Public Library, Marin & Masonic Avenues,  
Edith Stone Room**

Bill Lambert, manager of Berkeley's Office of Economic Development, will speak to us about the challenges involved in expanding business and job opportunities here. The City has adopted an "Economic Development Strategy," which outlines the services provided by the department to the business community in general, as well as to target sites, in particular.

The Economic Development staff also manages the City's various arts programs, working to integrate the arts into economic development programming. We will hear about these efforts and others, including the relationship between economic development and other elements of Berkeley's General Plan, including environmental protection and housing.

Please join us; we all have a lot to learn about this subject. The Edith Stone Room is next to the parking area at the rear of the library, which has lots of parking, is wheelchair accessible, and is served by AC Transit just a block away. If you need a ride, call and I'll find you one.

*-Jean Safir, Program VP*

## Good News for Scrip Users!

**Safeway e-Scrip is now available  
for League members and friends**

The Safeway Scrip program which contributed considerably to our income was discontinued several months ago. It has been replaced by e-Scrip. If you would like to join this program all you have to do is fill out a registration form listing your Safeway Club Card and Credit Card numbers (if you prefer to pay by credit card). Your purchases are then registered electronically and a percentage depending upon your monthly total is credited to LWVBAE. An annual fee of \$10 will be added to the cost of your first purchase.

We encourage you to enroll in this program. Registration forms, lists of participating merchants (in addition to Safeway) and more details are available at our office.

*-Eva Brecher, Scrip Chair*

## Donors Through January

### General Fund

<i>Ellen Barth</i>	<i>Winnie McLaughlin<sup>2</sup></i>
<i>Mim &amp; Bob Hawley</i>	<i>Patricia Pope</i>
<i>Louise Larson<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Jo Ann B. Price</i>
<i>Helene Lecar</i>	<i>Marjorie Rubinow</i>
<i>Ruth Maguire</i>	<i>Roberta Silverstein</i>

### Foundation

<i>Eloise Bodine<sup>3</sup></i>	<i>Alma Gardner</i>
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### In Memory Of:

- 1 - *Meda Rechen*
- 2 - *Meda & Jeb Rechen*
- 3 - *Ruth Rosenfeld & Jane McKenzie*

## Welcome New Members:

<i>Denny Abrams</i>	<i>Allan T. Maris</i>
<i>Marie LaGarde</i>	<i>Betty L. Miller</i>

## Personals

*Harriet Nathan*, LWV Berkeley President from 1955 to 1956, was recently honored by her co-workers at the Regional Oral History Office of the Bancroft Library and the Institute of Governmental Studies on her retirement from a lifetime affiliation with the University of California at Berkeley, and was presented the Berkeley Award. LWVBAE President, *Jo Ann Price*, is back and busy with League activities following a twelve-day hiatus in Italy visiting with her son and his family. *Kitty McLean* is at home and doing very well following major surgery. *Hugh McLean* was one of the two LWVBAE members whose letters to the Sunday Chronicle Book Review editor appeared in January. *Hugh* claimed in his letter that a certain book reviewer's main qualification is that he once wrote a book. *Kate S. Elman's* letter praised the work of Gellett Burgess, "an old friend of mine from childhood". It was pleasant to see Louise Larson looking well and hearty during a recent stop in our office. *Janet Strothman* is healing well after a fall and trip (pun not intended) to the emergency room. Your writer thanks the many League members who made the 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my birthday so very special with their good wishes and cards.

-*Eleanor Cox*, Corresponding Secretary

## Environmental Concerns

### TRANSDEF VS. the MTC

Transportation Solutions Defense and Education Fund (TRANSDEF) president David Schonbrunn spoke to the Environmental Concerns group January 10 on the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's ineffectiveness and some solutions to growing traffic congestion in the Bay Area. Mill Valley-based TRANSDEF is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization dedicated to environmentally appropriate transportation solutions.

TRANSDEF holds that MTC's 1998 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is deficient because it projects a disturbing decline in the quality of life in the Bay Area. The plan projects a 249% increase in average traffic congestion, more average daily driving and long distance commuting, less transit use, and a sprawling 32% increase over the currently developed land of the Bay Area.

