

# 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

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Editor: Bob Hawley

## The Aftermath of Florida 2000 - League of Women Voters and Other Reform Groups Set Criteria for Election Changes in Congress

Together with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the American Foundation for the Blind, the National Council of La Raza, Common Cause, the Urban League, and 19 other public interest, civil rights, labor, and disability rights organizations, the League of Women Voters has put together a statement of principles for election reform legislation in the 107th Congress.

The organizations have sent a letter to members of the House and Senate urging Congress to act quickly to “develop and pass truly nonpartisan election reform legislation...that will garner major support from members of both political parties”. The letter calls for:

- a multi-year federal grants program to upgrade elections technologies;
- protecting the Voting Rights Act and the National Voter Registration Act (Motor Voter);
- federally-approved “best practices” with standards to ensure accessibility and convenience for voters, accuracy, and non-discrimination;
- ensuring that funding goes to jurisdictions with the most significant problems.

“Our election administration systems are in dire need of repair. Unfortunately, the federal government does not pay its fair share of the costs of federal elections. Last year, the nation saw the results of that neglect. The goal of election reform must be that the vote of every American citizen will count. These principles give us the criteria by which every federal election reform proposal must be judged.” - LWV

“The 2000 election made it clear that we need new and effective standards, as well as other policy changes, to ensure that voters’ rights will be fully protected. We need to make sure that every citizen has an opportunity to register to vote, be educated, and have their vote counted. At the same time, existing protections must not be brushed aside in the rush to make changes in election systems.” - NAACP

“At the dawn of the 21st century, in the most vibrant democracy in history, we must address the persistent lack of attention and available resources that conspire to bar people with disabilities from equal participation in the electoral process.

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President's Column  
**Catch League Fever!**  
**Come to League Meetings!**  
**Join the Board!**

With all the League tasks to be done locally, we need more members to come forward and become involved. Yes, we can use the 2 or 3 hours you can give the League each week. Yes, we can give you worthwhile tasks. Yes, you can help make Democracy work better by volunteering with the League. Yes, we can teach you new skills. Yes, you can have fun while accomplishing small wonders. Yes, you can be part of a movement for citizen rights and education that's respected throughout the country. Yes, you can lobby for government projects and legislation important to you at the local, state, or national level. Yes, you can make a difference in the local schools, if that's your interest. Yes, you can write for our *Voter* or assemble it for mailing. Yes, you can be a local League leader. Yes, you can help us raise needed funds for our many activities and for keeping our office open. Yes, you can observe local boards and commissions for the League. Yes, you can indulge your passion for civic duty, equal rights, and the "American way". Yes, you can be an active Leaguer. We need you! We want you! - And you'll have a good time and feel good about your contribution. Send in the Volunteer page from your February *VOTER* or call the office a.s.a.p.

Shouldn't you be attending some of the League meetings you see on the *Voter* Calendar each month? What a lot of good and useful information you could gather by taking advantage of the meetings set up for you as a League member. Environmental Concerns on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, Speaker Series on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday, study units, program units, community forums, special meetings, state League-sponsored workshops - why you could even get friends and colleagues to come along with you to topics of mutual interest. In fact, you're always welcome to attend the monthly Board meetings to address the Board or just see how we go about the League's business.

You might even be interested in serving on the Board. We all go through phases in our life. Is this a phase when you would enjoy being a leader of our local League? Just say the word and you'll be brought into whatever part of League activity that appeals to you. This is the time of year that our Nominating Committee is busy putting together a proposed new Board for election at our Annual Meeting in June.

-(Continued in next column)

## January Board Briefs

The Board met on January 3, 2001, in the late afternoon at the League office. Afternoon meetings of the Board will continue for awhile.

January activities discussed were:

- LWVBAE Budget Committee meetings beginning the week of January 8,
- Bay Area League Day in Oakland on January 27, and
- LWVC Reproductive Lobby Day in Sacramento on January 27.

February activities are numerous. February has been designated "Honor League Volunteers Month." (Training sessions for office volunteers will be offered in the near future for new members and as a refresher for current volunteers.) Help will be welcome on February 3, the day chosen to streamline the office by cleaning up, rearranging, and examining files. Member training sessions on recording and moderating League meetings will be held in February and March. A special local event for League members to recognize the creation of the League in 1920 will be on February 11.

LWVBAE forums are being scheduled for February and April on instant runoff voting and housing. LWVC is furnishing information for forums on "Public Schools: Are They Making the Grade?" and on "A Nice Place to Live: Creating Communities, Fighting Sprawl."

ASUC election dates are April 10 through 12; ballot counting dates are April 20 through 22.

Interviews with members of the state legislature are planned; Alameda County Leagues will join us in interviews with Peralta Community College District board members.

