

The Voter

League of Women Voters of Berkeley • Albany • Emeryville



SUMMER 2009

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JANE WALES

LEAGUE'S ANNUAL COMMUNITY LUNCHEON WILL FEATURE

**JANE WALES, PRESIDENT AND CEO,
WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA**

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2009

11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

H^S LORDSHIPS ON THE BERKELEY MARINA

\$75 DONATION – INVITATIONS TO BE MAILED IN MID-JULY

The highlight of our League's 10th Annual Community Luncheon on August 20 will be Jane Wales' presentation of her thoughts on "The Transformation of Modern Philanthropy".

An expert in international security, nuclear arms control, sustainable economic development, conflict resolution and global philanthropy, Ms. Wales is President and CEO of the World Affairs Council of Northern California, host of the nationally-syndicated National Public Radio interview show *It's Your World*, and Co-Founder of the Global Philanthropy Forum (GPF). The GPF is a network of more than 750 philanthropists who are committed to international causes. In her capacity as an active GPF member, Jane Wales served for a year as Interim CEO of The Elders, an international grouping of powerful world leaders who are devoted to the easing of human suffering. The Elders is currently chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

Since April 2008 Jane Wales has been Chair of the Poverty Alleviation track for the Clinton Global Initiative. She also serves as Vice President, Philanthropy and Society as well as Executive Director of the Nonprofit Sector and Philanthropy Program at the Aspen Institute, whose goal is to help bring a research dimension to work in the philanthropic sector. Ms. Wales is the former National Executive Director of the Physicians for Social Responsibility, which shared in the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize during her tenure.

Another highlight of the Annual Luncheon will be the conferring of LWVBAE's "Spirit of the League" awards upon longtime League member *Alba Witkin* for her lifetime of philanthropy and civic involvement and upon the Alameda County Office of the Registrar of Voters for its tireless efforts to ensure a fair voting process.

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NOT A PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

This 89th year of our League of Women Voters (we began as LWV-Berkeley in 1920 and became LWV-Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville in 1993) has been full of work and accomplishments. LWVBAE has remained an important influence for good government in our cities, a force for civics education in our schools, a respected source of suggestions that helped shape Berkeley's Climate Action Plan, and a provider of ballot information that helped create a well-informed electorate. The accounts that fill the pages of this Voter will no doubt impress you, as they do me, with the breadth and sheer number of Board and Committee accomplishments, as well as with the dedication and expertise of our members. We invite you to join us in these endeavors.

Our well-attended Annual Meeting on June 4 featured a delicious dinner from Bette's Diner, the usual heart-warming chatter among old and new League friends, reports from our Committees, and an illuminating discussion about the State budget from Linda Craig, the LWVC Legislative Advocate. We also had a discouraging report of our League's own budget from *Tom Coulter*. Here's the bad news:

(1) Current LWVBAE dues do not support the cost of membership because the payments we make to the National, California, and Bay Area Leagues and the cost of the Voter exceed the amount we collect in dues by more than \$5 per member.

(2) This year our budgeted expenses will exceed revenues by about \$20,000, an amount that we must transfer from our investments. Our major expenses, other than those listed above, are office rent, a salary for our part-time office manager, supplies and utilities.

(3) Our investments, all in conservative "safe" mutual and money-market funds, have shrunk considerably this year, as you might expect. We now have \$95,000 in investments.

(4) If we continue to operate at our current level and if the economy fails to recover completely and miraculously, our expenses will continue to exceed our revenues and we could be broke in five years.

Members at the Annual meeting considered this information and voted overwhelmingly to increase our dues by \$10 per member. Suggestions were also made that we increase our fundraising activities, encourage all members to remember our League when they write their wills (bequests have been a major source of funds for our investments), and ask members to become as active as possible in the League, thereby reducing the amount of help we need from our paid office manager.

THE VOTER

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OF BERKELEY, ALBANY AND EMERYVILLE

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The *VOTER* is free to members, \$10/year for non-members. Current and past issues of the *VOTER* are posted on our website at lwvbae.org.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages active and informed participation in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

We are all concerned that the increase in dues not deter any of our members from rejoining. Therefore, if the new level of dues is a problem for any of you, please tell us. We will make every effort to keep you as a member in good standing.

Thanks for all your support for our venerable, active, and valuable League.

Mim Hawley
VP Action



LWVBAE VOTER WINS STATE AWARD

Our League's *Voter* received the 2009 Outstanding Newsletter award at the League of Women Voters of California Biennial Convention in May. The LWVBAE *Voter* was one of two winners selected from among the 65 local League publications throughout California. Kudos to Editor *Alice Kisch* and Associate Editor *Jane Brandes* for the recognition given our newsletter's artful graphic design and excellent content.

Sherry Smith
Director-at-Large

ANNUAL BOARD REPORTS TO THE MEMBERSHIP FOR 2008-2009

ACTION (*Mim Hawley*)

Climate change and health care reform were two of the major areas of focus for the Action Committee this year. You can read the Committee report on these subjects in this *Voter*, but I want to briefly mention that the Climate Change Committee's work on Berkeley's Climate Action Plan was productive, resulting in many League suggestions included in the Plan. This Committee's suggestions that Climate Action be the focus of our 2008 Fall Meeting were accepted, and we featured the mayors of our three cities, who spoke on this subject. The Health Care Action Committee's work resulted in a letter from LWVBAE to the California legislature, urging their support for single-payer health care legislation and a resolution adopted by the State League convention urging LWVUS to promote single-payer with Congress.

