



President: Nancy Bickel

March 2003

Editor: Jean Safir

THE END OF AN ERA

Ever since the fall of 1979, when League president *Eloise Bodine* received a call from the student senate (ASUC) at the University of California, Berkeley, the League has monitored student elections and helped assure a fair and honest election. Before that, two elections had not been certified and had to be repeated. Some students had voted twice and many instances of lack of accountability for the ballots occurred, such as the weekend the voted (but not yet counted) ballots spent traveling to Santa Cruz in the auto of the elections council chair.

The job of the League has been to assure compliance with the ASUC Bylaws and Constitution. These spell out in endless detail the rules for the student election. In the early years, we helped the students improve and amend the Bylaws. Right up to 2002 we talked, trained, and cajoled the students into creating a fair process, observing their bylaws and "getting organized," while we guarded the ballots.

Alas, we are now being replaced by computers.

University administrative staff from Housing, Office of the Registrar, and Information Systems met with the Elections Council Chair to find ways for the ASUC (which is not part of the University) to use the student identification numbers and confidential codes that would make an electronic election possible. A contract between the ASUC and the University will be drafted to enable such an election to take place.

(Continued on page 5)

IN THIS ISSUE

- p. 2 Commissions, Development and the League
In Memoriam
- p. 3 Donations
Board Briefs
Speaker Series
Welcome New Members
- p. 4 Electoral College Debate
Eleanor Cox Moves to Oregon
- p. 5 Environmental Concerns
Tea and Talk
- p. 6 Ready to Get Involved?
Understudy for Future Involvement
Dan Luten, 1909-2003
- p. 7 Read *The VOTER* Online
LWVC State Convention
UNESCO, the US & Afghanistan
- p. 8 Calendar

COMMISSIONS, DEVELOPMENT AND THE LEAGUE: JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

Various folks at City Hall in Berkeley, including the newly elected Mayor Tom Bates and Council Member Gordon Wozniak, are re-considering the structure and function of its 45-plus boards and commissions. This reconsideration is prompted in part by the looming budget crunch, since providing staff support to each body is costly. In addition, some Board and Commission members are reported to have treated staff and members of the public rudely and inappropriately.

A strong reason for taking a fresh look at planning-related boards and commissions is that the approval process for some construction projects is broken. In recent years some projects to create small apartment buildings with homes for low-income or senior residents have had to work for approval for up to three or more years. This lengthy and costly process, including many public hearings and many project changes in response to objections, should result in satisfying all legitimate concerns. But, nevertheless, a group called Neighbors for Responsible Development and several individuals are suing the City of Berkeley and the non-profit and profit-making developers to stop four projects recently approved by the City.

The League Board wants to take a broad and active role in the discussions and decisions that will take place in coming months. After all, improving the functioning of Boards and Commissions and providing affordable housing for very low-income residents are two of the League's most strongly held and long-pursued goals. Here is our opportunity to make a difference.

In the next few months, you can join an intensive short-term effort to observe key Boards and Commissions and report back to the Action Committee on what you see and hear. League Board members will be visiting

some commission meetings; then we'll de-brief and discuss what we've just seen and heard.

We invite you to join us in this effort. We expect to learn a lot and have some very lively discussions. Please let *Lois Brubeck* or me know right away if you'd like to join us.

Lois Brubeck: Lbru94708@aol.com
526-5139

Nancy Bickel: nkbickel@locrian.com
526-4055

Don't live in Berkeley? Albany and Emeryville also offer rich opportunities to look and listen to the doings of elected and appointed bodies in these cities. We currently have no systematic League observers or reporters on government actions of either city. If you'd like to take a look, one of our more experienced Leaguers will be glad to help you learn the ropes, or they would go along for an initial visit. - *Nancy Bickel*, President

To take a look at all the names and doings of all the Councils and Boards in our cities, go to:

www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/citycouncil/agendaindex.htm

www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/commissions/

www.albanyca.org/government.html

www.ci.emeryville.ca.us/gov/cityboards.html

IN MEMORIAM

We regret to report the loss of these League members and will miss their contributions to League programs:

