

The VOTER

LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS
of BERKELEY, ALBANY
and EMERYVILLE



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President: Jo Ann B. Price

April, 2000

Editor: Bob Hawley

Community College Background for Vista Community College Study June UNIT

The Community Colleges, started in 1907 as an extension of the K-12 system, obtained their own state-level chancellor in 1967. By now, the system covers the state in a network of 71 districts with 107 campuses, serving 1.4 million students.

The communities of Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland and Piedmont are served by the Peralta Community College District, composed of four campuses - Laney and Merritt in Oakland, the College of Alameda in Alameda, and Vista in Berkeley.

Although the campuses and the voting wards of Peralta's 7-member Board of Trustees are set up geographically, to serve their local communities, students enroll in whichever college best serves their interests, schedules, and convenience. Laney has the biggest enrollment, with almost 12,000 students; and Vista is the smallest, with 4,200 students. Roughly 3/4 of the student body attends part-time, and the average age of students enrolled is 34.

Every school has a core academic program enabling students to complete the first two years of a traditional baccalaureate program and then transfer into the 4-year state university system or a campus of the University of California. In addition, the colleges offer 2-year Associate in the Arts (AA) terminal degrees, and certificates of technical competence in a wide variety of vocational fields.

Each school also has its own distinctive programs - Merritt, with its extensive grounds, features Landscaping and Horticulture; Laney offers a full course in commercial, quantity cooking; College of Alameda has auto mechanics and avionics. Vista, the only college without a permanent campus of its own, has focused on offerings that don't require much space or elaborate equipment - programs in biotechnology and multimedia.

The question of Vista's place in the Peralta District, its mission, its financing and its permanence, has been a vexed one since the college was created in the '70s. When Merritt College, originally located on Grove Street in Oakland, moved to its present location in the Oakland hills in 1971, students and community members protested strongly that the citizens

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President's Column

Thank you! Kudos! Thank you!

It is such fun and so gratifying to work with the dedicated women and men who make up LWVBAE's membership. Our League is working hard and well on the road to accomplishing the goals we set for ourselves in July when we put together our "Build the Future" program. Every part of LWVBAE is "cooking". We're providing service to the voters, the community, and our members (no order intended).

Right now a special thank-you needs to be given to all of you who worked so hard on our non-partisan services during the California March Primary season, with particular mention of the following Leaguers:

- *Phoebe Watts*, Voter Service and Smart Voter Chair, and all the members who helped to distribute 8,000 Pros & Cons and 1,500 Easy Readers to over 50 sites.
- *Eloise Bodine* and *Jane Coulter*, Chair and co-Chair of the Speakers Bureau, who arranged training for 10 League speakers, and then scheduled speaking engagements for community groups, ranging over six weeks.
- *Allie Norton*, Voter Registration Coordinator, who made sure our registration form sites were kept full prior to the February 7 deadline for the March Primary.
- *Jill Martinucci*, TV/Video Project Chair, who produced three taped TV shows on Props. 21, 26, and 28 that were shown on Berkeley's and Emeryville's cable channels, as well as being available on tape for members' use.
- *Evelyn Light* and *Ruthann Taylor*, Office Volunteer Coordinators, and the office volunteers who ably fielded the ever-increasing questions that flooded the office in the weeks running up to the Primary and on election day.

This is a proud moment for the League when we can briefly sit back and say: "Mission accomplished. Job well done." Now on to the next project.

I must also give heartfelt thanks to the League of Women Voters of California President Gail Dryden, her Board and staff. Without their diligent and exceptional efforts, we would not have the excellent materials that we local Leagues need to do our job. It is the state League that gives us:

- Pros & Cons and Easy Reader publications, backed up by in-depth research information.