-*Evelyn Light*, Acting Board Secretary

They would be very pleased to hear from you whether you feel this is your time to serve or know someone else who could. They rely on member recommendations, so don't be shy. I do look forward to more members doing themselves a favor and finding the true rewards that come with being an active League member.

-**Jo Ann**

## Women in Action Lobby Day “The Changing Face of California Women: Building the Future”

For the 10th year LWVC will co-sponsor this meeting in Sacramento which encourages Leaguers to join a variety of activists to lobby on issues vital to women. The date is May 8, 2001 and this year Leagues are asked to sponsor high school- and college-age young women to include in their delegations. The usual format involves a keynote speaker, followed by briefings on bills important to women, and lobbying techniques for meeting with state legislators later in the afternoon. There will also be a rally on the Capitol steps.

This year’s keynoter is Eva Jefferson-Paterson, Executive Director of the Bay Area Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights. Diversity and gender equity will be emphasized. The cost is \$15 and everyone who is interested is urged to come. Sign up in the League office to go by train or car pool.

-compiled from LWVC UPDATE, Feb. 2001

## March Is Women’s History Month

Go to the library and get a book about a famous/important American woman who helped to provide us with the fulfilling potential we enjoy today. Or search the Internet for interesting information at the following sites:

- the National Women’s History Project  
[www.nwhp.org](http://www.nwhp.org)
- the Women’s Internet Information Network  
[www.undelete.org/library](http://www.undelete.org/library)
- [www.thehistorynet.com](http://www.thehistorynet.com) (search for suffrage or suffragist)
- the University of Rochester  
[www.rochester.edu/SBA](http://www.rochester.edu/SBA) has much information about Susan B. Anthony.

You could also come to our League office and borrow one of our books on the subject, including various histories of the League of Women Voters.

-compiled from LWVC UPDATE for February 2001

## ++ Speaker Series ++ Thursday, March 8, 2001 Albany Library, Noon to 2 pm “Albany’s Youth Service Programs”

Allan Maris, Mayor of Albany and member of LWVBAE, will tell us about the City’s unique approach to **Youth Services**. Several years ago, Albany adopted a “Youth Master Plan” to set goals and objectives and to coordinate its wide array of programs and activities serving the needs and interests of young people. Since then, the City Council has been monitoring the effectiveness of these programs and of the plan itself.

Council member Jewel Okawachi, who served with Allan on the Youth Task Force, will join him at our meeting to review progress made under the Plan and give us some of its highlights, such as the teen center, teen cafe, drug and alcohol prevention council, police athletic programs, high school dance group, etc. The meeting will take place from noon to 2 pm on the second Thursday in March — our regular time for Speaker Series — in the Edith Stone Room of the Albany Public Library, 1247 Marin Avenue, at the corner of Masonic Avenue. To find the room, enter the library and turn right, go past the video and CD shelves and look for the Edith Stone Room on your right.

Bring lunch, if you wish; the Speaker Series committee will provide fruit juice. Lots of parking is available, and a bus line is a block away on Solano Avenue. Or call me if you need help in finding a ride.

For next month, save **Thursday, April 12** — same time and place — to hear from Theresa Saunders, Director of Music for the Berkeley Unified School District and principal of Jefferson Elementary School, on “**Music in the Berkeley Schools.**” Learn about the history of these fine programs and their amazing variety, and hear some student performers.

Our final program this fiscal year will be on **May 10**, when we will hear from Nora Davis, League member and Mayor of Emeryville. Find out how Emeryville citizens have done an integrated job, working with City officials, in planning for their community. We’ll meet in Emeryville’s newly refurbished old City Hall. The next Voter will have more information on these two meetings.

-Jean Safir, Speaker Series Coordinator

## Donors Through January

### General Fund

|                                     |                                 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Robert C. Arnold</i>             | <i>Charlotte Loeb</i>           |
| <i>Virginia Blackledge</i>          | <i>Patricia Pope</i>            |
| <i>Linda Burden</i>                 | <i>Peggy Reid<sup>1</sup></i>   |
| <i>Thomas M. &amp; Jane Coulter</i> | <i>Nigel Renton<sup>2</sup></i> |
| <i>William E. &amp; Peggy Davis</i> | <i>Marj &amp; Hugh Rubinow</i>  |
| <i>Irene R. Hegarty</i>             | <i>Mary Rose Black Ryan</i>     |
| <i>Yvonne San Jule Koshland</i>     | <i>Lassie Ulman</i>             |
| <i>Louise Larson</i>                | <i>Andrea S. Washburn</i>       |
| <i>Helene Lecar</i>                 | <i>Lenora Young</i>             |

