

# THE V O T E R

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BERKELEY, ALBANY, AND EMERYVILLE

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President: Doris Fine

May/June, 1999

Editor: Bob Hawley

## Annual Meeting

Saturday, June 5, 1999

9:30 am to 1:00 pm

Northbrae Community Church

941 The Alameda, Berkeley

### Program

### LWVBAE Membership Dues: \$50 Proposed

**Carol T. Christ**, guest speaker at our Annual Meeting, is Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost at UC Berkeley. The title of her talk is "Women and the University"; it will include a broad range of subjects of interest to League members. Anyone who is unable to attend the business meeting should definitely try to join us for Dr. Christ's talk at 11 o'clock and for lunch at noon. **Be sure to call the office by May 28 to reserve lunch** (\$10, which can be paid at the door, or you may bring your own) and let us know if you need a ride.



The main elements of the business session will be adopting (1) the budget for 1999-2000 (see separate article), (2) proposed local studies, and (3) amended Local Support Positions. We will hear the outgoing President's Report on the past year's activities and then elect new officers to lead us in the coming year.

**Please bring your enclosed "Call to Annual Meeting" packet to the business session.**

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LWVBAE has managed to keep its membership dues at \$41 for ten years despite the fact that only \$6 per member remains for LWVBAE's use after Per Member Payments (PMP) to national, state and Bay Area leagues.

How do we support our many activities? Because we receive generous financial donations from many members; past bequests and the Tribute Fund earn interest for us; earnings from the annual ASUC election contract, and monthly grocery scrip sales are substantial, and grants from the LWVB Foundation support our educational and community service activities. Finally, we depend upon many hours of volunteer labor from you, our members.

Why do the Budget Committee and Board recommend a dues increase to \$50 now? The key reason: the PMP to LWVUS goes from \$19 to \$21 (with second household member from \$9.50 to \$10.50) as of July 1999. PMP for LWVC (\$15) and LWVBA (\$1) may also increase the following year. Compounding the financial situation is the drop in our membership, which reduces our income from dues.

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## President's Message

This is my "farewell" message to you as President. Looking back over the past two years, I cannot help but feel proud of our many accomplishments, in particular LWVBAE's contributions to our local communities. Here I refer to our outstanding voter services, the excellent video programs we are producing, and our constant attention to key policy issues, namely improving the education of minority children, and opening up the city budget process. Our studies also have focused upon important social issues, such as affordable housing, reform of the initiative process, and attention to the juvenile justice system. Finally, following the lead of the League at the national and state levels, we have taken action on such issues as campaign finance reform, preserving our wetlands, and reforming health care. All these efforts required the support and participation of you, our members. It is you who help to "make democracy work," fulfilling the League's mission to "encourage the active participation of citizens" and "to influence public policy through education and advocacy." I have also benefitted greatly from a dedicated Board who have given most generously of their time and energy and served as our leaders. Incoming LWVC President Gail Dryden quotes an ancient saying that aptly describes what it takes to lead an organization like ours effectively:

A leader is best when people barely know she exists,  
 Not so good when people obey and acclaim her,  
 Worse when they despise her.  
 But a good leader, who talks little, when her work is done, her aim fulfilled,  
 They will say: We did it ourselves.

Our nominating committee has chosen new leadership for the upcoming year, and I urge you to give them your full support. I will be joining *Anne Henderson* on the LWVC Board, but like *Anne*, will continue to take part in LWVBAE activities. So this is really not a "farewell," although I do heartily extend my best thanks and wishes to all of you, but rather an "au revoir."

-Doris

## Board Briefs

The last board meeting was held on March 31 (a week earlier than usual) to free board members to work at the ASUC elections.

A report from the nominating committee was given by *Mim Hawley*, chair, who said the slate to be presented at the Annual Meeting in June is very nearly completed.

The Board adopted the Program Committee's statement regarding proposed local studies which will be presented at the Annual Meeting.

Our delegates to the LWVC Convention to be held May 14-16 are *Fine, Price, Voison, Polak, Springston, Lecar, Brubeck, Kuhi, and Hawley*. They will meet sometime before going to the convention in order to be prepared.