- The Action Guide that backs up the stands on issues the state League takes in an election on behalf of all California Leagues.
- The State Bill Status Report, that keeps us up-to-date with the Senate and Assembly bills of interest to the League.
- In the Capitol Corridors, that analyses chosen current topics of immediate importance.
- The sample letters to be sent by Leagues on issues we choose to support or oppose.
- The post-Board Update on all the topics reported, discussed, and/or passed at each state Board meeting.

Here, I must mention two LWVBAE past presidents who serve with distinction on the state Board: *Anne Henderson*, Legislative Director, and *Doris Fine*, Government Director. We're proud of the work they do. So, KUDOS to our California state President and Board who are doing a textbook job of keeping the local California Leagues informed, involved, and supported. The LWVBAE is very pleased with the work they do for us all.

-J o A n n

Sonoma County League Lodging



The members of the League of Women Voters of Sonoma County invite you to their homes to visit beautiful Sonoma County. Breakfast and a helpful orientation start your day. A donation to the LWV of Sonoma County is:

\$40 per night for one adult

\$45 per night for two adults

Reservations should be made one week in advance if possible. Call one of the numbers below to reserve.

Phyllis Clement, 707-823-0925

Elizabeth Hawthorne, 707-433-5477

LWV of Sonoma County

2421 Coddington Center

Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Phone: 707-546-5943

March Board Briefs

The Board met on Wednesday morning, March 1, at the Emery Bay Clubhouse.

We heard a report about Voter Services activities for the March 7 election and learned that over 7000 Pros and Cons were distributed, as well as 1500 Easy Reading Voter Guides. 1000 of the guides were in English, 200 in Spanish, and 300 were in Chinese. There will be extra coverage in the League office on election day since it is usual to get many calls asking about voting.

The treasurer gave a report of the first eight months of this fiscal year and said she expects to have a surplus. We were also told of *Meda Rechen's* bequest of \$5000 to our League.

The Board accepted reports and recommendations made at the local program planning meeting at which LWVBAE and LWVBA planning were discussed.

The Board authorized writing a letter to the Berkeley city council about the Planning Commission's lack of appropriate process and concern for conflicts of interest among its members at the workshops on the Berkeley General Plan.

A letter to our three city councils asking that they support AB 1219 (Kuehl) was also authorized.

Plans were made to recruit members to work in the ASUC elections in April. LWVBAE will also participate in Berkeley Earth Day 2000 on April 22.

President *Price* showed us a notebook she assembled of League member reactions to the sale by LWVUS of their Democracy Network (DNet) website to Grassroots.com. Most were negative. The notebook is in the office for anyone to examine. The Board authorized sending a letter to the Board of LWVUS detailing our concerns about this sale, and one to the Board of LWVC.

-*Violet Feinauer*, Secretary

Speaker Series

Berkeley Health Programs and Services
Tuesday, April 4, 12 noon to 2 pm
Albany Public Library, Marin &
Masonic Avenues, Edith Stone Room

Berkeley is one of only three cities in California providing health services to its residents. In most cities, these services are the responsibility of the county government. Does this give Berkeley residents special advantages?

Come to the Speaker Series meeting on April 4 to hear Dr. *Poki Namkung*, Health Officer for the City of Berkeley - and, incidentally, a member of our League. She will tell us which programs are most successful, sources of funding, linkages and comparisons with county programs, and more.

Bring lots of questions, and lunch too, if you'd like. The Edith Stone room is next to the parking area at the rear of the library; there is ample parking, is wheel chair accessible, and is serviced by AC Transit a block away. If you need a ride, call me.

-*Jean Safir*, Program VP

ASUC Election Volunteers Needed

All members of LWVBAE will receive a call in March from a League Board member reminding them of the League's participation as poll watchers and vote count observers for the annual ASUC student body election at UCB. The election runs three days, April 11, 12, and 13. Vote counting proceeds April 21, 22, and 23 (yes, Easter weekend).