TRANSDEF recommended that the MTC study the alternatives as suggested in the Plan's EIR, including an increase in parking and solo driver costs and a decrease in transit costs; transit-oriented development that has the least regional environmental impacts; and a gateway alternative that discourages long-distance driving by investing in transit when it is parallel to a congested highway; e.g., not building a Caldecott Tunnel 4th bore; funding the NWP railroad instead of widening Hwy 101 between Novato and Petaluma; investing in the Altamont rail facility.

Schonbrunn said the MTC projects \$88 billion to be spent over the next 20 years, with \$2 billion for ferries and terminals. Yet, if the RTP's projected 52% of the population will go to the fringes of the Bay Area, are the ferries needed? Schonbrunn said that "Ferries are not useful where the growth is happening. They are not the answer to our transportation problem. The problem is land use. The fundamental problem in transportation is that there is completely irresponsible land-use planning." Schonbrunn said there are 29 different agencies, including the Ferry Authority, involved with Bay Area transportation, but there is no one on the Commission who has a regional view. Of the RTP he said, "This is going to benefit a lot of people but not the public."

Emeryville Council member Ken Bukowski, who attended the meeting, suggested a transportation convention every two years.

-*Gail Schickele*, Environmental Concerns

**LWVBAE Action**  
**State Issues on March 7 Ballot,**  
**Especially Education and Juvenile Justice**

When the League acts, people listen. The Action Committee urges you to inform your friends, neighbors, and colleagues about the League's stands on the March 7 state ballot propositions. (See January 2000 Special Issue on the March 7 Primary election.) The League has recommendations on the following propositions in addition to the four discussed below:

**Yes On -**

- 12 Park Bonds
- 13 Water Bonds
- 14 Library Bonds
- 26 Simple Majority for Local School Bonds

**No On -**

- 20 State Lottery
- 21 Juvenile Crime Act
- 22 Limit on Marriages
- 25 Campaign Finance Reform
- 27 Congressional Term Limit Declaration
- 28 Repeal of Prop. 10/Tobacco Surtax

As a result of LWVC's Juvenile Justice Study, California's local Leagues reached consensus on the urgent need for early intervention, as well as for services for at-risk youth and foster children. Because of LWVC's 1999-2001 emphasis on education and the new sections on its position on juvenile justice, the Action Committee particularly calls your attention to the following four propositions.

**YES on Prop. 14 California Reading and Literacy Improvement and Public Library Construction and Renovation Bond Act of 2000**

This bond measure will allow the state to issue \$350 million for public library construction and renovation. For new libraries, the state will give priority to libraries that have entered into cooperative agreements with school districts for the joint use of facilities. For remodeling or renovation, priority will be given to projects in areas where public schools have inadequate facilities to support access to computers and other educational technology. California ranks last in public funding for libraries. The funds cannot be used for books and library materials, but will encourage private fund-raising for these needs.

-(continued in next column)

**NO on Prop. 21 Gang Violence and Juvenile Crime Prevention Act Initiative Statute - (Juvenile Crime Initiative)**

This would make significant changes to both the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems. It would not only make it more likely that juveniles would be thrown into adult courts and prisons, but also would seriously jeopardize funding for prevention and early intervention programs. The measure provides inadequate protections for juveniles accused of crimes and no funds to support the huge costs it imposes on state and local government.

**YES on Prop. 26 School Facilities. Local Majority Vote. Bonds, Taxes, Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute**

This would enable localities to fund school facility improvements by lowering the requirement for approval of local school bond measures from 2/3 to a majority vote. To qualify, a bond measure must not allow bonds to be used for salaries or other operating expenses; must require annual performance and financial audits; and must require inclusion of a specific list of projects after consideration of safety, class size reduction, and information technology needs.

**NO on Prop. 28 Repeal of Proposition 10 Tobacco Surtax Initiative Statute**

This would roll back the \$0.50 per pack tax on cigarettes and equivalent increase in the state tax on tobacco products incurred when Proposition 10 was passed by the voters in 1998. This tax has enabled serious and careful planning in each California county for children from prenatal to five years old. The initiative also called for community-based programs to educate the public on the dangers caused by smoking and other tobacco use by pregnant women to themselves and to infants and young children, and the dangers of secondhand smoke to children. \$607 million was collected in the first year, most of which was held so that proposed programs can now start to be funded. All this will be eliminated should this measure pass.

