



The VOTER

LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS
of BERKELEY, ALBANY and EMERYVILLE

President: Sherry Smith

April 2006

Editors: Chapman, Smith & Brandes

LWVBAE MAKES FIRST BANSNER FUND AWARD

The League of Women Voters of Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville is pleased to make the first Eva Alexis Bansner Fund for Sustainable Communities Award in the amount of \$3,500 to Caryl Hart. The focus of the work that the grant will support is equitable access to open space and parkland in California. Ms. Hart is a second year Ph.D. candidate in the Division of Society and Environment in UC Berkeley's Department of Natural Resources.

The League wants to support her research as she seeks to provide a framework for park and open space planners to better serve the needs of diverse and underserved populations.

From several excellent applicants, the committee interviewed two other high-caliber finalist candidates. Glenda Humiston's subject was **Agricultural Policies for Food Security, Sustainability, and Social Equity**; and Yvonne Ybarra's was **The Development of Ecotourism in Guatemala**, using Costa Rica as a basis for comparison.

After considerable deliberation, the committee recommended Caryl Hart to the Foundation Board as the first Bansner Fund grantee. Her study, **Open Space and Environmental Justice in California**, has immediate relevance and the potential for affecting public policy in areas that exemplify League positions on the environment and social justice.

Caryl's background includes work with the California State Parks and Recreation Commission, California State Parks Program Planning and Policy Committee, California Outdoor Recreation Plan Committee, and the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District. She has also served as a public defender. We found this background, combined with her academic research topic, most in keeping with the Bansner Fund mission:

"... to further the integration of natural resource, land use, and economic planning development with the most immediate relevance and potential for affecting public policy as we honor the League and Bansner's work for beautiful, healthy, urban environments, sustainable land use planning, responsible stewardship, visionary leadership and good government."

We look forward to learning more about Caryl Hart's work during a public presentation she will make to the League later this year.

Carol Stone, Chair, Bansner Fund Committee

IN THIS ISSUE	
p. 2	President's Column
p. 3	Local Program Planning Eva Brecher, 1914-2006
p. 4	Peralta Bond Estate Planning Board Briefs
p. 5	Where your Membership Payment Goes February Donors New Members
p. 6	Calendar

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The following concludes Will Travis' keynote address at the Bay Area League's "State of the Bay" symposium in January. To read or reread the first half, see the March VOTER, either in print or in the VOTER archive section of our web site.

Sherry Smith, President

Why The Bay Matters (conclusion)

The Bay is our region's most valuable economic resource. But I believe the Bay matters most not because of its scientific, environmental or economic value, but because of a role it plays that is more subtle, yet far more profound. In many ways, the Bay's greatest importance is its spiritual value.

The Bay is the heart, soul and essence of our region. The Bay gives our region its name and creates the sense of place which defines the community where we live. The Bay is our Eiffel Tower, our El Capitan, our Big Ben. It is the visual icon which gives our region its identity as a place different from everywhere else.

The fact that the Bay still exists is a living tribute to the three visionary women who started the Save the Bay movement half a century ago. By its very existence, the Bay is a testimonial to the spirit of American democracy.

The Bay is our connection to the global environment inland of the Delta and beyond the Golden Gate. The water in the Bay may have fallen as snow in the Sierra Nevada, washed over a waterfall in the southern Cascades, begun as a rain squall that spoiled an afternoon picnic of a family from Los Angeles or lapped the feet of a kid walking on a beach in Japan.

The Bay is a stopping point on the Pacific Flyway for the wild birds on their long migration between the Arctic and South America. The skies over the Bay are also enlivened by man-made birds carrying passengers between the rest of the world and our region.

The Bay is a stage where an engineering and global economic drama plays every day. Giant container ships sail into the Bay and make their way beneath majestic bridges to ports where their cargo is unloaded by machines out of Star Wars and placed on mile-long trains that head off toward the Sierra Nevada carrying goods from China to Wal-Marts across America.

The Bay is a library filled with the writings of Jack London, Dashiell Hammet and Herb Caen. In another part of this library the filled flatlands around the shoreline remind us that for over a century we treated the Bay like ordinary real estate. The wetlands which are emerging where the Bay was once diked for salt ponds represent redemption from our past sins and offer hope for a better future. Thus, the Bay is both a book of history and a hymnal. It provides both a chilling record of our past mistakes, and offers inspiration to guide us in the future.