All members will be asked to call me to sign up for slots on the master schedule. You will be asked to take a shift (or, if you like, two or more) that will run from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm, or from noon to 4:30 pm. We are staffing these positions in cooperation with the Piedmont League, and we are asking them to handle the evening shifts.

Please feel free to call me before the Board member calls you; desirable slots are filled first come, first served!

Thanks to all of you for helping in this, the League's annual single biggest fund-raiser.

-*Sherry Smith*, Community Services VP

Come to a Housing UNIT
On March 26 or 27
See special insert in this Voter

Donors Through February

General Fund

Anonymous	<i>Charlotte Lichterman</i>
<i>Arrietta Chakos</i>	Meda Rechen Trust
<i>Elizabeth De Velbiss</i>	<i>Helen Wachs</i>
<i>Richard M. Diamond</i>	<i>Paul L. Warner</i>

Foundation

<i>Georgia Babladelis</i>	<i>Janet Strothman</i> ²
<i>Felicia Bock</i> ¹	

In Honor or Memory of:

1 - <i>Meda Rechen</i>	2 - <i>Ann Baeck</i>
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Personals

Former UCB Chancellor and Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, *Ira Michael Heyman*, has been sworn in as the US Department of Interior's designee to the seven-member San Francisco Presidio Trust Board. Professor *Heyman* was the speaker at last year's LWVBAE Inaugural Community luncheon in August. We wish a speedy total recovery to *Frances Townes* who is at home and doing well after having undergone thyroid surgery. *Ora Huth* had a large part in making the retirement celebration for LWV Berkeley past president *Harriet Nathan* (see Personals, March Voter). *Ora* was an instigator, expediter and spoke of *Harriet's* work with the League. *Adelia Lines* is the recipient of the Downtown Business Association (DBA) top award, the President's award. *Adelia* and the Berkeley Public Library staff were honored for their work involved with maintaining library services during the expansion and renovation of the main library.

Sherry Smith is serving as the chair of the Berkeley Civic Art Commission, a publicly supported Berkeley Administrative program. The commission qualifies, oversees, and encourages public art production and may offer grants to subsidize art projects. *Ginette Polak* has returned from southern California where she was mother of the bride at a genuine western wedding complete with horses and cowboy boots. Best wishes to the newly married couple for love and laughter ever after.

-*Eleanor Cox*, Corresponding Secretary

BUSD Elementary Tutoring Programs in Reading

Tutoring programs in the Berkeley Unified School District elementary grades are looking for a few good folks to help bring all our students to literacy. Can you help?

Cal Reads, under the auspices of the Graduate School of Education, trains and places undergraduates as tutors in both Malcolm X and Willard Middle School, with the ongoing support and technical expertise of advanced graduate students.

The tutors are impressive in action, and the feedback, and ready-made materials provided by the coordinators made the task look very do-able. Since there are more youngsters needing help than there are available undergraduates, the program is looking to the community for more tutors.

The time commitment for the present semester would be an initial hour of training, and then 3 mornings a week for an hour and a half (two students each morning) for about 6 weeks, until the middle of May. If that works out well, we can consider revisiting the program in the fall.

Franklin School is also looking for reading tutors, and several Leaguers have already signed on.

If you are interested in joining them, please call and we can talk about assignments that will fit your schedule.

-*Helene Lecar*, Education Chair

Update Your Who Represents BAE

After the January 2000 Who Represents Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville went to the printer, Emeryville selected its mayor. Please update your copy and make a few corrections (corrections are underlined below).

Under **Emeryville City Council**, add Mayor after Richard Kassis, and add Vice Mayor after Gary Caffey. Under **Emery Board of Education**, correct Vance's first name to Gladys. Under **United States House of Representatives**, correct e-mail to barbara.lee@mail.house.gov.

-*Ginette Polak*, Administrative VP

Vista Study (continued from Page 1)

of the northern Peralta cities were being deprived of their college. Vista was the result, conceived originally as a stop-gap, in rented quarters, until a permanent site could be found. Despite repeated efforts over many years to regularize Vista's position, the Peralta Board has not been able to agree on any proposed solution.