### Foundation

|                                   |                                  |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <i>Jane Barrett</i>               | <i>Claire Max</i>                |
| <i>Gilbert Bendix</i>             | <i>Winifred McLaughlin</i>       |
| <i>Aida L. Brenneis</i>           | <i>Roy &amp; Judy Nakadegawa</i> |
| <i>Pamela D. Drew</i>             | <i>Harriet Nathan</i>            |
| <i>Laura Enriques<sup>3</sup></i> | <i>Marj &amp; Hugh Rubinow</i>   |
| <i>Scott &amp; Jenny Fleming</i>  | <i>Geraldine Scalzo</i>          |
| <i>Linda Gerson</i>               | <i>Rosalind Singer</i>           |
| <i>Alice Hamburg</i>              | <i>Barbara Stern</i>             |
| <i>Marie Lagarde</i>              | <i>Doris White</i>               |
| <i>Elizabeth Little</i>           |                                  |

- 1 - In Memory of *Ada I. Reid*
- 2 - In Honor of *Barbara Renton*
- 3 - In Honor of *Elsa Tranter*

## Welcome New Members

|                       |                          |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Susanne Dewitt</i> | <i>K. McElheney</i>      |
| <i>Lesley Ewing</i>   | <i>Myra Paci</i>         |
| <i>John A. Kunze</i>  | <i>Hillary J. Reinis</i> |
| <i>Janet Levin</i>    | <i>Owen C. Thomas</i>    |
| <i>James Lovekin</i>  | <i>Marilyn Vaage</i>     |

## Orientation Coffee for New and Prospective Members

**Saturday, March 17, 10 am to noon**

### LWVBAE Office

The Membership Committee invites those interested to meet a few League leaders and learn more about how our League operates by attending a gathering at the League Office, 1414 University Ave., Berkeley, on Saturday, March 17, from 10 AM until noon. Access to our upstairs office, Suite D, is by the parking lot entrance to Andronico's store. Ring the bell for the League and we will buzz the door open. One door enters at the staircase, the other door is by the elevator.

Bring your questions! Invite a friend who may be interested in joining the League to accompany you.

Please let us know that you will attend by phoning me or leaving a message at the League Office by March 12.

-*Ginette Polak*, Membership Director

## Event to Honor LWVBAE Major Volunteers 2000 and the League's 81st Birthday a Big Success

*Karen Nelson*, Special Events Director, chaired the Dessert Party in honor of 50 of our major volunteers and the League's 81st birthday on February 11 at the home of *Dorothy Walker*. *Ruth Ganong*, Director-at-Large, co-chaired the event and served as the unparalleled pastry chef. Those office volunteers, committee members, and Board members who could attend enjoyed a wonderful late afternoon of sparkling conversation, delicious temptations, getting-to-know each other better, and bonhomie. We all heartily thank the co-chairs and the hostess for "a League afternoon to remember".

-*Jo Ann B. Price*, President

- Thanks to *Bill Chapman*, LWVBAE's webmaster, for the gift of a new and larger computer monitor for the office. Everyone who uses it is very pleased with the larger screen and readability. What a wonderful gift!
- Thanks to the members of LWVBAE's Board and committees who spent several hours of a February Saturday winnowing the files in the office and sprucing it up. What a difference! One Saturday didn't complete the project and there will be at least one more "getting files in order" date for those who were unable to make the first one. Then the League information will more accessible and easy to use for current and recent (up to 10 years) topics. We are archiving older information to join LWVBAE's section in the Bancroft Library.
- Thanks to *Eleanor Cox* for her caring and lively columns on our members' joyful and sad personal events. *Eleanor* will no longer be gathering this information and writing the column. We'll miss her special touch.

## January Environmental Concerns

LWVC Natural Resources Chair Kim Longworth addressed the January 8 Environmental Concerns meeting with an overview of the League's focus in Natural Resource issues in the state. The talk included some possible strategies for our local committee if we want to get more involved with action on regional issues or coordinate with state League action.

Although the Legislative Committee doesn't do its priority setting until March, bills of note include -

- AB 2054 (Torlakson): Amends the Inter-Regional Partnership State Pilot Project to Improve the Balance of Jobs and Housing established for Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, San Joaquin, and Stanislaus Counties by a budget trailer bill; (requires Partnership to improve interregional jobs-housing balance, create grants program.)
- AB 2140 (Keeley): Revises the requirements for the policy and financial elements of required regional transportation plans of agencies serving populations of over 200,000, by authorizing inclusion of a set of performance indicators related to congestion, safety, maintenance needs and public transit utilization and a standardized method of financially reporting. Authorizes plans to include an alternative planning scenario that attempts to reduce growth in traffic congestion, use the existing infrastructure more efficiently, and reduce the need for costly future public infrastructure.
- AB 2110 (Wayne): Establishes the California Stream and Watershed Protection Project which will use three pilot watershed protection projects to evaluate existing collaborative and cooperative mechanisms between state, federal and local agencies, local stakeholder groups, landowners and environmental groups to determine whether the process can be streamlined and implemented effectively at a more comprehensive level. The state Resources Agency and EPA are to report and make recommendations to the legislature by 2-1-02.
- SB 1986 (Costa): Authorizes the California Pollution Control Financing Authority to give loans to economically struggling communities to assist the financing and development of brownfield sites. To receive loan funding, proposed plans and programs would be required to incorporate smart growth strategies such as transit-oriented development,

remediation of brownfield sites or infill development.