The islands that punctuate the Bay tell a story rich in texture, intrigue and inspiration. In the past, they were used for prisons, lighthouses, immigration centers, military outposts, hunting clubs and farms. Today they are wildlife refuges, villages, parks and hotels. And tomorrow they promise to become whole new communities, destination resorts and wilderness sanctuaries.

Many of us live in beautiful communities where we can gaze down upon the Bay from our homes. But even if we can't see the Bay, it finds us. On summer days when Sacramento is sweltering, the Bay engages in a meteorological magic that envelopes some of us in fog and provides natural air conditioning for the rest of us.

When you're on a small sailboat in the middle of the Bay and the winds are high and the night is dark, you are in a wilderness that is about as far from civilization as you can get. But when, on a warm, sunny afternoon, you're sitting behind third base at the ballpark whose name keeps changing, and you're watching the drama on the Bay beyond the outfield, and you've skipped out of work to come to the game, and you've taken the streetcar to the game, and you're going home on the ferry, AND the Giants are winning, you are experiencing the best of everything civilization has to offer.

For over a century the Bay was ringed with military bases filled with ships, planes, tanks, troops and sailors. Today, the Bay plays a more limited role in the defense of America. But the Bay is still one of the things that makes America worth defending.

The Bay may matter for environmental, scientific and economic reasons. But most of all, the Bay is important because it defines who we are, where we live, and why we are here. Without the Bay, the Bay Area would be just like everywhere else. And that, more than anything else, is why San Francisco Bay matters.

LWVBAE MEMBER ALERT!!!
2006-2007 PROGRAM PLANNING
Wednesday, April 5, 2006
5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.
LWVBAE Office

This is **your** opportunity to influence the direction our League takes in Berkeley, Albany, and Emeryville for the next League year. Come help us decide what actions, studies, and areas of emphasis need to be pursued in addition to fulfilling our commitment to voter education and service. Do we need to:

- have more outreach in terms of civil rights to under-served areas of our population?
- be more involved with the public schools?
- more closely monitor local government in our three cities: the city councils and key commissions?
- emphasize increasing and involving the membership in order to achieve more?
- emphasize fundraising in order to achieve more?
- play more of a role locally and countywide in lobbying regarding HAVA (Help America Vote Act): voting machinery; "clean money"; and health issues?
- plan on a two-year basis rather than one? (and how do we implement our plans?)
- pursue the issue you care most about locally that hasn't yet been mentioned?

Program decision-making is at the heart and soul of what kind of League we are or want to be. Do we sit back on our laurels, become over-achievers, just react to issues as they arise or choose one area and make a difference there?

You can pose the additional questions that need to be discussed, but you need to be on hand at the meeting where this happens in order to have your say. Please come and be part of the decision-making that determines how vibrant, meaningful, and effective our League chooses to be. This is a decision made only with the support of the membership. As active as the Board members want to be, they can't do the job on their own. It takes significant member involvement to be outstanding.

We look forward to seeing and hearing you

on Wednesday, April 5, from 5:30 to 7 p.m., at the League office. Please help to shape the future of our League.

Jo Ann Price, Program V.P.

EVA BRECHER, 1914-2006

Eva Brecher was an active and beloved member of our League from 1966, when she joined, until her death March 3, when she passed away peacefully in her home at age 91.

Participants in the "Scrip" program will remember Eva especially fondly, as her long-time dedication to that fund-raising project made her acquainted with many members of the League. Eva volunteered in numerous capacities throughout the years, and we were pleased to take advantage of her cheerful willingness to say "yes", and to be able to depend on her complete follow-through no matter what was asked of her. Her family has asked that donations be made in her name to our League, and they may be sent to LWVBAE at 1414 University Ave., Suite D, Berkeley 94702.

She was born October 14, 1914, in Prague, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. After studying at German schools there, she left in 1935 for Santiago, Chile where she married Theo Buchwald, a Viennese orchestra and opera conductor, who became founding conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of Peru. The couple settled in Lima and had four children.

In 1959, Eva moved to the United States and, following her divorce, married George Brecher, a physician-scientist working at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. When George was appointed Chair of the newly-established Department of Laboratory Medicine at UC San Francisco in 1966, the family moved to Kensington.

Eva was admired and loved by her family and friends for her intelligence, and her wide range of interests in politics and the arts (I was happy to greet her at Aurora Theater productions until just a couple of months before she died). Her commitment to progressive social issues was well-known, and later in life she turned to sculpting.

She was preceded in death by her husband, and is survived by all of her children and by two grandchildren.