*Theodore A. Dungan*¹ *Daniel B. Luten*¹
*L. Teresa Hultgren*² *Laura S. White*⁴
*Jean Jenny*³

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 1. 15-year member | 3. Lifetime member |
| 2. 35-year member | 4. 2-year member |

DONATIONS in January 2003 to the General Fund

<i>Barbara Alesandrini</i>	<i>Sara Mathews</i>
<i>Eva Brecher</i>	<i>Sylvia McLaughlin</i>
<i>Suzanne & Gordon Chun</i>	<i>Alice Mead</i>
<i>Bruce Harris</i>	<i>Patricia Pope</i>
<i>Louise Larson</i>	<i>Julie Shearer</i>
<i>Charlotte & Martin Lichterman</i>	<i>Lassie & Lloyd Ulman Paul Warner</i>
<i>Jill & Piero Martinucci</i>	<i>Phoebe Watts</i>

to the Foundation

<i>Winfred McLeod</i>	<i>Ruth Schorer</i>
<i>Karen Nelson</i>	<i>Barbara Stern</i>
<i>Barbara Renton</i>	Transaction Financial Corp.

to the Tribute Fund

<i>Eloise Bodine</i> ¹	<i>Judy & Roy</i>
<i>Eva Brecher</i> ⁴	<i>Nakadegawa</i> ²
<i>Evelyn Light</i> ⁴	<i>Jean Safir</i> ¹
<i>Winfred McLaughlin</i> ³	<i>Sherry Smith</i> ⁴

1. In memory of *Suzanne Adams*
2. In honor of *Miriam & Bob Hawley's* 50th wedding anniversary
3. In memory of *Virginia Laurence*
4. In memory of *Dan Luten*

- *Evelyn Light*

BOARD BRIEFS

At its Feb. 5 meeting, the Board:

- approved recommendations from LWVBAE Program Planning Meeting for LWVC study and issues for emphasis & action at the State level during the next 2 years;
- voted to cosponsor a meeting with the United Nations Association on "UNESCO in Afghanistan" on March 30;
- discussed ways to involve more members in LWVBAE activities;
- reviewed plans for a myriad of League activities.

-*Ginette Polak, Secretary*

SPEAKER SERIES

Thursday, March 13, 12 noon to 2 pm
Albany Public Library, Edith Stone Room
1247 Marin Avenue, at Masonic

The redevelopment of University Village is the topic of the next Speaker Series meeting on March 13. Jeffrey Bond, Senior Planner in the UC office of Real Estate & Housing, and Jackie Benirier, also of UC, will speak to us about the University's plans for new development at the Village, which is located in Albany, west of San Pablo Avenue just north of the Berkeley border.

Some of the community's concerns are the amount and use of open space to be provided in the plan; the design of the residential area, including density, circulation and pedestrian access; and the retail space proposed along San Pablo Avenue. Come and hear some lively discussion about issues that will affect both Albany's and Berkeley's future.

As usual, the meeting will be in the Edith Stone Room, which is located at the rear of the library, next to the parking lot. Bring a bag lunch, if you wish; juice will be served.

On **April 3** — a week earlier than our regular schedule — Alameda County Supervisor **Keith Carson** will be our featured speaker for the next Speaker Series gathering. He will speak to us about the expected budget cuts and how the County will be struggling to cope with their impacts.

- *Doris Mendell, committee member*

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ann Berry

Karen Larson

Norbert Bischof

Charles Townes

- *Evelyn Light*

THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE DEBATE

As part of the LWVUS update of the system for electing the US President, a special meeting was held on January 27 at the Berkeley Main Library to hear a debate on the merits of direct election of the president versus the use of the Electoral College. Terri Bimes, Political Science Instructor at UC Berkeley, spoke in favor of direct election, and Teaching Assistant Brendan Doherty spoke in favor of the Electoral College.

For rationality and in keeping with the principle of "One person, one vote", the League of Women Voters' current position of direct election won hands down.