We refer you to LWVC's "Action Guide", listed at <http://ca.lwv.org/lwvonly/> for more background on these and all the propositions on which LWVC has taken a stand for the March 7, 2000, primary election.

-Lois Brubeck, Action VP

## LWVBA: Legislative Watch

The League of Women Voters of the Bay Area is following legislative proposals and other activity in Sacramento directly related to measures proposed in the consensus questions to strengthen our regional planning positions. All of the initiatives listed below were referred to by speakers at Bay Area League Day (BALD) on January 28. A full report on that event will appear in next month's *Voter*.

- State Treasurer Phil Angelides' policy to invest state dollars only in projects that meet smart growth objectives (infill, more compact, higher density, mixed use, transit-oriented development, natural resource protection) is being implemented through criteria developed by the California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank for funding bank loans to help revitalize economically struggling communities and neighborhoods, support sustainable development and sound environmental practices, and make wise use of public resources.
- Assembly Speaker Villaraigosa's Commission on State and Local Government Finance is considering measures to stabilize local government revenue sources and provide funding for integrated state-regional-local planning, including pooling resources at the regional or sub-regional level to encourage and facilitate regional decision making. The Commission's final recommendations -coming soon- will be incorporated into legislation.

Bills introduced in one house (Assembly or Senate) in 1999 must have been passed to the other house by January 31 to remain alive. The following bills address issues that LWVBA has been following and has commented upon at federal or state hearings. All have met the January 31 deadline, and we will continue to monitor them and watch for opportunities to comment with LWVC approval.

- AB 185 (Hertzberg): Reorganizes the statutes relating to the operation of LAFCOs preparatory to substantial reforms contained in the recommendations of the Commission on Local Governance for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Some of the recommendations are responsive to LWVBA comments presented to the Commission last April.
- AB 1648 (Aroner): Provides for a study of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)

- by the Institute of Transportation Studies at UC Berkeley to include a review of MTC's voting membership; its designation as a metropolitan planning organization (MPO); its priorities and criteria for programming and distribution of federal transportation funds; the impact of MTC's decisions on land use and social equity, including impacts on low-income and minority communities within the region; and the proportional representation for MTC based on the population within the jurisdiction. These were all recommended by LWVBA and many other regional advocacy groups in a public hearing on re-designation of MTC as an MPO, held by federal transportation agency officials in June 1999.

Two of the BALD speakers, Contra Costa County Supervisor DeSaulnier and Assemblyman Torlaksen, mentioned the intent of the Legislature to broaden the scope of the study to include the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Association of Bay Area Governments. This touches on many of our regional positions and we will be watching it closely.

- AB 1219 (Kuehl): Requires a city or county, prior to approval of a final subdivision map for a residential development of over 200 lots, to require written verification from a water service provider that water utility service to meet the needs of the project will be provided through existing capacity or planned expansion that will be available to meet the needs of the project. Provisions of the law require closer coordination between local general plans and a public water system's water management plans.
- SB 632 (Perata): This bill is a trailer to the 1999 legislation (SB 428 (Perata)) creating the San Francisco Bay Area Water Transit Authority (BAWTA), providing funding for the Implementation Operations Plan and specifies requirements for Plan and EIR content, requirements for MTC's involvement, and powers of BAWTA. LWVBA will be watching the many regional planning and governance issues in this one.

LWVBA will keep you posted as these bills move through the legislative process.

-Yvonne San Jule, LWVBA Liaison

## Education Alert:

BUSD

### "Retention and Promotion Policy" Summer Plans

The Education Committee has been closely monitoring Berkeley Unified School District's plans for implementing the new state Retention and Promotion Policy, which bans "social" promotions. The District is supposed to provide opportunities for all students to have the help they need to acquire mastery over the content mandated by the state's new, stricter academic standards. We see trouble ahead.