The League and all of her friends within it are grateful that Eva chose to express her enthusiasm for citizen involvement through the programs of the League. We will deeply miss her.

A memorial in Eva's honor will be held at a future date, and will be announced on the League's Web site when we have further information.

Sherry Smith, President

\$390 MILLION PERALTA COLLEGE DISTRICT BOND SET FOR JUNE BALLOT

At its meeting on February 28, 2006, the Peralta Board of Trustees voted to put a bond measure to fund long-overdue campus repairs and major maintenance on the June ballot.

The 2000 Measure E bond came in under the old Prop 13 rules, requiring that all monies be used for capital construction. Measure E met the requirement of passage by more than 2/3 of the voters. However, even though some \$22 million of the \$153 million Measure E provided remains uncommitted, its use is limited by Prop 13 rules.

This new bond, as yet unnamed, would go under Prop 39 rules, permitting use for "construction, major rehab or replacement, including furnishing buildings, acquiring equipment or leases of real property." Under Prop 39 rules, the measure need only be approved by 55% of the voters to pass. It would add about \$25 per \$100,000 of assessed value (not market value) to people's tax bill. It would also require an advisory committee at each campus composed of representatives of all major stakeholder groups—students, faculty, administrators, classified staff and others.

Last time, for Measure E, Tom Smith, the District's Chief Financial Officer, spoke to our LWVBAE Community College study committee. This time, since all four Peralta leagues have a strong state position to stand on, and June 6 is scarcely 3 months away, Mr. Smith has offered to come to any interested League group to discuss the measure in detail.

We are in the process of scheduling a daytime and an evening meeting, one of which we hope you'll be able to attend. Once the details are set, we will post them on our website (<http://lwvbae.org/>) and notify those on our e-mailing list.

The other significant community college issue that came before the Peralta Board was a resolution to support a proposed state ballot initiative: the Community College Governance, Funding Stabilization and Student Fee Reduction

Act. It includes a cap on student fees at \$20 a unit, to rise only as per-capita state income rises, and it also separates the CCs from K-12 Prop 98 funding once and for all. Stay tuned. In the meantime, plan to attend one of Mr. Smith's presentations.

Helene Lecar, Community College Chair

REMEMBER THE LEAGUE IN YOUR WILL OR TRUST

As League members engage in writing or updating wills and trusts, we modestly suggest that they consider including the League among their beneficiaries. Dues provide less than half of the League's yearly budget. We rely on donations and legacies to carry forward our program of citizen support and voter information. Our 85 years of existence has been assured by the generosity of those who have gone before. You can help assure the League's continuing support of an informed citizenry through a gift that will live beyond your dues-paying years.

BOARD BRIEFS - FEBRUARY 2006

At the February board meeting, a motion to approve the appointment of officers of the Foundation for the coming year was passed.

Also discussed was the Assembly's passage of the Clean Money Bill. President *Smith* reported that the Clean Money events held in January were a great success, with the public meeting held in Oakland City Hall drawing a sold-out crowd.

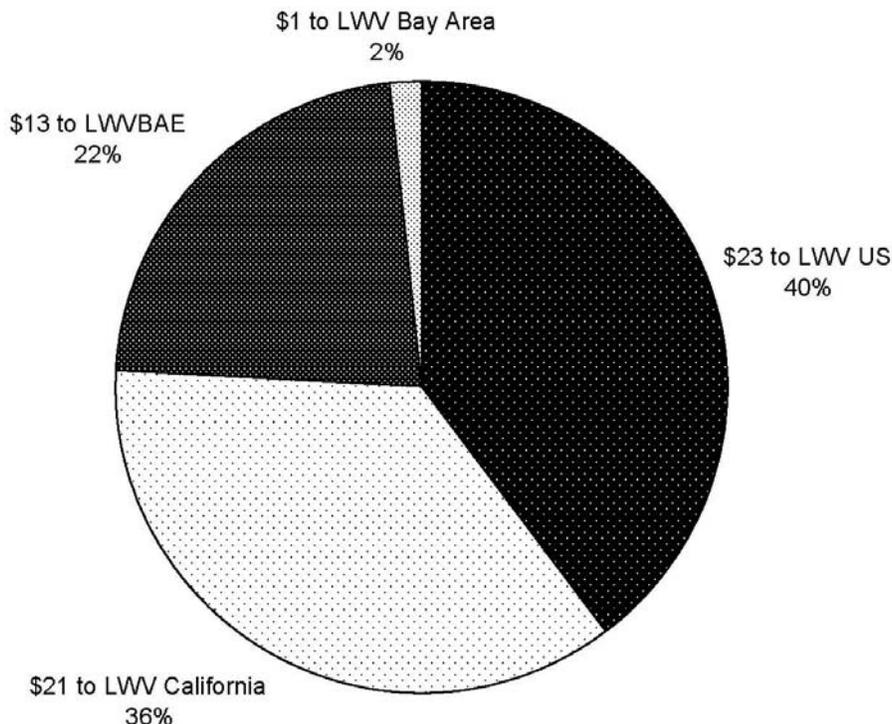
Health care director *Ursula Rolfe* reported that Senate Bill 840, which proposes a single payer health care plan, would be reintroduced with a financial plan added. *Rolfe* also reported on the Measure A Oversight Committee.