Questions posed included:

- Why did the framers choose the Electoral College?
- Who determines how the states allocate their Electoral College votes?
- How does the Electoral College affect third-party contenders?

The Electoral College electors are determined for each state by adding the number of representatives and senators the state has. The likelihood of getting the required 2/3 vote of both houses of Congress to amend the Constitution to eliminate the Electoral College system of electing the President, appears to be almost impossible. And that is without trying to get 3/4 of the state legislatures to vote for such an amendment.

Several suggestions were made to reform the system without going the Constitutional route. Having the States adopt uniform methods of determining electors, such as by congressional district, might be a way to make the system fairer. It was also suggested that some perks could be offered to the small States to get them to give up some of their power. But is reform even possible?

We will revisit these questions after receiving study materials from LWVUS and will keep you posted in *The Voter*.

- Eloise Bodine, Program VP

ELEANOR COX MOVES TO OREGON

Longtime member, *Eleanor Cox*, moved to Bend, Oregon, in December to be near one of her sons and his family. In all, she has three sons, a daughter and 12 grandchildren. She and her husband, Melvin, moved to California in the early 1940s during the wartime work boom. She joined the work force after her family was grown and she was widowed.

During her membership in the League, Eleanor has served as Administrative Vice-President, Membership Chair, Corresponding Secretary and twice as a member of the Nominating Committee. At one time she was the League representative for Albany and moderated Albany candidate debates. When she was Membership Chair, she began a "personals" column for *The Voter*, much enjoyed by many for several years.

Eleanor is one of those dependable people who would come in every week to do a three-hour tour of duty at the volunteer's desk. She wrote thank you notes for donations and often helped collate the newsletter. In recognition of her unstinting dedication to our League, she was awarded a Certificate of Merit at the 2000 annual meeting.

Now 88 years old, Eleanor is content to be as fit as she is, near family and living in a place with friendly people and good food. We shall miss her wry humor, her frank and affectionate personality and her willingness to help.

For those who would like to contact her, her address is: 1801 NE Lotus Drive #w204, Bend, Oregon 97701. Her phone is 541-312-3146. She would enjoy hearing from you.

- Linda Carothers

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

March 10, 2003 — 7:30 pm

1340 Arch Street

(Continued from Page 1)

This year the ASUC plans to provide computers at each polling place, and students will have their identity checked electronically when they enter their ballot choices. This should eliminate the many hours of entering votes into the computer, as well as the physical work of printing, distributing, collecting and securing paper ballots. The League will have only the very minimal role of controlling access to the server to assure security.

The Elections Council Chair would like the students to be able to vote online from any computer, but the ASUC Senate has not made this decision yet. Students overwhelmingly support online elections and the Daily Californian wrote a supporting editorial. The advantages cited were: equal accessibility for all students, efficiency and cost savings (the cost of the League contract!).

Many senators have reservations about voting online, such as voter fraud, the inability to guarantee that voters are not pressured when they cast their votes and the security of the server. We have additional concerns that cost savings may not materialize for several years, the Elections Council may miss the League's coaching and greater access may not increase voter participation, which requires a great deal more than just being able to vote in the comfort of home.

Our League wishes the students a successful election and we can look forward to a less hectic spring. However, we will miss seeing the wonderful League volunteers who have worked on the election. We have all enjoyed our yearly contact with each other and with the University and the students. The League has many opportunities to make a difference in our local communities; let's all get busy working on League projects there.

- Jane Coulter, ASUC election coordinator

P.S. We are planning an "end of era" party in April, so that those who volunteered to help out on the ASUC election for all those many years can get together and share our memories and a good time. Look for details in the April Voter.

At our next Environmental Concerns meeting, Richard Register will speak about ecological design and several planning ordinances proposed for Berkeley. He is studying how to build cities in balance with nature. He has a plan for ecologically responsible urban design and how we can apply it in downtown Berkeley. This is sure to be a lively meeting about a vision for Berkeley, and it has action potential for the LWVBAE.

We will begin with a short presentation by Carol Barrett, the Director of Planning for the City of Berkeley. She will tell us about the downtown elements of the recently adopted General Plan to give us a context for Richard's proposals.