The Action Committee sent letters to the city councils and school boards of our three cities asking that they participate in Children's Memorial Flag Observance on April 23.

Several of our members held a "filing day" during which they explored and organized the files in our office. They reported enjoying themselves as they found out many things about our history. They expect to schedule another day to complete the task.

It was moved that we go on record as supporting the Albany Schools Parcel Tax which will be voted upon on June 8.

The last part of the meeting was devoted to the ways Board members could help to recruit members to work in the ASUC elections.

-*Violet Feinauer*, Secretary

## Membership Dues (continued from Page 1)

If we raise the dues only a few dollars now, the Board will need to ask the members to approve another dues increase in a year or two. If we do not raise local dues, members will have to spend much more time and energy fundraising, which the Board and membership have recently been reluctant to undertake.

The Board urges you to consider the options and attend the Annual Meeting and vote on the Proposed Budget (see enclosed packet) which includes the \$50 dues proposal.

-*Ginette Polak*, Treasurer  
 -*Yvonne San Jule*, Budget Chair

## Donors Through March

### General Fund

*Virginia Blacklidge*

*Peggy Casey*

*Irene Hegarty*

*Marion Luten*

*Gene Poschman*

*Nancy Riddle*

### Foundation

*Doris Maslach*

## Members and Membership

A hearty welcome to our new members: *Horst Bansner, Vida Lehmann, Judy Peck, and Gail Todd*. We hope to personally greet each of you at a League function very soon. The LWVBAE calendar (back page of this *Voter*) contains the Whats, Whens, and Wheres of League activities being held in the near future.

A Voter's News published by the Berkeley League of Voters in March of 1947 has been donated to our local League. It is very fragile and brown with age, and must be stabilized before being displayed. The titles of matters being studied at that time were: What's Up Before Our Legislature? Reciprocal Trade Agreements, and Youth In A Dilemma. Although the subjects being studied then and now are much the same, the amount of League dues paid by members, has, of necessity, increased exponentially from \$.50 - (fifty cents).

News You Can Use About Members: *Dildar Gattenburg* is now in Macedonia on a two-year assignment for the Peace Corps. She has let us know that she can be reached by e-mail, but we have not been able as yet to find her address. *Mari Fertig* is now living in The Berkshire at 2235 Sacramento Street. She keeps herself busy trying to get a dialogue going with others at the facility about health care and voter registration and by sparking interest in League membership. *Lenora Young* and I have both visited with *Mari* and taken her League materials to use in her efforts. Audie Elizabeth Bock, daughter of League member *Felicia Bock*, has won a seat in the California Assembly for the 16th District. Bock, author, teacher and member of the Green Party, won her seat by a margin of 327 votes over her competitor. Our congratulations to both mother and daughter. More good news - *Joy Carlin*, who had

major surgery on March 29, is at home, doing well, and feeling fine.

Since my term of Office will end soon, this will be my last membership column for our *Voter*. I would not have been able to write for you in each *Voter* issue without your encouragement and kind words of appreciation. I want to thank some very special people: the indomitable duo of *Nina* and *Mina (Olsen and Jenner)* who have kept, produced, and distributed membership records with kindly good will; *Evelyn Light*, who never missed putting information about League members in my office folder; and to *Marj Rubinow*, who with *Evelyn*, scrupulously proof read and corrected my copy; to *Phoebe Watts*, who, upon seeing my bewilderment, graciously took my typed *Voter* copy and e-mailed it to the Editor; to Linda Carothers, Office Manager, for being there and laughing at my jokes; to the three remarkably kind women, *Winnie McLaughlin, Jean Safir, and Carol Voisin* who took over and made the Getting To Know The League and You meeting soar in my absence; and to those of you who also pitched in; and to *Mim Hawley, Ginette Polak, Jean Safir, and Lenora Young* for their wise counsel and encouraging words.

### In Memoriam

Our condolences go out to the family and friends of *Charlotte Libby*, who died in March. *Charlotte* chaired the LWVUS Health Study which met at her home in Kensington during 1991-1992. She is survived by her husband, Henry; four children: Gordon, Karen, Susan and Peter; four grandchildren and two great grandsons. A celebration of her life will be held at a later date.