Work on ballot measures for the fall 2008 and spring 2009 elections absorbed much time and energy this year. The Committee formulated recommendations for the Board to support, oppose, or remain neutral on local measures in last fall's election; we then prepared VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE materials which we placed around town and distributed at street fairs. Some of us also walked the streets handing out advocacy material to grateful passers-by: *Jean Safir, Nancy Bickel* and *Roxane Soucy* in November, and *Jean and Jinky Gardner* did it for the May special election.

The Action Committee also organized and conducted legislative interviews with most of our Councilmembers as well as with *Nancy Skinner*, our assemblywoman, and *Barbara Lee*, our representative in Congress. We discussed a range of subjects with them, including budget woes, health care reform, climate change, and their priorities for the coming year. All of those with whom we spoke were gracious and forthcoming in their comments. Interviewers were *Nancy Bickel, Jan Blumenkrantz, Jinky Gardner, Mim Hawley, Anne Henderson, Cathy Lynch, Ginette Polak, Ursula Rolfe, Sherry Smith, Carol Stone, Linda Swift, Li-Hsia Wang* and *Phoebe Watts*.

And our Committee prepared, for Board approval, several letters and information packets for legislators; we lobbied the California legislature for single-payer health care, and later in the year asked them not to take money from transit operating funds to help balance the budget. We also wrote to *Nancy Skinner* urging her support for instant run-off voting, and spoke to the Berkeley City Council urging them to pass the Climate Action Plan.

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION TEAM

(*Regina Beatus*)

This past year the Climate Change Team presented the facts about climate change to the League and other groups, stressing the urgency of the problem. We created a brochure to help publicize the dire environmental situation and recruit members to the Climate Change Team. The Climate Change Team hosted a League meeting with Berkeley's representative *Timothy Burroughs* and the mayors of *Albany* and *Emeryville* in order to obtain updates on the climate-change activities in their respective cities.

The Climate Change Team was a major participant with the LWVBAE in preparing responses to the Berkeley Climate Action Plan Draft; the Plan was approved in May 2009. In the coming year we plan to monitor the implementation of the Plan and to assist the City of Berkeley in any way that we can.

In March *Linda Swift* and *Jan Blumenkrantz*, co-chairs of the Climate Change Team, went to Washington D.C. to meet with the national League and to lobby our representatives who are involved in climate-change efforts. (See the photo of our team with Senator *Barbara Boxer*, soon to be posted in the League office.)

Posted on our website <http://lwvbae.org/climateaction.htm> are the League's priorities for Climate Change Action. We invite you all to participate by sharing these priorities with people you know, including legislators, civil servants, business people and educators – across the U.S. and around the world. Encourage them to take action with us to combat climate change.

Linda Swift will be stepping down as co-chair for next year. *Regina Beatus* will be the new co-chair with *Jan Blumenkrantz*. We all want to thank *Linda*, who has done a tremendous job on this Committee. Looking ahead, *Regina* and *Jan* are participating in the Berkeley Ecology Center's Climate Action training on what individuals and communities can do. In the fall we plan hold a training session for League members.

HEALTH CARE, STUDY AND ACTION

(*Ursula Rolfe*)

The Health Care Committee had a busy year; we held monthly meetings and added several new members.

In 2008 we focused almost completely on the California single-payer healthcare bill, SB840. In June 2008 *Rainey Sykes*, one of our members, opened her home to the community to discuss the issue of healthcare and the League's support of SB840. It was apparent to all of us who attended that party how woefully unknown the issue of single-payer was.

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ANNUAL BOARD REPORTS

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Our Committee tabled on the issue at the Solano Avenue Stroll in September 2008, and at the Spice of Life Festival in October 2008. SB 840 passed both the California Assembly and the State Senate, but Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed the bill.

Following the November election, there has been a 'sea change' of interest in healthcare. It was clear that, with a new administration in Washington and a President willing to consider taking on healthcare reform, people were becoming more involved in the issue all around the country.

Our Committee was informed that LWVUS was looking closely at how best to educate League members on the state of healthcare in this country, as well as possible means of reform. Our Committee took it upon ourselves to step up efforts to do so as well. We have done the following:

- *Ursula* is keeping us informed about advocacy efforts by the CA League, including joint visits to legislators by members of local Leagues and physician groups residing in the legislator's district.
- We have interviewed Berkeley City Council members and have acquired their continued support of single-payer.
- The Committee developed a survey of the League membership on healthcare issues that was included in the February 2009 *Voter*. The survey results made it clear that our membership finds the current healthcare system seriously inadequate, and most respondents expressed a desire for universal coverage BUT were unclear on how to achieve that goal.
- A feature article on single-payer healthcare was published in the March *Voter*.
- The March Brown Bag Lunch topic was on healthcare, and *Ursula* gave a clear explanation of the workings of a single-payer plan and how single-payer compares with our present system of private health insurance; the Lunch was very well attended, and many non-Leaguers were in the audience. After *Ursula's* presentation there was a lively discussion period which centered on where the national focus of healthcare reform would go. A suggestion was made to introduce a resolution at the CA state League convention, asking the US League to advocate for consideration of HR676, the most prominent national single-payer bill.
- At our April meeting the Committee voted to send a resolution to the state League convention in support of single-payer healthcare. The resolution

was carried to the convention by one of our new members, *Li-hsia Wang, M.D.*, who presented it to the membership and lobbied vigorously for it; the resolution was passed unanimously.