Contact person is *Carol Stone* 549-0959 or seastone11@hotmail.com.

TEA & TALK

The first ever "Tea & Talk" (or "Clip & Sip") for LWVBAE was held at noon on January 30. A small and lively group discussed the need to repeal Prop 13, the need for citizenship education, the vehicle license tax, local government issues, and housing. Several people brought clippings to discuss.

What about the war in Iraq? Where will we be by **March 27, our next scheduled "Tea & Talk"**? Join us and bring your concerns and your lunch. If you would like to come, but the time does not work for you, let us know and we'll see about finding a better arrangement.

- *Eloise Bodine*, Program VP 845-0974

READY TO GET INVOLVED?

Shireen Burns, Chair, and Nominating Committee members *Doris Nassiry*, *Ruth Ganong*, *Karen Nelson* and *Mary Wainwright* are starting their quest for Leaguers who will serve on the Board and work at essential off-Board jobs from June 2003-May 2004.

We welcome you to volunteer for consideration or to suggest your friends and colleagues for consideration. Members of the Committee will call and chat with prospective nominees to make sure they are willing to serve and that they are attracted by the job. If you're taking some time off to raise your children, relax or have just retired, we have jobs that will require as much [or as little] time, challenge and interesting, collaborative work as you are seeking.

All League positions are open for consideration. We like to rotate our members through many jobs to develop more skills and share responsibilities. Experienced Board and League members will welcome and train their immediate or future successors.

Open positions include the following: President, Vice-Presidents (for Program, Action, Administration, Election Services and Community Outreach and Development), Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Secretary, Chairs and members of the following standing committees: Membership, Environmental Concerns, Speaker Series, Special Events, Publicity, Representative to Bay Area League, and Nominating for 2004-5. Many jobs may be done with or without serving on the Board.

Please contact *Shireen Burns* at 527-1339 or <theburns@idiom.com>.

Want to Understudy for Future Involvement?

If you think you're not ready to take on a big job, but would like to work with others and learn how the League does it, please contact *Jinky Gardner* at 548-5292 or via e-mail at <jinkybsg@earthlink.net>. Here are just a few of our many opportunities:

- Publicize League events
- Order, distribute and sell League publications
- Distribute voter registration forms
- Maintain League clipping scrapbooks
- Help plan and run meetings and events, big and public or small and monthly
- Identify and develop topics and speakers for public meetings; moderate meetings
- Welcome attendees to meetings
- Study the process of electing the President
- Learn and plan for election services in 2004
- Work on the Smart Voter Web site supplying local information to this state-wide service
- Train and then speak on League issues to other organizations
- Join the Action Committee and begin to follow one or more issues at local, state or national level of government
- "Adopt" a new Leaguer -- accompany him/her to several League meetings and get acquainted
- Join the Membership Committee to plan training and events for members
- Volunteer once a month/week in the office or help with big mailings, such as *The Voter*
- Help schedule and train volunteers

Dan Luten, 1909 - 2003

- *Nancy Bickel*, President

Marion Luten reports the passing of her beloved husband *Dan*, a long time member of LWVBAE. Their family invites friends to a celebration of his life on **March 23 at 1 pm in the Faculty Clubhouse** on the UC Berkeley campus. If you plan to come, please call 510-524-4046 or email <thl@luten.com> before March 16, 2003.

Read *The Voter* Online

The LWVBAE *Voter* has been available for online reading for several years. Should you want to read the electronic version but are not sure how to do so, here are some (hopefully) simple instructions.

1. open your web browser and go to the League web site at <http://home.pacbell.net/lwvbae>
2. click *The Voter* link in the menu box near the top of the home page
3. the current *Voter* should open in a new browser window
4. when you've finished reading, close the *Voter's* browser window without exiting your browser
5. you should see the LWVBAE home page in the first browser window again

If you do not see *The Voter* in the browser window that opens (it may take a minute or two to download and appear), you most likely need to install the free Acrobat Reader program for your web browser. To do so,

1. click the boxed *Voter* Archive link in the menu box near top of our home page
2. the *Voter* archive page should appear in the space below the home page menu
- C. click the Adobe Acrobat icon you'll see on the *Voter* Archive page
4. the Adobe download page should open in a new browser window
- E. follow the instructions you'll see there to download and install the Acrobat Reader program
6. return to step 1 above

If you want to read earlier issues of *The Voter*, the process is similar to Steps 1-5, but you'll click the Archive link instead of the *Voter* link. Once the *Voter* Archive page appears in your browser window, click the issue of *The Voter* that you want to see.