Two bond measures - Measure A for \$47 million in 1965, which paid for the construction of the other three campuses, and Measure B for \$50 million in 1992 - were committed with no reference to Vista's needs.

Supporters grew so disillusioned that in 1995, they initiated the lengthy and complicated proceedings to de-annex Vista from the Peralta District altogether. In response, the District Board put on the 1996 ballot a measure the voters passed, which set aside \$7.5 million remaining from Measure B funds and authorized an additional \$8 million for the acquisition and construction of a Vista campus. This represents roughly half the cost of putting up a 100,000-120,000 square foot building in downtown Berkeley.

In November 1997, the State Board of Governors approved the petition to allow Vista to submit its de-annexation proposal to the voters, but the effort was stopped in the courts. In July of 1998, the State Community College Chancellor negotiated a last-ditch settlement requiring the District to do 5 things:

- acquire a site for Vista by January 1, 1999;
- endorse formally a mission statement and an educational and facilities plan for the college;
- gradually increase the proportion of full-time to part-time faculty at the college until it matches the ratios at the other Peralta campuses by the year 2008-09.
- establish a benchmarked operating budget allocation as a base from which to negotiate annual budget allotments, and to consider establishing an allocation formula so that Vista receives its fair share of the District's budget as a matter of course.

In response, the District Board has finally taken title to a site on Center Street in Berkeley, but it has yet to approve an architect. It has endorsed a mission statement and approved an education plan for the college. It has increased the full-time faculty positions

-(Continued in next column)

Growing a General Plan Organically

The Environmental Concerns Committee was honored in February to discuss general plans with Claudia Cappio, the Planning Director of Emeryville. As Cappio has also served as the Planning Director of Albany, she has viewed Berkeley planning from both sides of the border and is now extending her circuit by accepting a deputy planning directorship in Oakland.

Claudia outlined the contents and typical process for developing a general plan. She noted that Berkeley's course of creating area plans and revising zoning before completing a general plan is not the logical sequence. There are likely to be inconsistencies between the various documents. She also said it was important to have firm Council support for the general plan process and that it should not be scheduled in an election season.

From her Emeryville perspective, the lack of a Berkeley transportation improvement plan complementing with Emeryville's plan was remiss. Claudia expressed pride in the progress Emeryville had made in developing new housing compared to Berkeley's planned commitment. But even with an improved jobs-housing balance and transportation improvements, she warned Leaguers not to drive to Emeryville to shop Saturday afternoons.

-Eva Bansner

by four (but also frozen a number of appointments, so the size of the teaching staff is actually slightly smaller this year than it was in 1998--the freeze on positions is District-wide, but pinches Vista most). The question of a budget allocation formula remains unresolved 15 months past the January 1, 1999 deadline for action.

Now that the Board has resolved to place a new \$150 million bond issue on the November 2000 ballot, Vista supporters must decide whether they can accept the assurances of the Peralta Board that these bond revenues will indeed provide adequate funds to finally construct a proper home for the college in downtown Berkeley.

-Helene Lecar, Vista Community College Study Chair

State Action

With the Primary past, the LWVC will now devote much of its energy to issues before the state legislature that deal with sustainable communities and children and families. AB 1219 (Kuehl) requires that before giving final approval to a residential subdivision of more than 200 lots, a city or county must receive written assurance by a water service provider that the reasonable water needs of the project will be met - through existing capacity, planned expansion, or a distribution formula. **Alert: write Senator Perata urging his support of AB 1219 (Kuehl).**

Two bills carried over from 1999 address the special needs of foster children as they reach adulthood and make the transition into independent living. SB 147 (Alpert) would extend MediCal benefits to foster youth until their 21st birthday. AB 434 (Aroner) would provide grants equal to the average cost of food and housing for emancipated foster youth college students living off-campus.