- This resolution was sent on to the national League, along with signatures of the vast majority of convention attendees who had signed on in support. Our league has received a letter of commendation for our efforts from *Barbara Storey*, Program Director for Health Care, LWVC.

CIVICS EDUCATION AND ACTION

(*Jinky Gardner*)

Last fall's election gave the Civics Education Action Committee an opportunity to get busy. *Bill Chapman* was invited to speak to one of the government classes at Berkeley High for Constitution Day. *Bill* got the students thinking about how much impact the Constitution has on our lives, and he encouraged a very lively discussion.

As the election drew nearer, we sponsored and supported Mock Elections at Albany High (AHS) and Berkeley High (BHS), and we staffed voter registration drives at BHS and Berkeley Technical High.

Also, one of the social studies teachers at AHS decided to have her students write a voter's guide on the presidential candidates, and requested the League to judge the brochures, which we did. It was very interesting to see things through the eyes of a younger generation; we judged the guides on clearness, accuracy, and fair, even-handed presentation.

There's still lots of work to do to get the message of active citizenship into our classrooms. The Committee is considering the creation of an "in-service" training module for teachers; and *Bill* is currently writing, and the Committee is editing, a twitter stream which summarizes the day-by-day story of the Constitutional Convention which met in Philadelphia in 1787. *Bill* is adding new installments daily through September 17 at <http://twitter.com/philly1787>. Check it out and let *Bill* know what you think.

Thanks to Committee members *Barbara Alesandrini, Bill Chapman, Jinky Gardner, Helene Lecar, Cathy Lynch, Dianne McNenny* and *Janet Strothman* for all their hard work and great ideas.

ADMINISTRATION (*Eloise Bodine*)

Since the late 1960s the League has had an office with a part-time manager to serve as the center for the League's many activities. The office still serves as that hub under the management of *Cheryl Nichols*, and it provides space for everything from *Voter* mailings to meetings of committees, the Board, the Foundation and the League of Women Voters of the Bay Area's

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Northern Action Committee. The office is equipped with three computer stations and a high-speed color laser printer, as well as copier, fax and phone lines to provide coordination and support.

For many years the office was run by volunteers for six hours each weekday. For the past few years, however, there have been no regular hours when the office was open to the public because we had too few volunteers. This year, regular office hours from 2 pm-4 pm each weekday were established by coordinating office hours with the office manager's work schedule so that *Cheryl Nichols* could fill any gaps in volunteer coverage.

A large number of people have served as volunteers, recruited by *Jane Barrett*, office volunteer coordinator. Volunteer *Juanita Peterson* has been coming to the office each Monday since she joined the League in 2006. Others who have staffed the volunteer desk include: *Eloise Bodine, Bill Chapman, Suzanne Chun, Jane Coulter, Tom Coulter, Vi Feinauer, Ruth Ganong, Jinky Gardner, Mim Hawley, Angharad Jones, Alice Kisch, Helene Lecar, Karen Nelson, Ginette Polak, Jean Safir, Sherry Smith, Roxane Soucy, Rainey Sykes, Ruthann Taylor, Phoebe Watts* and *Teresa Wong*.

Members who have given us their email addresses receive email notices and reminders of meetings and other news of interest that come up between editions of *The Voter*. In order to keep our members without email addresses informed, we have revived the Phone Tree. Special thanks go to *Cheryl Nichols* for organizing the Phone Tree. *Linda Gerson, Alice Kisch, Evelyn Light, Candi Simonen, Janet Strothman, Ruthann Taylor, Elsa Tranter* and *Tami White* are our callers.

ELECTION SERVICES (*Phoebe Watts*)

Election Services activities started in August 2008, when members researched the Berkeley and Albany ballot measures and wrote pros and cons about them. *Lessly Wikle Field* was in charge of production, and League members *Lois Brubeck, Mim Hawley, Karen Nelson, Fran Packard, Jean Safir* and *Phoebe Watts* wrote and edited. It was a huge job, accomplished in a remarkably short time.

Finally, the State pros and cons arrived, packed with a surprise in the boxes: errata sheets which had to be folded and inserted into each flyer. Many people helped with this tedious job and distributed all the documents to libraries, senior centers, places of worship, clubs and neighbors. Helpers were *Nancy Bickel, Bill Chapman, Suzanne Chun, Louetta Erlin, Jinky Gardner, Mim Hawley, Helene Lecar, Wendy Markel, Cheryl Nichols, Allie Norton, Juanita Peterson, Ginette Polak, Ursula Rolfe, Jean Safir, Sherry Smith, Janet Strothman, Rose Williams* and *Cynthia Wooten*.

We produced forums for Berkeley candidates at the Berkeley Community Media studio and at City Council chambers. *Lessly Field* was the moderator for seven programs, and other League participants were

Masako Yamada, Phoebe Watts, Jill Martinucci, Lois Brubeck and *Mary Lou Breiman*.