Catch-up programs for the students who aren't able to meet the standards center on academic tutoring in after-school programs and in summer school. Last year's 4-week summer school offerings, however, were neither long enough, nor well-enough planned, nor budgeted to provide the kind of intensive, small-group personalized instruction necessary to help such youngsters succeed.

The Summer School Task Force to plan this year's program met only once during the fall semester. The group generated some excellent ideas, but planning seems woefully behind schedule. For the District to ensure that there are enough teachers, spaces and materials in place, it must identify potential summer school students by April at the latest. As we go to press in early February, neither plans, budgets, nor schedules exist to improve over last summer's performance.

The other programs to carry the District's remediation efforts are supposed to be focused academic components added to the ongoing after-school programs. Those schools which have additional funding from such federal programs as Healthy Start and Magnet Schools have reasonable budgets to undertake these new tasks.

All the other school sites are limping along under the state's allotted \$5 per day per child (for a 3-hour program), scarcely enough to provide bare-bones salaries for the site-coordinator, and the janitor, with a few cents left over for crayons and construction paper. Adequate funding for effective academic tutoring programs is a difficult problem; but if the Board doesn't succeed, the District will have a large number of children who will face being left back.

The problem at the high school is especially difficult. In her presentations to the Board in October, Principal Saunders hazarded a guess that 1900 out of

the 3000 students, over 60% of them, would not be promotable in all their subjects. Ms. Saunders outlined a plan requiring students in the 9th grade who are at risk of failure to log in 120 hours of tutoring in Saturday morning sessions or before or after school in the Student Learning Resource Center. No special provisions have been made for upperclassmen

An additional wrinkle is created by truants. The best teaching in the world won't help students who don't show up. The District has begun to address this problem by reconstituting the Student Attendance Review Board; but here again, one term is over and there is not yet a standard process for bringing truants back into the classroom. Since absent students do not earn the District Average Daily Attendance dollars from the state, these no-shows are not only hurting their own chances to earn a highschool diploma, they are also costing the district thousands of dollars a day.

-*Helene Lecar*, Education Chair

## Office Open House - 2000, Fun!

On Saturday afternoon, January 29, the LWVBAE Board hosted an open house at our office for local officials and members. Many officials came to chat about issues, look at our office, and see what information and items we had to offer the voter for the March Primary. A few representatives sent their regrets, but LWVBAE Board members on hand were delighted to greet US Representative Barbara Lee and Jennifer Simon, her aide; Supervisor Keith Carson; EBRPD Director Jean Siri; Berkeley Council members Margaret Breland, Linda Maio, Betty Olds, and Kriss Worthington - and Dennis Walton, Dona Spring's aide; Albany School Director Mary Wallman; Berkeley School Directors *Joaquin Rivera* and Pam Doolan; and Berkeley City Manager James Keene. We gave them Pros & Cons and Easy Reader publications to distribute through their offices and to their neighbors, and filled them in on the League's Smart Voter web site. We also discussed the state ballot measures LWV has taken a stand on. (See specifics in the Action article.) We thank *Mary Wainwright*, our Development VP, who arranged the refreshments for the event and who invited each person who came to become a League member. We got some new members!

-*Jo Ann Price*, President

## Announcements of Interest!!!

### ● **ASUC Election Volunteers Needed** ● **Tues./Wed./Thur., April 11 - 13** **Morning/Afternoon/Evening Shifts**

The Associated Students of the University of California have asked LWVBAE to provide poll watchers and oversight in vote counting for their election again this year. It is set for April 11 - 13, and the counting will be done on dates yet to be determined. As in the past, **we need nearly 100 volunteers.**

This is the largest single fund-raising event for LWVBAE each year. Although ASUC has been considering online voting, that won't happen until next year at the earliest. Please call *Sherry Smith*, Community Service VP **asap** if you can cover one or more four-hour shift. We need your help!

### ● **Women in Action Lobby Day 2000** ● **"Voices for California's Children"** **Tuesday, April 11, 8:30 am - 3 pm**

#### **Sacramento Convention Center and State Capitol**

This is always a popular event for League members to join with members of other organizations such as AAUW, PTA, NWPC, NOW, and Common Cause to discuss issues of common interest. This year's topic involves women speaking out for California children on issues related to education, health, safety, and economic development. The cost for adults is \$35 by March 31, including coffee/rolls, lunch, and materials packet. Students pay \$15 at any time. Call the League office for registration forms and car pool sign up.