-*Eleanor Cox*, Membership Chair

## League Luncheon In September

A committee chaired by *Karen Nelson*, Development VP, is working to produce a delightful and memorable League event in September. We will make an all-out effort to involve business people, government officials, and citizens from Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville. The goal is both PR and fund-raising. Please call *Karen* at 525-1673 if you want more information and would like to work on this event. WE NEED YOU!

-*Jo Ann Price*, Action VP



## Publications Corner

### Promising Strategies:

Results of the 4<sup>th</sup> National Survey on Community Efforts to Reduce Substance Abuse and Gun Violence. February, 1999.

This is the fourth year that **JOIN TOGETHER** of the Boston University School of Public Health has conducted a national survey. Four thousand responses were received and the survey compiled 1608 responses from lead coalitions. Lead coalitions are composed of broadly-based, non-profit community organizations and governmental agencies which plan or direct alcohol, tobacco or other drug-related programs. Coalitions were asked to describe effects of substance abuse in their communities and to report any changes in public policies they could recommend.

Respondents agreed that there should be significant changes in public policies with respect to tobacco, alcohol and substance abuse. Policies and laws should be strictly enforced on the local level. Alcohol and tobacco advertising should be severely restricted, while taxes for those products should be increased. Federal funding for treatment and prevention should grow sharply, while federal financial support for interdiction should drop. All addictive persons who need medical treatment should receive it, either through medical insurance or HMOs. Treatment for drunk drivers would be mandatory and addicts in the criminal justice system would be required to undergo medical treatment. Such treatment would be an alternative to jail for non-violent offenders. There was almost no support for repealing current laws against use of illicit drugs.

Respondents felt that coalitions are an integral component of a community's response to substance abuse by focusing upon increasing coordination and public involvement in addressing both alcohol and illicit drug problems. While federal money is spent largely on advertising campaigns opposing only teen marijuana use, a majority of coalitions feel they have been influential in increasing community prevention programs for both youth and adults.

Coalitions, generally, do not focus upon treatment, after-care, HIV, community economic development or jobs; although, in larger cities as coalitions mature, their budgets increase and their range of influence in those areas increases.

In response to a question related to efforts by community institutions and groups which address

substance abuse in their communities, most respondents gave high ratings to law enforcement agencies, schools, courts, health care providers and state governments. Even though coalitions receive less federal funding to address substance abuse needs, the ratings for the federal government have improved since the last survey.

Low ratings continue for local governments, business, labor, local fund groups, religious and civic and fraternal organizations (although most coalitions are composed of some or all of these entities). The main complaint with local governments was that they did not produce annual reports showing progress in reducing substance abuse. Respondents who lived in communities where there was significant involvement of community institutions and improved access to treatment reported greater progress in curbing substance abuse.

In local areas where substance abuse conditions improved, schools and municipal government played significant roles. For example, there was an office in the city government specifically charged with reducing substance abuse; an annual report was prepared; mayors and governors paid attention to the issues; there were higher levels of local enforcement. The schools had more educational programs at all grade levels and local colleges worked with municipal government to reduce underage drinking.

A little over one-fourth of the coalitions responding to a question of gun violence reported that their communities are active in the area, with California having the highest number of coalition respondents. Many coalition respondents also reported that gun violence is an issue which needs the most attention in their organization.

JOIN TOGETHER reports that a review of state gun laws shows that every state had gun-free school zones and most have laws dealing with juvenile possession, sale and transfer laws, while fewer states have laws related to licensing, registration or child access protection. Survey results show that gun policies would be different if the preferences of coalition leaders were followed, since nearly all of the respondents said safety training for all gun owners and childproofing of all guns should be required, and the firearms companies should be held accountable for safety defects in their guns. A majority believed that

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Publications Corner (continued from Page 4) taxes on guns and ammunition should be increased. While the need for all these policies varied by regions - mid-western and western states were more likely to oppose them - gun violence prevention is an issue that is gaining support among community leaders, as well as new and existing coalitions.

A significant finding of the survey indicated that while the influence of coalitions is increasing, the movement is not expanding as rapidly as in the past, and the number of local coalitions participating in the survey has decreased for various reasons including their "disappearance," a decrease in federal funding for coalitions or a decrease in volunteer participation. While community-based coalitions have led to decreased alcohol, tobacco and illicit drug use, a decline in community-based coalitions could mean problems for many communities in the future.