We also gave a forum for Albany City and School Board candidates, which was taped and broadcast on Albany's community cable station. *Jane Coulter* moderated, and *Lois Brubeck, Jean Safir, Marsha Skinner, Roxanne Soucy* and *Sherra Scott* (an Albany High school student) helped. *Helene Lecar* was moderator for a forum for Berkeley School Board candidates at Berkeley Adult School, and *Lois Brubeck, Ursula Rolfe* and *Dan Reamon* (a teacher at the school) helped.

Sherry Smith was in charge of the *Smart Voter* website, which had an unusually high number of visits during the election season. *Bill Chapman* kept our LWVBAE website up-to-date. We registered voters and distributed literature at two street fairs, and at the Solano Stroll, the Spice of Life Festival, Albany High School, Berkeley Food & Housing Project, and the Down Low Club in Berkeley. *Nancy Bickel, Lois Brubeck, Helen Canin, Ranya Cohen, Jinky Gardner, Mim Hawley, Angharad Jones, Sherry Keith, Jeanne Klems, Helene Lecar, Cathy Lynch, Wendy Markel, Karen Nelson, Ursula Rolfe, Jean Safir, Nancy Salzman, Roxanne Soucy, Rainey Sykes, Li-Hsia Wang* and *Phoebe Watts* registered voters and handed out literature. *Helene Lecar* and *Phoebe Watts* filled display cases at Berkeley Central Library with voting information.

Eloise Bodine organized speakers who told 19 groups about the pros and cons of ballot measures. Speakers included *Eloise Bodine, Lois Brubeck, Doris Fine, Jinky Gardner, Mim Hawley, Helene Lecar, Cathy Lynch, Fran Packard, Jean Safir, Sherry Smith, Linda Swift* and *Phoebe Watts*.

And then the election took place, and election services were over – except that the Legislature hastily called a Special Election for May 2009. The schedule for publication of the titles and texts of the six ballot measures, and for submission of arguments for and against the measures and for rebuttal statements, was greatly shortened. LWVC decided, on the basis of time and money, not to produce a pros-and-cons for this election, but we had the *Easy Voter Guide* to distribute.

As part of an agreement between the Registrar of Voters and Leagues in Alameda county, there is a group of League volunteers who work year-round to distribute Voter Registration cards to libraries and post offices. *Claudia Berger* is in charge of this activity, and her helpers this year were *Eloise Bodine, Suzanne Chun, Bob Compton, Merle Fajans, Constance Fraser, Mim Hawley, Sherry Keyes, Helene Lecar, Ruth Maguire, Jennifer McDougall, Cheryl Nichols, Becca Plager, Jean Safir, Marissa Saunders, Bobbie Spike* and *Ruthann Taylor*.

Thanks to everyone who helped.

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ANNUAL BOARD REPORTS

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COMMUNITY LUNCHEON (Sherry Smith)

The 9th Annual Community Luncheon held in August 2008 featured popular KQED-FM "Forum" host Michael Krasny. The event, attracting over 200 people, netted nearly \$7,000 for the League – our most successful fundraiser to date. The annual "Spirit of the League" award was conferred posthumously upon long-time League member and community activist *Luanne Rogers*, who had passed away two months prior to the Luncheon. The foundations and funds that support public education in our three cities – Albany Education Fund, Berkeley Public Education Foundation, Emery Ed Fund, and Albany's School Cares – received the organizational Spirit award as a group.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE (Karen Nelson)

During this past year our 50 new women and men members have brought our membership numbers close to the average of 400 which we've maintained for the last three years. The Membership Development Committee's "JOIN US!" tri-fold flyer significantly enhanced our League's publicity; we had an increased number of local new members, and a new student/low-income membership dues rate added a useful membership option. This year's Membership Committee has comprised *Karen Nelson, Mina Jenner* and *Jane Coulter*; *Jane* will chair the Committee in 2009-2010.

We draw your attention to the reverse side of the membership card, which has spaces you can use for indicating your volunteer and other interests which can contribute to the work and goals of the League. The volunteer desk has access to this information, which is then distributed to the Board members and to the members of relevant committees. Once we know in which League activities you would like to participate, we will contact you and put you in touch with League members who are involved in relevant efforts. The Membership Committee invites you to get in touch!

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

(*Jinky Gardner*)

The Membership Development Committee took responsibility for the logistical support of our two member meetings, the Annual Meeting in May and the Fall General Meeting in September. We ordered the food, arranged the room set-up, decorated the tables and cleaned up. We also called our members, especially our new ones, to encourage them to come. We are happy to report that both meetings showed a slight increase in attendees.

On Sunday, February 15, 2009, we hosted a party for members and friends. The party was in celebration of Susan B. Anthony's birthday, and it was held at the home of *Doris Fine*; thanks again, *Doris*, for your gracious hospitality. More than 60 people came out in the pouring rain; and we ate, visited and played a fun game of guessing what well-known woman's name was on your back. The highlight of the event was listening to a gorgeous piano and cello concerto played by LWVBAE members *Doris Fine* and *Eloise Bodine*. We finished the celebration with a delicious persimmon birthday cake for Susan B., baked by LWVBAE member *Jane Coulter*.