The Governor's budget focuses on education, with proposals for merit scholarships for students; expansion of the teacher institute program; incentives to help recruit and retain teachers; funds for computer acquisition and training of teachers; and institutes for Science and Innovation at three UC campuses. Higher education would receive significant funding increases. There is a modest \$93 million in programs and \$47 million in tax credits to improve care for seniors. His transportation proposals expedite, rather than expand, funding for transportation, with a \$121 million allocation for one-time rail projects.

The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) criticizes several points. On education, it recommends a shift of funding from the UC and CSU higher education systems to the K-12 schools to increase discretionary funding. The office points out that the proposed budget contains 6% base growth for UC and CSU, in addition to funds for enrollment growth and policy initiatives. In contrast, the K-12 system would receive 2.84% base growth. Even with a shift of \$134 million, UC would have a total budget increase of 9% and CSU an increase of 7.4%.

The LAO also suggests options for increasing K-14 spending; recommends more flexibility for school districts and school sites in applying funds to local needs; and recommends directing teacher recruitment and retention funds to the neediest schools as block grants. -(continued in next column)

Ecological City Building

Environmental Concerns

Monday, April 10, 7:15 pm
1340 Arch Street, Berkeley

Based upon the strong recommendation of *Lenora Young*, we will view a video presentation on Curitiba, Brazil.

"Ecological City: A Shared Course" is being brought to the League by Tim Alley, Ecology Programs Coordinator of the Oakland Museum Educational Department. He will be returning from a conference in Curitiba the day before the meeting, so his perspective will be very fresh. Curitiba has made amazing progress in utilizing transit effectively, providing housing, reducing solid waste and air pollution, and educating its citizenry.

We hope you will join us to see what inspired leadership and cooperation can accomplish in city building.

-*Eva Bansner*, Environmental Concerns
Co-Chair

A Few Good People Wanted

Do you want to help make the League an even more effective voice in the community? Have you been thinking about a project you'd like to work on in the League? The Nominating Committee welcomes all suggestions for projects and for the people to do them. We're seeking people to help increase our membership, work on action and community programs, and prepare Board minutes. Let us know what you would like to do, and give us tips about other people who might like to be invited to do League jobs. Call the office or any member of the Nominating Committee with your ideas.

-*Mim Hawley*, Nominating Committee Chair

Budget subcommittee hearings are beginning to flesh out details of the budget, and the administration will bring in revised revenue estimates and expenditure plans in May.

Summarized from In the Capitol Corridors published by LWVC.

-*Lois Brubeck*, Action VP

Instant Runoff Voting Study

Our LWVBAE study of the Instant Runoff Voting method is well under way, with Consensus UNITS scheduled to be held in May, 2000.

Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) is a method for determining the winner of a single seat office in one election, without the need of a special second election to pick a winner when no candidate gets a majority of the votes cast. Under IRV, the runoff is accomplished from information already available from the ballots initially cast.

Here is how it works: Instead of casting a single vote for the preferred candidate, the voter specifies her first choice, second choice, third choice (and so on) among all the candidates. Thus the name of each candidate appears on the ballot and the voter puts the appropriate 1,2, 3 (and so on) in a box adjacent to the name.

When the votes are tabulated, only the first choice votes are initially counted. A candidate with more than 50 percent of the votes cast (a majority) is declared elected, just as in the usual method of election. If no candidate has a majority of the votes cast, instead of holding a second or runoff election between the two top candidates, the IRV mechanism operates as follows: The candidate with the lowest number of first choice votes is eliminated and the second choice votes for those ballots are transferred to the remaining candidates accordingly. This process is repeated until one of the candidates has a majority and is declared elected. It should be pointed out that the more choices a voter expresses on the ballot, the greater their impact on the results can be, even though they are not required to rank all of the candidates.