Program VP *Jo Ann Price* reported that the results from the National and Bay Area Program Planning meeting would be reported in an upcoming VOTER. Board members also discussed local Program Planning, and considered possibilities for speaker for the May Annual Meeting.

Angharad Jones, Secretary

WHERE YOUR \$58 MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT GOES

(79% of our members pay this amount)



The remainder of our membership pays:

	to US	to State	to LWWBAE	to Bay Area
9% are 2 nd household members	\$11.50	\$10.50	\$4.50	\$0.50
11% joined via LWW US			\$5.00	
1% are Honorary (50 year +)	-	-	-	-

NEW MEMBERS

Our warmest welcome to our newest members:

Barbara Bernstein *Lorraine Sykes*
David Coleman III

FEBRUARY DONATIONS

TO THE GENERAL FUND

Charlotte Lichterman *Doris Maslach*
Phoebe Watts

TO THE LWWBAE TRIBUTE FUND

Winifred McLaughlin In memory of Anne Wallach

TO THE LWWB FOUNDATION

Joan Grossman *Sarah Miyazaki*
Dr. Grace G. Smith

Lenora Young, Donations Secretary



LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS
of Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville
1414 University Ave., Suite D
Berkeley, CA 94702-1509

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Berkeley, CA
Permit No. 29



IT'S EASY TO JOIN
The LEAGUE of
WOMEN VOTERS

Just fill in the blanks below, clip this coupon and mail it with your check for \$58 Annual Dues made out to:

LWVBAE

**1414 UNIVERSITY AVENUE, SUITE D
BERKELEY, CA 94702-1509**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel. Day: _____ **Eve:** _____

FAX: _____ **E-mail:** _____

Joining at the local level makes you a member at all levels:

LWVBAE, Bay Area, State and National.

Dues and contributions

to the League are not tax deductible.

Contributions to the LWVB Foundation are deductible, to extent allowed by law.

CALENDAR

Berkeley addresses unless otherwise indicated

APRIL

- 5 Wed. 5:30-7 pm Local Program Planning (see story on page 3)
LWVBAE Office *J. Price, 548-5206*
- 5 Wed. 7-9 pm Board Meeting, LWVBAE Office *S. Smith, 548-1769*
- 7 Fri. noon Deadline for May/June VOTER *B. Chapman, 527-0827*
- 10 Mon. 7:30-9:30 pm Environmental Concerns
1340 Arch Street *C. Stone, 549-0959*

MAY

- 3 Wed. 7-9 pm Board Meeting, LWVBAE Office *S. Smith, 548-1769*
- 6-7 Sat-Sun LWV Calif. Leadership Conference,
Sacramento *S. Smith, 548-1769*
- 8 Mon. 7:30-9:30 pm Environmental Concerns *C. Stone, 549-0959*
- 13 Sat. Bay Area League Convention - Save the Day! - details TBA
- 17 Wed. 5:30-8:30 pm LWVBAE Annual Meeting
Northbrae Community Church *J. Price, 548-5206*
- 22 Mon. Last day to register to vote in the June 6 California Primary
- 29 Mon. League Office closed in observance of the Memorial Day holiday

JUNE

- 6 Tue. 7 am-8 pm California Primary Election
- 7 Wed. 7-9 pm Board meeting, LWVBAE office *S. Smith, 548-1769*
- 9 Fri. noon Deadline for Summer VOTER *B. Chapman, 527-0827*
- 10-13 LWV of the United States Convention - Minneapolis, Minnesota
- 19 Mon. League Office closes for the summer. It will reopen August 14.