PROGRAM (Jean Safir)

At the last Fall General Membership Meeting in September of 2008, the subject was Climate Change and how each of our member governments is dealing with this growing challenge. Speakers were Mayor Ken Bukowski of Emeryville, Mayor Robert Lieber of Albany, and Nils Moe, Assistant to Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates. The buffet dinner was organized by Membership Development Committee members *Bill Chapman, Suzanne Chun, Jane Coulter, Jinky Gardner, Muffett Graham* and *Rainey Sykes*.

In January of this year, we participated in Program Planning for LWVC, in which members met to put together our recommendations on topics we'd like LWVC to emphasize over the next two years. We agreed on the following list of topics:

- Climate Change: review existing positions and pull together those that would support a Climate Change Action Policy;
- Housing; update our positions to focus on the growing need for Emergency Shelter for Homeless People;
- Initiative Process: update our support position to focus on clarification for voters;
- State and Local Finance: update to focus on the State Budget Process;
- Health Care delivery; and
- Protection of Biodiversity.

The March *Voter* carried an announcement that we would participate in an LWVUS study of the National Popular Vote Compact if we could form a study committee. This would be a way to choose our US President by popular vote and without having to get a constitutional amendment to do away with the Electoral College.

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We got a good response from volunteers, five of whom got started immediately to study the background material sent out from national. The April *Voter* contained a summary of the background material and dates for two consensus unit meetings, where we had a good turnout and lively discussion. The report on our consensus was sent in to LWVUS a week before their April 30 deadline.

We concluded that “The League can continue to work for a constitutional amendment AND support the compact.” Since then, and even before the deadline, a lot of League members nationwide expressed objections to the process used by national in conducting the study and in interpreting the results. These issues have yet to be resolved, so stay tuned; we’ll keep you posted.

Profound thanks to study committee members *Doris Fine, Harold Lecar, Howard McNenny, Liz Schaaf and Roxane Soucy.*

For this annual meeting, we again give thanks to our Membership Development Committee for their help in arranging dinner and doing all the other backup activities that made this meeting possible and enjoyable: *Bill Chapman, Suzanne Chun, Jinky Gardner and Rainey Sykes.*

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

(Gail Schickele/Carol Stone)

In the 2008-09 season, Environmental Concerns (EC) welcomed nine noted speakers presenting topics which included air quality, climate change, biodiversity, hydroponics, changes in the Presidio, and the Public Trust. In September we cosponsored a meeting with the United Nations Association of the East Bay and International House of the UC campus to celebrate the International Day of Peace. The topic was “Climate Change and Peace: Why the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change won the Nobel Peace Prize”, with keynote speaker Daniel M. Kammen, followed by Miquel Altieri speaking on agroecology and the world’s food supply. About 200 persons attended the event.

The Eva Alexis Bansner Fund for Sustainable Communities gave one final fifth cash award to Thomas Azwell, a graduate student from UC Berkeley’s Department of Natural Resources, for his work on “hydroponics” and vermicompost tea. EC meetings are held the second Monday of the month, September through May, and are open to the public. This past year we met at the homes of *Roselyn Rosenfeld, Wendy Markel and Sylvia McLaughlin.*

BROWN BAG LUNCH MEETINGS *(Helene Lecar)*

Our Brown Bag meetings this year have reflected the gravity of the unresolved problems we are facing.

In September, when the state budget was a mere two months late, we heard from the budget officers of our three cities about how cities would cope without the usual flow of state General Fund allocations.

October’s meeting was devoted to the ballot questions we would be answering in November, such as High-Speed Passenger Train Bond, Same-Sex Marriage, Redistricting, etc.

November had us dealing with the worldwide crisis of climate change. *Linda Swift and Jan Blumenkrantz*, our Climate Change Action co-chairs, took us on a whirlwind tour of the perils awaiting us all – dire shortages in water, energy and clean air– and ways we can move on to create, in public policy and in our personal lives, a more careful stewardship of our natural resources and a more sustainable way of life. **In December**, following the remarkable turnout for the Presidential election (80% of those registered actually voted), producer Mabel Yee joined us for a showing of her film *Engage Her*, which looks at the different mindset of women in California’s Asian, Latino and Black communities, most of whom don’t vote even when they are registered.

January saw us tackle Program Planning for next year’s State League agenda. (See above under Program.)

February had us addressing the impact of the housing crisis on Alameda County. Michelle Starratt, one of the County’s Community Development Agency officers, walked us through the programs available to help homeowners in danger of foreclosure, and talked about where in the county the intertwined problems of job loss and homelessness were most severe.

In March, our Health Care Committee, led by *Ursula Rolfe and Li-Hsia Wang*, led a discussion of single-payer health care for all at both the state and national levels. Although the political obstacles to passage are formidable and the pockets of private insurers and drug companies are very deep, single-payer has a wide net of committed advocates who are collaborating to achieve universal health care that is both easier to access and more cost-effective.

April brought with it a discussion and consensus on LWVUS’s exploration of the National Popular Vote Project. (See above under Program.)

May saw a wide-ranging discussion exploring the Pros and Cons of the propositions on the ballot of the California Special Election which was held on May 19. As observers have pointed out, California’s problems are not due to excessive spending but to insufficient revenue. Because the legislature could not muster the 2/3 vote necessary either to raise taxes or to pass a balanced budget, most of the ballot measures were designed to scrape up more cash without raising new taxes in the face of a \$21 billion deficit. The state League had already come out in opposition to all the financial measures on good-government grounds as well as fiscal ones.