A copy of this survey is available in the LWVBAE office, or write to Join Together at 441 Stuart Street, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston, MA 02116. Their e-mail address is info@jointogether.org.

-Lenora Young, Publications Chair

### Annual Meeting (continued from page 1)

The Board recommends that we undertake three local studies in the coming year. The first will be a continuation of the Housing Study, which has been under way for a year gathering information on the housing policies and programs of our three cities. A second year is needed to report findings to our members and the communities, to review and revise current positions, and to conduct consensus units.

Another recommended study would determine whether Peralta Community Colleges, in general, and Vista College, in particular, have sufficient funds and facilities to meet the needs of local residents.

A third study would evaluate "Instant Runoff Voting," which could be an alternative to the conventional runoff elections that are needed when three or more candidates are running and none gets a majority of votes cast. It enables voters to rank candidates as first, second, etc., choices and then, if none gets a majority of first choices, then second, etc., choices are counted until someone does get a majority.

At the Annual Meeting, interested members will have the opportunity to sign up to join any of these studies. So read the descriptions in the Annual Meeting packet and come prepared to vote and to **SIGN UP to participate!**

Local Support Positions - see enclosed packet - have been amended to clarify which positions apply only to

Berkeley, and which ones can apply to both Berkeley and Albany. (A complete review is still needed before local positions may be applied to Emeryville.) Some of the proposed changes would clarify meanings as originally adopted but none of the changes would alter the intent of the positions. A majority vote of members attending the Annual Meeting is required to re-adopt the Local Support Positions, as amended. Please review them carefully!

-Jean Safir, Program VP

### March 20 New Member Meeting

We had a very gratifying turnout for the latest New Member get-together on March 20. In attendance were 14 persons: newly joined members, prospective members, the LWVBAE's President, Action VP, Program VP, Development VP, Administrative Assistant, and two of the Membership Outreach team.

Such meetings are intended to be both informational and informal--to give an overview of League structure and activities, and to offer a welcome and sense of belonging. Discussion was lively and avenues opened up for potential involvement.

Being part of the League can be a very enriching experience, as each person does find for himself/herself over time. Finding a way to participate depends on knowing the choices, the needs, and how one may connect those with one's own interests. It often takes just a warm initial contact. Hence, the invitation and the meeting of this type.

If you were not able to attend this time we hope you will attend next time. We encourage you to keep alert to the next opportunity-usually scheduled twice a year in addition to our spring and fall general meetings. Even if a year or two has elapsed since you joined, or if you are coming into this local area from affiliation elsewhere, such smaller get-togethers may be just what you will want to explore.

In the meantime, you may call in to the office and leave a message stating your interest, and you will receive a follow up call from Membership or someone in your specified interest area.

-Winifred McLaughlin, with Eleanor Cox and Carol Voisin

## 1999 EdSource Conference: A Report

Several LWVBAE members attended this year's EdSource Conference on "Student Achievement: What Influences It and What We Can Do To Improve It!" In opening remarks, Gerald Hayward, Director of Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) issued a wake-up call: California is below the national average in reading, language arts, math, and science. Half the students entering a California State University campus need remedial work in math and English! These indicators, he declared, point to the need for strenuous and sustained efforts to improve school performance.

The first speaker, Professor of Psychology Laurence Steinberg, suggested that parents and peer pressure account for much of the problem of low achievement. In a recent study, he determined that most students "tune out" because of indifference and the lack of a payoff for school success. He recommends making schooling the primary activity for teenagers - discouraging part-time employment; raising parents' consciousness about the value of schooling; ending social promotion as well as remedial education in colleges; and making school performance count as preparation for both work and college.

Robert Maxson, President of CSU Long Beach, emphasized the importance of quality teaching. He wants colleges to "guarantee" that their graduates can do the job by making the preparation of teachers the responsibility of every faculty member.