As always, water is a big issue. One major topic has been LWVC involvement in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program, the cooperative effort of 18 state and federal agencies with regulatory and management responsibilities in the SF Bay-Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta ecosystem. The object of this collaborative planning process is to identify comprehensive solutions to the problems of ecosystem quality, water supply reliability, water quality, and Delta levee and channel integrity. The Program issued its Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (PEIS/EIR) last summer. For further information, call CALFED at 800-900-3587. (LWVC contact: Roberta Borgonovo).

Another statewide League focus has been on sustainable communities and the publication by LWVCEF of "Choices for a Vital Community," a guide for community issues on quality of life in California; and the accompanying "Convener's and Moderator's Guides" for a League community forum.

-Gail Schickele

e-mail: gspence@aol.com

LWVUS  
President

### Invited to Speak at Commonwealth Club

Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, President of LWVUS, was invited to speak on "Making Democracy Work" on February 21 at the meeting of the Commonwealth Club, at the Pauley Ballroom on the UCB campus in Berkeley. Her talk was co-sponsored by the Goldman School of Public Policy at Cal.

President Jefferson-Jenkins was invited to the Bay Area by the San Francisco League of Women Voters who scheduled a full day of events for her in their city. Starting with breakfast at the City Club with the Board of Supervisors, following with lunch with League members, and then a City Hall reception in the Mayor's office, the highlight of the day was to be her speech to the Commonwealth Club. The S.F. League planned to top off Jefferson-Jenkins' day with a tour of San Francisco by night. Several members of LWVBAAE planned to attend the talk.

-Jo Ann B. Price, President

## The State of Berkeley Schools

Berkeley Unified, like districts all over the state, is scrambling frantically to keep up with all the new state mandates on budgets not much bigger than those of the past.

### New State Mandates:

- Reduction in class size for grades K-4 to 20 students per teacher
- Elimination of social promotions for grades 7-12
- Statewide standards to ensure a rigorous curriculum in all major subjects
- A statewide exit exam required of all students for graduation, beginning with the Class of 2004 (this year's 9th graders).

**The Money Crunch:** The new initiatives, coupled with existing demographics, have created a hothouse of educational experiment and challenge, but many feel that educational goals can't be achieved without a significant increase in state spending. While the Governor promised that state revenue growth would provide hefty increases for education, the energy crisis has suddenly stalled all the more grandiose plans. Many school districts are now hoping they'll get enough money just to keep the lights on.

The smaller class size has meant that districts need more teachers for the same number of students. We were already facing a major shortage of credentialed teachers, especially in science and math. Low salaries, combined with the high cost of housing locally, have convinced many new teachers to leave the area and/or the profession entirely. Although salary increases negotiated by Berkeley Unified last year should reduce the annual turnover, the 9% increase built into the contract for this year is proving hard to fund because per-pupil allocations from the state to local districts are still insufficient to cover the cost. Albany Unified has been struggling with the same issue in its teacher negotiations all this year.

Smaller class size also puts a premium on space. When you add the space squeeze to the increase in the school-age population as the children of the Baby Boomer generation make their way through the system, the walls bulge. New construction at Berkeley High School was designed to provide for a student population of 2500. Enrollment is now at 3200.

**The Achievement Gap:** The more rigorous academic standards, the exit exam, and the required

retention of failing students is also exposing painful gaps in the preparation of many of our youngsters. The achievement gap, under which 15% of Berkeley's students, mostly young minority men, fail, has been a long-standing embarrassment in a system with high academic expectations that are supposed to be for all students. The new initiatives have shown that the problems begin long before high school. Out of the 870 freshman class entering Berkeley High last fall, 250 students have failed one or more major subjects in their first semester.

**Existing Programs:** To provide a safety net for those who need extra support, the District has been funding a number of literacy programs to eliminate problems while they are small. Reading Recovery provides intensive daily help for youngsters in first grade who score in the lowest 20th percentile of their classes. Statewide STAR test results this year show significant gains in reading for most of the BUSD's elementary and middle schools.

Healthy Start after-school programs and Magnet School enrichment money could also enable schools to provide other avenues for youngsters to gain academic mastery. But once again, the shortage of money is a major stumbling block. The current state funding for Healthy Start programs is \$5.36 per child. That is supposed to cover a 3-hour supervised program on school grounds, but only for those children who attend every day for the full 3 hours. The restrictions makes recruiting older children difficult, because they often have other demands on their time--jobs, family obligations, sports, clubs, lessons. The state legislature is currently holding hearings on the after-school programs, but no remedies are on the immediate horizon.