- Bill Chapman, Web Master

LWV CALIFORNIA STATE CONVENTION

May 15-18

Oakland Marriott City Center Hotel

See the League in Action
Attend business sessions, caucuses,
workshops
Meet fellow Leaguers from across the State

There is still time to sign up as a volunteer
to help with:

Registration	Plenaries
Workshops	Marketplace
Information Kiosk	Dine Around

Send your name, phone number and e-mail
address to: Bunny Robinson
Vivrbnsn@aol.com
344244 Arizona Street
Union City, CA 94587

UNESCO, THE UNITED STATES AND AFGANISTAN

Sunday, March 30, 2 - 5 pm

Booth Auditorium, Boalt Hall, UC campus

This event focuses on the community's support of US re-entry into UNESCO and highlights the work of UNESCO on behalf of education, literacy and capacity-building in Afghanistan. It is sponsored by the United Nations Association, East Bay Chapter, and co-sponsored by LWVBAE, among many others.

Speakers will include Afghan historian Dr. Senzil Nawid, a member of the local Afghan community working on literacy projects in Kabul, and a UNESCO expert. Questions will be welcomed from the audience. Akbar Ramish, a well-known Afghan singer and musician, will perform, and traditional Afghan delicacies will be available. Admission is free and donations will be accepted on behalf of the Afghan Widow's Project and UNESCO's educational programs in Afghanistan.

- Berkeley addresses unless otherwise indicated -

CALENDAR

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FEBRUARY

27 Thurs. 11:30am — LWVBAE ANNUAL LUNCHEON — Attorney General Bill Lockyer
Radisson Hotel, Berkeley Marina K. Nelson, 525-1673

MARCH

5 Wed. 4-6p Board Meeting LWVBAE Office Bickel, 526-4055

7 Fri. Noon April VOTER deadline jeansafir@att.net Safir, 524-9088

10 Mon. 7:30p Environmental Concerns 1340 Arch St.(Bansner) C. Stone, 549-0959
Richard Register, "Ecological Design" in Berkeley

13 Thurs. Noon Speaker Series: UC Village Redevelopment Mendell, 843-8824
Albany Library, Edith Stone Room, 1247 Marin Ave.

20 Thurs. 7:30p Action Committee 1419 Grant St.(Watts) Brubeck, 526-5139

27 Thurs. Noon Tea and Talk LWVBAE Office Bodine, 845-0974

30 Sun. 2-5p UNESCO, the United States & Afghanistan Bodine, 845-0974
Booth Auditorium, Boalt Hall School of Law, UC Berkeley

APRIL

2 Wed. 4-6p Board Meeting LWVBAE Office Bickel, 526-4055

3 Thurs. Noon Speaker Series: County Supervisor Keith Carson Mendell, 843-8824
Albany Library, Edith Stone Room, 1247 Marin Ave.

4 Fri. Noon May-June VOTER deadline jeansafir@att.net Safir, 524-9088

7 Mon. 7:30p Environmental Concerns 1340 Arch St.(Bansner) C. Stone, 549-0959

MAY

15-18 Thurs. - Sun. LWVC STATE CONVENTION S. Smith, 548-1769
Oakland Marriott City Center Hotel



IT'S EASY TO JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Just fill in the blanks below, clip and mail this information to us with your check for \$50 annual dues made out to:

LWVBAE
1414 University Avenue, Suite D
Berkeley, CA 94702-1509

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel. Day: _____ Eve: _____

Fax: _____ E-Mail: _____

Joining 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 the extent allowed by law.

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

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