Another way of looking at it, that some people find helpful, is to suppose that the election is being held in a hall where each voter lines up behind a placard bearing the name of her favorite candidate. If no candidate has a majority of the voters, the weakest candidate is declared defeated and her voters are free to join one of the other lines, the process being continued until one of the candidates has in her queue more than 50% of the voters in the hall.

A great deal of attention is currently being paid to this possible change in election method. For example, other local Leagues in California and elsewhere are conducting studies, and League studies at the State and National level are either under way or are under serious

consideration. The reasons for this development stem from the fact that there are a number of apparent advantages to the IRV method, of which a few can be stated here. (1) Runoff elections are costly. (2) Usually fewer voters participate in runoffs than in the original election. (3) With IRV, a voter who really prefers a candidate with unlikely prospects of winning, can vote that preference without "wasting" a vote; if a preferred candidate is eliminated, a second choice vote will count and the voter still affects the outcome. (4) It is thought by many that negative campaigning is lessened with IRV because candidates can lose possible second choice votes by unfair attacks on other candidates.

Our study strives, as always, to examine these apparent advantages in a critical way and to identify for League members what we see as important disadvantages of IRV as an election method for our cities. We are assuming that suitable election equipment will be installed in Alameda County for other reasons, so that the cost of this equipment needed to conduct an IRV election will not be an issue. We also assume, for the sake of this study, that any legislation needed to run IRV elections will be enacted. A possible outcome, then, would be for our League to support the adoption of IRV in our cities as soon as suitable equipment and enabling legislation is in place.

Berkeley voters recently decided to hold runoffs in single winner elections only if no candidate received 45% (instead of more than 50%) of the votes cast. To many, this is seen as a step backward from democratic elections that the adoption of the IRV election method would reverse.

-John Reynolds, Study Coordinator

Save The Date

Thursday, August 24, 2000
2nd Annual LWVBAE
Community Luncheon
11:30 am - 1 pm

Volunteers needed.
Karen Nelson, Co-chair

Calendar

- Berkeley addresses unless otherwise indicated -

March

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

4	Tue.	12 - 2 pm	Speaker Series: Berkeley Health Dept. Director	Albany Library, Edith Stone Room, Marin & Masonic Ave.	(Safir)
4	Tue.	7:30 pm	Program Advisory Comm.		(Safir)
5	Wed.	9 am - noon	Board Meeting	Emery Bay Club House, Emeryville	(Price)
7	Fri.	Noon	May-June Voter Deadline	LWVBAE Office	(Hawley)
10	Mon.	7:15 pm	Environmental Concerns: Ecological City Design		(Bansner)
11	Tue. through 13 Thurs.		— ASUC ELECTION MONITORING —		(Smith)
11	Tue.	8:30am-3pm	Women in Action Lobby Day	Sacramento	(Price)
13	Thurs.	7 pm	IRV Study Committee		(Reynolds)
19	Wed.	9 am - noon	Action Committee		(Brubeck)
21	Fri.	10 am	Education Committee		(Lecar)
22	Sat.	11am - 5:30pm	Earth Day	Civic Center Park, Berkeley	(Smith)
26	Wed.	9 am - noon	Executive Committee	LWVBAE Office	(Price)
26	Wed.	1 pm	Vista Study Committee		(Lecar)
26	Wed.	7 - 9 pm	Housing UNIT		(Adams)
27	Thurs.	12 - 2 pm	Housing UNIT	Albany Library, Edith Stone Room, Marin & Masonic Ave.	(Adams)
29	Sat.	10 am - 1 pm	New Member Orientation	LWVBAE Office	(Wainwright)

May

3	Wed.	9 am - noon	Board Meeting	Emery Bay Club House, Emeryville	(Price)
14	Sun.		"Million Mom March" (vs. gun violence), Washington, D.C.		

June

1	Thurs.	5:30 - 8:30 pm	— ANNUAL MEETING — SAVE THE DATE — (Safir)		
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