**PCAD (Parents of Children of African Descent) and the Berkeley High Freshman Class:** The particular problems of freshmen on the Berkeley High campus began to be addressed last year with the formation of the 9th grade Village. To provide some sense of community and continuity, students were grouped with core teachers in English and Math who would remain with them for the entire year. Link Crew was set up, a program to give freshmen an upperclass buddy, a junior or senior, to help steer them through the often confusing welter of high school procedures. A Student Learning Center was funded to offer tutoring on any subject throughout the day. The Saturday school made teachers available on Saturday

**Berkeley Schools** (continued from Page 6) mornings to help students who were having trouble with core subjects. This fall the SMART program was supposed to address the needs of students who were failing English and/or Algebra at the first report period.

In each case, the school's offerings did help some children, but left many others behind. In December, parents of 9th graders organized a group to protest the ineffectiveness of existing efforts and to demand a much more focused, better funded response to student failure. PCAD, formed between the Christmas break and the start of the new semester on January 30, made extensive proposals for a group of especially hard hit students, those who were failing two or more major courses. These youngsters, they proposed, should retake the first semester of 9th grade work in classes of no more than 10-12, with parents and teachers communicating often to be sure that the student attends, that homework gets done every night, and measurable academic progress is evident in test results. With the first semester's work completed, those students could then complete second semester 9th grade courses over the summer in the same kind of tightly supervised, small-class environment so that they could pick up 10th grade along with their classmates and move on. The full proposal is available on-line at <[www.home.earthlink.net/pcad01](http://www.home.earthlink.net/pcad01)>.

Given the limited funds at the District's disposal, the School Board agreed to fund 3 extra teachers through the summer school period, the principal found classroom space, and the experiment is in progress. The outcome of all these efforts can only be judged when student achievement is measured, of course, but the process has galvanized many minority parents to become more active on behalf of their children. Others maintain a more cautious, wait-and-see approach. Still other parents point out that resources set aside for this group have been taken away from other BHS students.

PCAD group has responded by seeking funding from the wider community, the City of Berkeley and private foundations. They hope to bring the principles they have laid down in their proposals to a broader segment of the student body in the future.

Amid the swirl of organizational changes, debates about the effectiveness of school programs, and major reconstruction after the fire last April, Principal Frank Lynch and his administrative staff have worked very hard to provide a modicum of stability, so the normal life of the campus can continue: club activities, school plays, concerts, college interviews, term papers continue much

as they always have, while students and teachers strive to create a meaningful education.

**The Search for a New Superintendent:** As these events were taking place at the Berkeley High, District Superintendent Jack McLaughlin announced that he would be leaving Berkeley to become the Chief State School Superintendent in Nevada. At this writing (Feb. 12), an interim Superintendent, Steve Goldstone, has undertaken to steer the District through the next semester while the superintendent search goes on. A team of consultants has already drawn up a schedule for interviews with interested district supporters, public forums and site visits to the districts of promising candidates. The scope of the new superintendent's responsibilities will be particularly daunting.

**Things You Can Do:**

- **Stay tuned.** Those legislative debates over what to do with the tax surplus, if there is any, will have a direct bearing on the quality of our schools. We have to let our legislators know what our priorities are.
- **Volunteer.** The schools are eager to welcome anyone who has an hour a week to help youngsters practice their reading and writing skills. Tutors are needed at all levels. Call me at the number shown below.

*-Helene Lecar, Education Director*

## Ed Source Conference 2001 "Tests and More Tests: the Road - - - Ahead for Student Assessment"

The northern California session of the popular annual Ed Source conference will be held in San Ramon on April 6.

Early bird registration for a reduced fee must be by March 5. The cost for LWVBAE members is \$50 at the early-bird rate, and \$60 at the door. Last year the event was sold out early. Call the League office for details.

## Action Report

How will the state address the question of adequate funding and flexibility of school finance in order to help local districts meet state mandated standards? Are there are prospects for initiative reform? What role should governance, land use and fiscal reforms play in preserving a high quality of life? These are the three questions LWVC asked Leagues statewide to take to their **legislators for their annual interview and exchange of ideas**. Reports from these interviews help LWVC decide on future action.

In response to these questions, our Assembly Member Dion Aroner advocated a time-out in state mandates while we assess the results of current ones, and more flexible funding or non-categorical money for school districts. Given that the public holds the initiative process sacrosanct, she sees no hope for initiative reform at present. The smart growth issue, she says, has swept the legislature; however, the subject is so large that approaches to it will be incremental. The legislature will probably neither favor forming another layer of government, nor act against strong agricultural interests to curb the right of farmers to sell their land. She saw for the first time last year the possibility of talking about Prop. 13, but sees, too, that change will be very difficult. More money this year will go to housing and transit villages, and she also favors greater density on major thoroughfares. Her own priorities include reforming the funding for the developmentally disabled; a moratorium on the death penalty, at the very least while data is collected; increased funding for foster parents; lowered caseloads and outcome-based accountability for foster care workers; and funding for college student housing.