Pedro Noguera, Professor of Education at UC Berkeley and former member of the Berkeley School Board disagreed strongly with Professor Steinberg that it is up to parents to change in order to improve student performance. He insisted that it is the schools that must do better, and he called for leadership from the top down, starting with awareness of the problems and then finding ways to address them. He called on parents to develop and to use their political clout to change the system, and he criticized Governor Davis' recent initiatives as misguided. Specifically, he argued against basing social promotion on test data; protested that ranking schools would not change anything; called for tests that measure what kids know and what they need to learn; and for standards that govern not only curriculum but facilities and staffing. Finally, he proposed using the data schools collect to analyze the problem of underachievement - its socioeconomic roots as well as evidence of teacher incompetence - and to focus on reforms that will work because they

are designed to address real needs.

Christine Aranda, Deputy Secretary of Education, reviewed Governor Davis's 4 initiatives: (1) Teacher Peer Review - districts have to apply for funds and establish local programs by July 2001; (2) Reading - calls for 6-week "academies" for students needing intensive remediation; (3) Accountability - based on an index of all schools, with low-performing ones eligible for improvement grants; (4) Exit Exams for HS students, consistent with standards, starting with the class of 2004. She agreed that school improvement requires well qualified teachers, a focus on reading, developing standards that align with assessments, and accountability.

A lively question-and-answer period followed, and more information about the conference is available on EdSource's WebSite at [www.edsource.org](http://www.edsource.org). You may also contact local members *Lois Brubeck* and *Helene Lecar*. (EdSource is an independent organization dedicated to providing impartial information about educational issues in order to stimulate dialogue, increase participation and enable informed decision-making about California's public schools.)

-Doris Fine

### LWVBAE's Affidavit Project: A Report

What is it? The affidavit project concerns the distribution of voter registration forms on behalf of the Alameda County Registrar of Voters by members of local Leagues. There are hundreds of sites throughout the county maintained by Bay Area League members, including 25 in Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville. Display boxes and affidavits are placed where they can be easily accessed by citizens; for example, in post offices, schools and senior centers. Our coordinator, *Allie Norton*, picks up affidavits from the county, maintains a supply in our office, and refills display boxes at other locations as needed. We receive compensation for our services from the county depending upon the number of boxes we maintain.

*Allie* and her co-workers have been performing this service with great dedication for several years. It can be a frustrating task as sometimes not only are the affidavits taken but display boxes also disappear. Thank you, *Allie*, for your hard work. If there are League members who would like to help with this project, please call the office. It is an important service to our communities and a fund-raiser as well.

-Lassie Ulman, Community Services VP

## Environmental Concerns

LWVBA President Jean Matsuura presented a newly released draft Compact for a Sustainable Bay Area report by the Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Development (BAASD) at the March 8 meeting of LWVBAE Environmental Concerns. "The Compact is the essence of what we see as needing to be done in order to promote sustainable development in the Bay Area," said Matsuura, Chair of the BAASD Public Outreach Committee.

Through the Compact - final version expected in 2000 - the Bay Area Alliance is trying to develop a framework for intraregional cooperation among the Bay Area's nine counties, 100 cities and more than 200 governmental entities that develop and implement policy.

Since its first general meeting in the spring of 1997, more than 75 area organizations and some 200 people have participated in developing the Compact through the Alliance's five working caucuses and six working groups. The caucuses, which provide input to the working groups and to the Alliance, are: Social Justice; Regional Agencies; Business/Employer; Local/Sub-regional Sustainability Programs Roundtable; and Environmental. The working groups, comprised of specialists in each area, provide recommendations for the Compact in the following arenas: Housing, Jobs and Access; Environmental Quality and Biodiversity; Public and Media Strategy; Tax/Fiscal Policy; Best (management) Practices; and Sustainable Development Indicators (quantifiable characteristics such as levels of air pollution or crowding in schools).

The Compact is a commitment by participating organizations to take specific steps over the next quarter century. It is also an action plan to guide government, business and civic groups, and individuals in cooperative efforts that will lead to a region that is economically prosperous, environmentally healthy and socially equitable. The document then represents goals and strategies for five subjects: Natural Resources; Economic Development and Jobs; Community Development Housing; Transportation; and Opportunity and Diversity. Under each strategy there are specific actions, responsible organizations and agencies (implementers), and indicators to measure performance. Next are chapters describing Fiscal Policy and Local Government Finance; Public Education/Citizen Involvement;

Indicators; and Best Practices by governments, business and individuals to achieve sustainability.