Compiled by *Jean Safir*, VP Program

SICK AROUND AMERICA:

WHAT EXACTLY WAS *FRONTLINE* TRYING TO SAY?

By Trudy Lieberman, April 1, 2009

[Following is the conclusion of an article that appeared in the May-June 2009 *Voter*.]

The documentary offered a sad story about a lupus sufferer named Nikki, who eventually died after being cut off from TennCare, Tennessee's failed attempt to cover poor people. But there was little context to explain what happened in Tennessee, and nothing to help viewers understand that the state lacked the money to cover everyone who needed insurance – and that politicians refused to raise taxes to compensate, instead insisting that the poorest should assume responsibility for their own care. The anecdote, sad as it was, didn't engender outrage the way a short documentary called *Collateral Damage* does. That film, produced by Talking Eyes Media, packs a wallop that never fails to outrage my students when I show it.

On the positive side, the film gave a fair assessment of one of the problems in the Massachusetts health reform law – too many people still fall through the cracks. They don't qualify for subsidized coverage and still can't afford what the state considers an "affordable" policy – a problem likely to surface in the national reform ideas being discussed. The documentary did mention the perils of cost containment, quoting blogger and former insurance executive Robert Laszewski, who for months has been asking how we will pay for reform. Said Laszewski: "I've never met anyone who would take less. Until we're willing to have that discussion, we're nibbling at the edges." Too bad these comments came toward the end – by that time, some viewers might have tuned out.

So here are my takeaways:

- Employers who provide good insurance are good guys, but, boy, when you lose it, you're in trouble.
- The individual health insurance market sucks.
- Insurance execs who have health problems couldn't qualify for coverage from their own companies if they didn't have good group insurance.
- Doctors and other providers may be making too much money.
- Unless we contain costs, we are just nibbling around the edges.
- Change is a-comin'. The President said so.

But what change? The documentary didn't make that clear. Was it that we are headed toward more private insurance for the uninsured despite all the problems described in the documentary? An astute viewer could easily infer that from the conclusion. Near the end of the show came a clip from the President's health care summit held in early March, where all the

system's stakeholders assembled to share in a moment of cordiality and cooperation. Ignagni stood up and told the President that she wanted to work with him and Congress on a bipartisan basis; that her group was here to play, contribute, and help pass health care reform this year. "Thank you, Karen," the President said. "That's good news."

Part of the confusion in the piece may have stemmed from the departure of T.R. Reid, a Washington Post correspondent who hosted *Sick Around the World*. Reid was to host this one too, but he left the show this February in a dispute with *Frontline*. Reid told me: "When I saw it, I didn't agree with it. It took a different view of health policy than I have." He refused to say what the differences were, adding that "it's hard to reduce them down to a line or a paragraph. It's perfectly legitimate to disagree about health policy."

Indeed it is. It would have been helpful if *Sick Around America* had reflected more of that disagreement.

Trudy Lieberman is President of the Association of Health Care Journalists and Director of the Health/Medicine Reporting Program at the City University of New York Graduate School of Journalism. She is the author of five books, and is a Contributing Editor to the Columbia Journalism Review. This article was published in the Columbia Journalism Review, http://www.cjr.org/campaign_desk/sick_around_america.php.

APRIL, MAY & JUNE DONATIONS

TO THE LWVBAE GENERAL FUND

Jane Bergen
Eva and David Bradford
William Craig
Brigitte Fisher
Patricia Kuhi,
in memory of Luanne Rogers
Doris Maslach
Winnie McLaughlin
Allie Y. Norton
Nancy Riddle
George Trilling

TO THE LWVB FOUNDATION

Horst Bansner
Jane Bergen
Eloise Bodine
Brigitte Fisher
Ann-Marie Hogan
Mary Jacobson
Helene Lecar
Hillary Reinis
Barbara Steinberg
Alba Witkin

Many thanks for remembering your League.

Louetta Erlin
Donations Secretary

FOUNDATION PROVIDES FOR TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS THAT DIRECTLY BENEFIT THE LEAGUE

For nearly 20 years, our League has had the benefit of its own Foundation to help support its educational activities. Many other Leagues have the ability to accept tax-deductible donations, but they must do so through an Education Foundation administered through the State League. The League of Women Voters of Berkeley (LWVB) Foundation has the ability to control its own funds and distributions by way of a five-member Board.

The LWVB Foundation Board for this coming year consists of *Sherry Smith*, President; *Tom Coulter*, Vice President; *Nancy Bickel*, Secretary; *Eloise Bodine*, Treasurer; and *Lois Brubeck*, Special Projects Coordinator. The Board meets quarterly to decide on expenditures and to discuss how to enhance revenue.

Although the Foundation's assets are prudently invested in conservative funds, those assets have decreased in value this year, along with the flagging economy. Donations to the Foundation, incorporated and given approval by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) non-profit entity, are completely tax-deductible.

Your Foundation Board would appreciate your considering the Foundation in your estate plan. Over the years legacies from thoughtful members have helped sustain and grow our Foundation, and thus have significantly enhanced our ability to provide educational services to voters and about-to-be voters in our public schools. For further information you may contact any member of the Board whose names appear above.