*Pat Kuhi*, LWVBAE, serves the State League as off-board program director for juvenile justice. She will soon be analyzing juvenile justice bills in the new legislative session, deciding on which LWVC should take action. A bill signed in the summer 2000 allocated \$21 million to counties for juvenile delinquency prevention; Alameda County has already been approved to receive \$5 million, which will be administered by an appointed council. We hope that some of us among the Alameda County LWVs will be following the allocation of these funds. LWVC's suit to overturn Proposition 21, the initiative that would move more juveniles into the adult court system, is still to be decided; the argument being that the initiative included multiple issues.

**LWVUS top priority issues for 2001** are Election Administration Reform and Campaign Finance Reform. Of moderate priority are Direct Election of the President, Health Care Reform (the Patients' Bill of Rights) and Federal Tax Policy. These aren't the only issues they will be addressing, but are the ones on which the League will seek a leadership position and which will involve direct lobbying, testimony when appropriate, Action Alerts, and Lobby Corps work. We are already responding to an Action Alert in support of the McCain-Feingold Campaign Finance Bill, S.27, as introduced.

Locally, we have written letters to the Berkeley City Council urging that they make a decision in favor of a full playing field at East Campus, the planning process having been thorough, and that they have the City Attorney clarify rules governing conflict of interest and ex parte contacts for all bodies with adjudicatory decision-making powers.

Join us at Action Committee meetings the third Wednesday of each month 9 am to noon. We welcome you.

*-Lois Brubeck, Action VP*

## Florida Aftermath (continued from Page 1)

Voters with disabilities must share in the opportunity, enjoyed by all Americans, to vote privately and independently." - American Foundation for the Blind

"Antiquated voting machines, ballot systems that confuse the voter, and insufficient numbers of machines so that voters have to wait hours in line are just some of the problems that must be addressed in election reform. Language accessibility and convenience for all voters, accuracy and non-discrimination should be the guideposts for Congress and the President as they seek to improve our nation's election processes." - National Council of La Raza

You are urged to join with these organizations (as our National League has) to write your own letter to your Representative and your Senators that echoes the call for legislation that will ensure that every county in every state has the funds to provide adequate technology and sufficient and educated poll workers to ensure that no citizen is disenfranchised on election day.

-compiled from LWVUS news release  
by *Jo Ann B. Price*, President

## Recent News from LWV California

- A Restructuring Committee was established to study the need for and how best to change the existing functioning of the Board and administration of the state League. Chairing is Fran Packard (LWVBAE), former LWVC President. All Leaguers are invited to make recommendations online. Send a blank message to:  
lwvcdiscuss-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.
- The 1999-2000 LWVC fiscal year ended with a deficit of \$26,685.
- Underwriting for the California VOTER wasn't found, so there will be no further issues during this fiscal year. Instead, local Leagues will be asked to add an insert from LWVC in their VOTER.
- Nineteen off-Board Legislative Consultants for 2001-2002 were appointed.
- The LWVC website is being re-designed and will launch at the state convention in May.
- Voted support for the Assembly Speaker's Commission on the California Initiative Process to have a nonpartisan entity prepare the ballot pamphlet title, summary, and ballot label for measures on the statewide ballot.
- LWVC's Electricity Restructuring Committee's advocacy work will focus on: 1) policy or legislation that encourages or promotes conservation or development and use of renewable energy sources, and 2) public participation in the development of policies or legislation relating to electricity, especially participation by the small customer.
- Sent a letter to LWVEF (national) congratulating them on their DNet success, informing them of Smart Voter success, and letting them know we are interested in working with them more closely in the future.
- A revised Local Study brochure is planned to be available at the state convention in May.
- The LWCEF fundraising dinner has been postponed to the fall.
- A central database for local League leaders and public relations contacts is needed to better coordinate disseminating information about League projects.

-compiled from LWVC UPDATE, Feb. 2001

## Do LWVC and LWVBAE Need Restructuring?

The demands of today's world on League volunteers make it difficult to get the League's work done. Finding enough members to staff boards and committees is becoming ever more difficult for Nominating Committees. All members value the purpose of the League and its role in the local community, the state, and the nation. The question is how to maximize the efforts of those who serve on our Boards and committees, how to do the work more efficiently, and how to pay for it all without increasing dues inordinately.

The state League believes it's time to seriously study how to facilitate the work done by the state Board, administration, and office in an effort to serve local Leagues maximally throughout California. To make that happen, a Restructuring Committee has been established. (Please see the "Recent News from LWV California" article on this page.) Recommendations will be made to the new Board at state Convention in May.