### ● **23rd Annual EdSource Conference** ● **"Ranking California Schools: Will it improve student learning? Undermine public support?"** **Friday, March 31, 8:15 am - 3:15 pm** **PG&E Learning Center, San Ramon**

LWVC is a founding member of EdSource and supporter of its programs. This annual conference always has many Leaguers present. This year the likely impacts of public school ranking will be explored in the morning; and in the afternoon a panel of statewide education opinion leaders will debate whether California's school reforms are on the right track. The day promises to be dynamic and interactive. Registration including lunch is \$45 by February 29, \$55 thereafter. Call the League office for registration forms and car pool sign up.

-Jo Ann Price, President

## U.S. Supreme Court Upholds Limits on Campaign Gifts

### New Hope for Prop. 208?

On January 24, 2000, the Missouri law limiting campaign contributions to individuals from \$275 to \$1,075 was upheld by the Supreme Court as they reversed the Eighth Circuit finding in *Nixon v. Shrink Missouri Government PAC*, and rejected the reconsideration of their landmark 1976 campaign finance ruling that upholds the constitutionality of contribution limits, in *Buckley v. Valeo*.

The vote was 6 - 3. Justice David H. Souter, writing for the majority, used language that left no doubt that the government protection of the integrity of the democratic system by banning large contributions to individual candidates is not an infringement of free speech. He wrote of the "threat from politicians too compliant with the wishes of large contributors" and of the point that to "leave the perception of impropriety unanswered and the cynical assumption that large donors call the tune, could jeopardize the willingness of voters to take part in democratic governance". He further wrote that democracy works "only if the government has faith in those who govern, and that faith is bound to be shattered when high officials and their appointees engage in activities which arouse suspicion of malfeasance and corruption".

In a concurring opinion, Justice John Paul Stevens made the important finding that "Money is property, it is not speech." He explained that although "speech has the power to inspire volunteers to perform a multitude of tasks on the campaign trail", "Money...has the power to pay hired laborers to perform the same tasks...". He concluded that the First Amendment does not afford the same measure of protection to the use of money as it provides to the use of speech to achieve the same political results.

Justices Souter and Stevens were joined by Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist and Justices Sandra Day O'Connor, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and Stephen G. Breyer. However, the justices maintained the interpretation of *Buckley* that caps on spending are generally considered an infringement on free speech.

-Jo Ann Price, President

## January Speaker Series Go-See Tour of Columbus School

Principal Becky Wheat gave League members a wonderful tour of Berkeley's new Columbus School on January 27. Recently rebuilt after extensive input from parents and community members, the school looks like a village, a group of small houses arranged around a play area. Full of children, playing freely, the playground was patrolled by two blue-jacketed children, trained in conflict resolution, who strolled about casually and confidently.

As a magnet school, Columbus gets federal funds for a gardener who builds gardening into the curriculum. Classrooms are arranged in pods, some with their own small garden. There is a dual-immersion language program - one class of 20 students per grade, half of whom are Spanish speakers learning English and the other half English speakers learning Spanish. Ms. Wheat pointed out that studies show this a highly effective learning method.

Each classroom is designed with an ample office, where the teacher can prepare lessons, store supplies, and move projects so that the room can be used by pre- or after-school programs. There are about 116 children in the after-school, state-funded extended learning program, and others in a play program. A homework club for the upper grades and after-school math for 4th graders is heavily attended, and children may move seamlessly between programs.

Columbus is also the district's trial school for a universal food program, providing breakfast in the classroom and free lunches for all children. Ms. Wheat looks forward to the use of organic food and a salad bar.

To meet the community's desire for a science room, a computer lab and a large multi-purpose service center, the Berkeley Public Education Foundation raised \$1.36 million. When we walked in, the science room, financed by Bayer, was filled by a silver "star dome," rented from the Lawrence Hall of Science.

Upstairs, children were intent at long rows of computers editing a video that some schoolmates had shot on Halloween. If all goes according to plan, adults will be taught to use these computers by teachers from the Adult School.