Sherry Smith, President
LWVB Foundation

NEW MEMBERS

Our Warmest Welcome
To Our Newest Members:

- Henry Abrons*
- Joan Baumrind*
- Lucia Birnbaum*
- Peggy Love*
- Moira McChin*
- Marcia McNally*
- Joyce Suess*

And To Rejoining Member:
Theodora Hodges

ANNUAL MEETING IN BRIEF

BUDGET REPORT AND ADOPTION

Budget expenses exceed revenue by about \$20K, and the balance will be taken from investments; if this pattern continues, we will run out of money in 5 years.

The Budget Committee recommends a fundraising drive, plus cutting back on costs, with more office work to be done by volunteers.

Lively discussion brought out these ideas:

- increasing dues;
- reducing cost of producing *The Voter*;
- encouraging members to add additional dollars to membership fee.

Motion was passed to increase annual dues to \$75, with \$10 also added to second household memberships.

Motion was passed to have higher levels of dues, to encourage members to make additional contributions.

Motion was passed to adopt the proposed budget, with modification to increase dues by \$10.

ELECTION OF 2009-2010 BOARD MEMBERS

The list of new Board members appears on page 10.

PRESENTATION OF AWARD

Suzanne Chun was thanked for her "unceasing work on the Annual Luncheon, organization of the assembling and mailing of *The Voter* and comprehensive help generally."

Jean Safir
VP Program

CALIFORNIA YOUTH ENERGY SERVICES

The California Youth Energy Services and Smart Solar Program (CYES), launched in partnership with the California Energy Services Corporation, offers FREE "green house calls" to homeowners and renters. CYES' Youth Energy Specialists will perform a FREE energy efficiency audit in your home and will install FREE energy- and water-saving equipment. This summer's program runs for six weeks starting June 30, so call early to reserve your appointment. Call 510.665.1501, ext. 10 to sign up, or visit the CYES website at www.risingsunenergy.org for additional information. If you are interested in solar heat, CYES' new Smart Solar program can provide you with free unbiased information about solar products, services, financing and grants. Call 510.981.7750 or visit www.ebenergy.org/smartsolar for more information about solar heating. Note: At least one LWVBAE member has used this program and has found it useful.

Mim Hawley
VP Action

MEMBERSHIP ELECTS OFFICERS AND BOARD DIRECTORS FOR 2009-2010 PROGRAM YEAR

At the Annual Membership Meeting held June 4, 2009, the following Officers and Board Directors were elected for the 2009-2010 League year:

OFFICERS

Recording Secretary	<i>Angharad Jones</i>
Treasurer	<i>Bill Chapman</i>
Vice President-Action	<i>Sherry Smith</i>
Vice President-Administration	<i>Diane Akers</i>
Vice President-Election Services	<i>Phoebe Watts</i>
Vice President-Membership	<i>Jane Coulter</i>

[NOTE: The position of President remains unfilled, and the Officers and Board will continue, as they have this past year, to divide up Presidential tasks among them so those duties will be covered. Responsibility for presiding over Board meetings will be rotated.]

DIRECTORS

Voter Editor	<i>Alice Kisch</i>
Brown Bag Programs	<i>Ginette Polak</i>
Education Director	<i>Helene Lecar</i>
Environmental Concerns (co-directors, one vote)	<i>Carol Stone/ Gail Schickele</i>
Health Care Director	<i>Ursula Rolfe</i>
Directors at Large	<i>Mim Hawley Jean Safir</i>

NOMINATING COMMITTEE, 2010-2011

Jinky Gardner, Alice Kisch, Sherry Smith (two additional members will be appointed by the Board)

Sherry Smith, Chair
2008-2009 Nominating Committee

HELP SUPPORT THE LEAGUE

When you order Andronico's Scrip, 6 percent of the amount you pay comes back to the League. In other words, for every \$100 you buy, the League receives \$6. Every two months your grocery Scrip will either be delivered to your home, or you may pick it up at the LWVBAE office. Last year we earned about \$3,000 from this program. If you are interested in participating, please contact *Ruthann Taylor* at 510.527.0673 or clydetaylr@att.net.

Ruthann Taylor



ROSELYN BERNHEIM ROSENFELD

As impossible as it seems, *Roz Rosenfeld* died suddenly and completely unexpectedly at home of a stroke on June 2 at the age of 82. *Roz* had been the healthiest 82-year-old on the planet, walking up Marin Avenue, going to the gym, with most people 20 years her junior unable to keep up with her.

We in the League offer our condolences to *Roz's* family. We will miss her participation and her wonderful presence. *Roz* was a member of our League since 1964 – 45 years! She became active in the League after she retired from her work as an attorney, organizing and chairing our energy study in 2005. Many League members will recall taking an informative tour of Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory that was arranged for us by *Roz* with the help of her husband, *Art*, who is a California Energy Commissioner. As an active member of our Environmental Concerns committee, *Roz* hosted several committee meetings at her home.

Roz is survived by her husband of 53 years, *Arthur Rosenfeld*, her daughters, *Anne* and *Margaret*, and her 6 grandchildren ages 7 through 13.

A memorial service for *Roz* is being planned, and will probably take place around Labor Day (September 7) in Berkeley; details will be forthcoming. In the meantime, please send memories or photos for a book her family is creating to: *Art Rosenfeld, Commissioner; California Energy Commission; 1516 9th Street; Sacramento, CA 95814* (phone: 916.654.4930).