Meanwhile, our local League is having similar problems in filling spots on our Board. We decided to follow state's lead and have our own Restructuring Committee, chaired by *Jane Bergen* (848-3954) with *Nancy Bickel* (848-6255) and *Jane Coulter* (524-0525). These astute women will be interviewing past leaders and committee members to get as much input as possible before they make their recommendations to the Board in time for any changes to be proposed for a vote at our Annual Meeting.

The LWVBAE committee encourages your recommendations. Please call any of them, and do it a.s.a.p.

-Jo Ann B. Price, President

**Environmental Concerns Meeting  
Monday, March 12, 7:15 PM  
1340 Arch Street, Berkeley (at Rose Street)**

On March 12, LWVBAE Environmental Concerns will continue to focus on Energy Deregulation. Guest speakers will be Graham Browerstein of TURN and *Lessly Wikle* of PG&E. Joins us for a stimulating session!

-Eva Bansner

### Bay Area League Day Smart Growth and Water

Bay Area League Day, held in Oakland January 27, attempted to bring water concerns into the discussions of what is Smart Growth. We got our toes wet.

The panel members on Smart Growth were locally elected officials who have stretched themselves for years to address regional issues as well as local issues. Berkeley, Albany, Emeryville and Alameda County elected officials were not among them. Mayor of Danville, Millie Greenberg, spoke of the need for urban growth boundaries to permanently protect agriculture, for revitalization within the boundaries and for alternative transportation. She envisioned comprehensive planned growth to a defined carrying capacity and led the general plan effort for her own community. Steve Kinsey, Marin supervisor, imagined achieving Smart Growth with incentives for new housing, building support for regional planning from the bottom up. Mark DeSaulnier, Contra Costa supervisor, looked forward to having new civic infrastructure where regional issues could be debated and resolved; incremental local decisions were not addressing the global impact of our development pattern.

Panel members on water supply each took different directions. For Larry Kolb of the Regional Water

Quality Control Board the issue was whether we should devote water, especially high quality water, to low value crops. He noted that urbanized areas use 15% of the available water. Low value crops, including subsidized cotton and rice, use half the agricultural water. Why invest in expensive reverse osmosis to treat low quality water for urban use while dumping high quality water on the fields?

Santa Clara Valley Water District gave an account of an integrated water supply and management district born out of the crisis of massive subsidence due to over pumping. John Gioia, Contra Costa supervisor, spoke of state legislation that requires evidence of water availability before approval of large subdivisions.

Will Travis, Director of the Bay Conservation and Development District, turned the League's attention to the need to make a regional decision on expansion of the San Francisco Airport into the Bay. The regional League would appreciate League members who have expertise in any of the airport-related issues to communicate your thoughts to LVW Bay Area.

-Eva Bansner, LWVBA  
evabaer@earthlink.net

### Give the Gift of Democracy - A Gift Membership in the League

As we move past the presidential election and into the coming local and state elections, we are mindful that our democracy is one of our most precious gifts. The League stands as an ever vigilant and active advocate for preserving and strengthening this system, hard-won by many Americans who preceded us. The League is the premier U.S. nonprofit and nonpartisan organization that is devoted to making democracy work.

**A gift of League membership is an all purpose one that reaches out to friends, colleagues, and relatives for any special occasion, to say you care about them and our democracy. The recipient will thank you, and so will we.**

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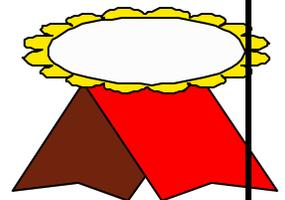
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## Reproductive Rights In Jeopardy

### **We have our work cut out for us!**

On January 22 there was a Lobby Day in Sacramento called by a coalition of pro-choice organizations to celebrate the 28th anniversary of the landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision in Roe v. Wade. This is the decision that protects a woman's right to decide whether to end a pregnancy. On that very day, the first Monday of his presidency, George W. Bush reinstated the Global Gag Rule, which had been in effect from 1984 until 1993 when President Clinton rescinded it. The Global Gag Rule ends U.S. family planning assistance to private family planning programs overseas, which use their own funds to perform abortions, counsel about them, or "engage in any activity or effort to alter the laws or governmental policies of any foreign country concerning the circumstances under which abortion is permitted, regulated or prohibited." This leaves vast numbers of poor women in undeveloped countries without the family planning services that can reduce reliance on abortion and the deaths caused by unsafe abortion. It puts in jeopardy their access to contraceptive services, prenatal care and trained birth attendants. Also on the 22nd, John Ashcroft, President Bush's nominee for Attorney General, announced that he would ask for further study of the health effects of RU 486 (mifepristone). Mifepristone has been in use in France for 12 years and in Sweden, the United Kingdom, China, Israel, and nine other European countries for varying degrees of time. In September 2000, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the use of mifepristone in the United States. Millions of women worldwide have used mifepristone and a prostaglandin analogue to terminate pregnancy with impressive safety and efficacy. Further unnecessary study would once again delay access to this early option pill for early abortion. Moreover, as Senator, Attorney-General Ashcroft, along with Senators Helms and Smith, cosponsored a resolution calling for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to ban abortion even in cases of rape or incest. The amendment also would outlaw several of the most common contraceptive methods. Perhaps our greatest concern is the Supreme Court. Justices O'Connor and Rehnquist have indicated that they would like to retire. If they do, we must remember that the Attorney General makes recommendations to the President for judicial appointments. We can anticipate that President Bush will nominate judges who will be anti-choice.