The library, thanks to BSEP, has a 20-hour/week librarian (there are no District funds for K-5 librarians). A family resource center offers individual and group counseling for children and family counseling as well. All

1st and 2nd graders are screened for dental care, with the help of a pro-bono clinic. Community members serve as parent advocates. A licensed social worker and interns coordinate the work. Although, ideally, this resource center would serve the whole community, at present it cannot meet more than the needs of the school children and families.

We wound up the tour in the multi-service room, a full-sized basketball court, which, like the track outside, can be used after school hours by the community. That evening was Thursday family night, when parents would gather, talk and eat together.

*-Lois Brubeck, Action VP*

## "Family Reading Night" At Franklin Elementary School Friday, March 3, 5 pm - 7 pm 1500 Virginia St., Berkeley

Please come to Franklin's "Family Reading Night". LWVBAE is a sponsor and League members are wanted to volunteer to bring spaghetti, to serve supper, to assist with the adult reading workshops, to sort donated books by grade level, to get donations of books from publishers and book stores, and to supervise children's activities. The school is collecting gently used children's books, especially multicultural ones. Books may be dropped off at the Children's Book Depot - Room 100, at the address listed above, during school hours, preferably before the 3rd. Call Mark Coplan, 647-5219, or Cynthia Papermaster, 849-2683, to get more information and to volunteer to help with "Family Reading Night".

*-Helene Lecar, Education Chair*

## B- TV and Video Programs on Props. 21, 26, and 28 Tuesday, February 29, 9:00 pm - 10:30 pm Saturday, Mar. 4, 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm Sunday, Mar. 5, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

The TV/Video Project Team has made three excellent videos on Propositions 21, 26, and 28. They will all be aired on B-TV, Channel 25, in three 90-minute programs (30 minutes each in their numerical order) on the dates and times above. You may also borrow the office copy tape of any of these programs and invite your friends to see it with you. Or suggest that your church or organization hold a viewing.

*-Jill Martinucci, TV/Video Project Chair*

- Berkeley addresses unless otherwise indicated -

## February

- 21 Mon. 7:15-9 pm Environmental Concerns: The City's General Plan (Bansner)  
 22 Tue. 11 am-1 pm UNIT: Local Decisions/Regional Impacts Albany Library,  
 Edith Stone Room, Marin & Masonic Ave., Albany (Safir)  
 23 Wed. 9 am-noon Executive Committee LWVBAE Office (Price)  
 23 Wed. 1-3 pm Vista Study Committee (Lecar)  
 24 Thurs. 7-9 pm UNIT: Local Decisions/Regional Impacts (Safir)

## March

- 1 Wed. 9 am-noon Board Meeting, Emery Bay Club House, Emeryville (Price)  
 3 Fri. Noon April Voter Deadline LWVBAE Office (Hawley)  
 7 Tue. - **PRIMARY ELECTION** -  
 9 Thurs. 10 am Education Committee (Lecar)  
 9 Thurs. 2-4 pm Housing Study Comm. (Adams)  
 9 Thurs. 7-9 pm Instant Runoff Study Comm. (Reynolds)  
 13 Mon. 7:15-9 pm Environmental Concerns, Recycling in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Bansner)  
 15 Wed. 9 am-noon Action Committee (Brubeck)  
 16 Thurs. 10:15-noon Speaker Series: Economic Development Albany Library,  
 Edith Stone Room, Marin & Masonic Ave., Albany (Safir)  
 22 Wed. 1-3 pm Vista Study Committee (Lecar)  
 29 Wed. 9 am-noon Executive Committee LWVBAE Office (Price)  
 31 Fri. 8:15 am-3:15 pm EdSource Conference  
 PG&E Learning Center, San Ramon (Office, 843-8824)

## April

- 5 Wed. 9 am-noon Board Meeting, Emery Bay Club House, Emeryville (Price)  
 7 Fri. Noon May-June Voter Deadline LWVBAE Office (Hawley)  
 11 Tue. 8:30 am-3 pm Women in Action Lobby Day, Sacramento (Price)  
 11-13 Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday **ASUC Election** (Smith)