An outgrowth of the Presidents Council on Sustainable Development (PCSD), the Bay Area Alliance has facilitated meetings of regional regulatory agencies; organized a roundtable of leaders from city and county programs; and conducted a regional survey to identify other Bay Area efforts. It encouraged intraregional cooperation by bringing together five oft-competing regulatory agencies: the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, Regional Water Quality Board, ABAG, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission. Unlike Bay Vision 2020, which sought regional governance, the BAASD is looking for effective cooperation among existing regional entities.

The Bay Area Alliance seeks to exemplify the theme in the PCSD report, "Sustainable America-A New Consensus," that a sustainable America can be achieved only by creating sustainable communities and by integrating perspectives of economy, environmental and social equity - the three E's. PCSD members Richard Clark and Michele Perrault first gathered a local leadership team representing business, environmental, economic, government and social equity sectors in the Bay Area. The resulting BAASD steering committee is comprised of Clark, a PG&E retired CEO; Perrault, Sierra Club International VP; Sunne McPeak, president, Bay Area Council (BAC); Mary King, president, ABAG; and Carl Anthony, president, Urban Habitat Program.

Matsuura said the challenge is to get people in adjoining communities to work for the common good. The goal is to take a regional perspective. *Jane Bergen* noted that the BAASD is like a Chamber of Commerce for the region. *Nancy Bickel* questioned the incentive for certain communities to integrate low-income housing. *Eva Bansner* noted that politicians need to be involved to put teeth into our housing elements. Matsuura emphasized public dialogue and education. "This is the key - the outreach. You cannot rely on just an internal working," she said. "We are truly very inter-dependent."

For information call ABAG at (510) 464-7900.

-*Gail Schickele*, Co-chair, Environmental Concerns

# CALENDAR

## April

- Berkeley addresses unless otherwise indicated -

- 26 Mon. 1:30- 4:30 pm Executive Committee *(Fine)*
- 28 Wed. 8:30 am-3 pm Women in Action Lobby Day - "Women's Access to Education"  
Sacramento Convention Center & State Capitol (Office, 843-8824)

## May

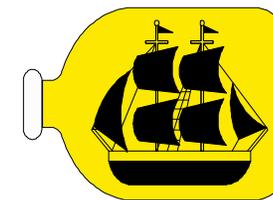
- 5 Wed. 9 am- noon Board Meeting South Berkeley Library *(Fine)*
- 5 Wed. 7:30-9:30 pm Local Actions/Regional Impacts Study  
1129 Neilson St., Albany *(Safir)*
- 6 Thurs. 2- 4 pm Housing Study *(Adams)*
- 10 Mon 7:15-9 pm Environmental Concerns Program Planning for 1999-2000  
*(Bansner)*
- 13 Thurs. 10 am- noon Education Committee *(Brubeck)*
- 14-16 Fri.-Sun. (3 days) LWVC Convention San Jose *(Fine)*
- 19 Wed. 9 am- noon Action Committee *(Price)*
- 22 Sat. 9:30 am-1 pm LWVBA Council Redwood City *(San Jule)*
- 26 Wed. 9 am-noon Executive Committee *(Fine)*
- 31 Mon. All day Office closed for Memorial Day

## June

- 4 Fri. 4 pm Deadline for Summer VOTER LWVBAE Office *(Hawley)*
- 5 Sat. 9:30 am-1 pm **LWVBAE ANNUAL MEETING**  
Northbrae Community Church, 941 The Alameda *(Safir)*
- 8 Tue. 7 am-9 pm Albany Election City-wide *(Safir)*
- 9 Wed. 9 am-noon Action Committee *(Price)*
- 10 Thurs. 2- 4 pm Housing Study *(Adams)*
- 16 Wed. 10 am -1:30 pm Joint Board Meeting & Lunch *(Fine)*
- 18 Fri. 4 pm LWVBAE Office closes for summer break

## September

- 23 Thurs. 5:30-9 pm **FALL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**  
**SAVE THE DATE!** *(Safir)*



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