We are fortunate here in California. Our state constitution protects reproductive choice as a fundamental right to an even greater extent than the federal constitution. MediCal assistance is NOT restricted, as it is under federal law, to cases of life endangerment, fetal deformity, rape, incest or unlawful intercourse with a minor; abortion is considered a regular medical procedure. Although the Legislature did pass a law requiring parental consent, a court has ruled that this law is unconstitutional under the state constitution and has issued a permanent injunction prohibiting its enforcement and we have a strong law protecting access to clinics that provide abortions.

BUT also - 33% of California counties have no identifiable abortion provider, so laws that say that a woman may have an abortion are negated by the lack of access.

Women who need hospital-based abortions may not be able to get them at all. Only five percent of California's hospitals are abortion accessible. Catholic hospitals are taking over non-religious hospitals at a record rate, eliminating abortions, tubal ligations, birth control and emergency contraception. In fact, 82% of Catholic hospitals nationwide do not provide emergency contraception even to women who have been raped. Furthermore, a provision of California law known as the "conscience clause" provides that no physician, registered nurse, licensed vocational nurse, or person with staff privileges at or employed by a hospital or facility, who objects in writing on moral, ethical, or religious grounds, may be required to directly participate in an abortion.

Although we have a clinic protection law, clinics continue to be under fire, literally and figuratively. Here in Oakland, one of the clinics must be defended every single Saturday against abortion foes who harass and try to obstruct young women approaching the clinic, whether for family planning, prenatal or abortion services.

Every one of us must take some responsibility to see that the rights we have won do not erode any further. Keep the pressure on the President and your representatives in Congress and in the State Legislature. Let them know that you care about these issues. If you would like to be on our "action" list for reproductive rights, send an email to: <clichty@dnai.com >.

*-Charlotte Lichterman, Reproductive Rights Consultant*

- Berkeley addresses unless otherwise indicated -

## February

- 21 Wed. 6:30-8 pm Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, President, LWVUS (Price)  
 Speech to Commonwealth Club, Pauley Ballroom, UCB
- 22 Thur. 7:30-9:30 pm Instant Runoff Voting Forum (Lindsay)  
 Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda
- 28 Wed. 4 pm Executive Committee LWVBAE Office (Price)

## March

- 1 Thurs. 7-9 pm **UNIT: Election Systems Study #2** LWVBAE Office (Strasser)
- 3 Sat. 10-noon **UNIT: Election Systems Study #2** LWVBAE Office (Strasser)
- 7 Wed. 4-6:30 pm LWVBAE Board Meeting, LWVBAE Office (Price)
- 7 Wed. 7-9 pm State Election Systems Study Committee Wrap-Up (Strasser)  
 LWVBAE Office
- 8 Thur. Noon-2 pm Speaker Series: Albany Youth Services (Safir)  
 Allan Maris, Mayor, Albany Library, Edith Stone Room
- 9 Fri Noon Deadline for April Voter (Hawley)
- 12 Mon. 4-6 pm Education Committee (call for location) (Lecar)
- 12 Mon. 7:15 pm Environmental Concerns, (Bansner)  
 More Energy Deregulation: Graham Browerstein, TURN  
 Lessly Wikle, PG&E
- 17 Sat. 10 am-noon New/Prospective Member Coffee, LWVBAE Office (Polak)
- 21 Wed. 9 am-noon Action Committee (Brubeck)
- 21 Wed. 4-6 pm Peralta Comm. College Dist. Study (call for location) (Lecar)
- 28 Wed. 4-6 pm Executive Committee LWVBAE Office (Price)

## April

- 4 Wed. 4-6:30 pm LWVBAE Board Meeting, LWVBAE Office (Price)
- 6 Fri. Ed Source Conference, San Ramon (Office, 843-8824)
- 6 Fri. Noon Deadline For May-June Voter (Hawley)
- 9 Mon. 4-6 pm Education Committee (call for location) (Lecar)
- 9 Mon. 7:15 pm Environmental Concerns, (Bansner)
- 10-12 Tues., Wed., Thur. **ASUC ELECTION** (Smith)
- 11 Wed. 4-6 pm Peralta Comm. College Dist. Study (call for location) (Lecar)



12 Thur. Noon-2 pm Speaker Series, Albany Library, Edith Stone Room  
21 Sat. **EARTH DAY**

*(Safir)*