Please do not send flowers, but instead make a contribution to your favorite charity, or make a donation in memory of *Roz* to the Blum Center for Developing Economies (<http://BlumCenter.Berkeley.edu/donate-blum-center>). In the Special Instructions section, direct your donation to the Rosenfeld Fund.

A League member who knew *Roz* for many years said of her: "I don't think she had any faults." She was a remarkable woman.

Carol Stone and Mim Hawley

BOARD BRIEFS

Following are highlights from the Board Meeting of May 28, 2009:

TREASURER'S REPORT

- Having overspent our income by \$17K thus far in the current fiscal year, we are still under the \$22K we had budgeted to transfer from our investments for this purpose, and expect to stay within that limit.
- With the stock market rebound, it has been a good month for our investments.
- We agreed to negotiate a new 5-year office lease with Andronico's.

ACTION COMMITTEE

- The Health Care Committee will hold Berkeley neighborhood meetings on the single-payer health plan.
- Successful interviews were carried out with all but two Berkeley Council members. A general statement will be prepared for *The Voter*, outlining topics discussed and the general tenor of the meetings.

VOTER SERVICES

- Even though the special election schedule was rushed, we trained speakers and contacted 20 groups to find speaking opportunities. Registration cards were distributed as usual.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

- *Regina Beatus* and *Jan Blumenkrantz* will co-chair the Climate Change Action committee in the coming year.

REPORT ON STATE LEAGUE CONVENTION

- A resolution passed unanimously to urge LWVUS to support a single-payer health plan as one of the options to be studied by Congress. The resolution was initiated and heavily promoted by LWVBAE Health Care Committee.
- Next State Convention will be in 2011.
- Our *Voter* won one of the two awards in statewide competition.
- State Board will emphasize and advocate these issues in coming year: government, budget and redistricting.

Jean Safir
Co-VP Action

NEW HOURS FOR LWVBAE OFFICE

Effective August 2009 our Office Manager's hours will be on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BERKELEY, ALBANY AND EMERYVILLE BOARD 2009-2010

Recording Secretary:	ANGHARAD JONES
Treasurer:	BILL CHAPMAN
Vice President-Action:	SHERRY SMITH
Vice President-Administration:	DIANE AKERS
Vice President-Election Services:	PHOEBE WATTS
Vice President-Membership:	JANE COULTER
VOTER Editor:	ALICE KISCH
Brown Bag Programs	GINETTE POLAK
Education Director:	HELENE LECAR
Environmental Concerns: (CO-DIRECTORS, ONE VOTE)	CAROL STONE/ GAIL SCHICKELE
Health Care Director:	URSULA ROLFE
Directors at Large:	MIM HAWLEY JEAN SAFIR

LEAGUE'S ANNUAL COMMUNITY LUNCHEON *(continued from p. 1)*

The Luncheon will be held on Thursday, August 20, 11:30 am to 1:30 pm, at H^s Lordships Restaurant at the Berkeley Marina. League members and those who have attended past Luncheons will receive invitations in the mail in mid-July, and are urged to bring friends to this gala event. The Luncheon is a wonderful way to show guests what the League accomplishes in our communities and is the major way in which we raise funds to support the League's many activities and programs.

Mrs. Dalloway's Literary and Garden Arts bookstore has once again generously agreed to contribute a portion of the proceeds from its sales of topical books at our Luncheon. As an added attraction, our speaker, Jane Wales, will recommend some of her favorite books, and some of these titles will be among those offered for sale at the Luncheon.

Jane Wales joins the list of distinguished past Community Luncheon speakers which includes KQED radio Forum host Michael Krasny; Christopher Edley Jr., Dean of Boalt Hall School of Law; UC Professor Robert Reich, former Secretary of Labor; former State Senator and now Member of Congress Jackie Speier; UC Professor Daniel Kammen, head of UC's Renewable and Appropriate Energy Laboratory; and State Treasurer and former Attorney General Bill Lockyer.

The Luncheon will highlight your summer. Watch for your invitation and join us on August 20.

Suzanne Chun (843-7855)
Sherry Smith (548-1769)
Luncheon Co-Chairs



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 Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville
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 Berkeley, CA 94702-1509

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how to join

fill in coupon below and mail with your check in the amount of \$75 (\$40 for each additional household member; \$30 for a student membership) to the order of LWVBAE,

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel. Day: _____

Tel. Eve. _____

Email: _____

Fax: _____

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 the extent allowed by law.

calendar

JULY

No VOTER DEADLINE IN JULY

LWVBAE OFFICE CLOSED FOR SUMMER BREAK Jul 1 - Aug 17

1 WED.	3-5 PM	ACTION COMMITTEE, LWVBAE OFFICE	S. SMITH, 548.1769
15 WED.	1:30-3:30 PM	CLIMATE CHANGE TEAM, LWVBAE OFFICE	J. BLUMENKRANTZ, 548.3845
20 MON.	1:30-3:30 PM	HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE, LWVBAE OFFICE	C. LYNCH, 527.2173
21 TUES.	7:30-9 PM	CIVICS EDUCATION ACTION COMMITTEE LWVBAE OFFICE	J. GARDNER, 548.5292
23 THURS.	7-9 PM	BOARD MEETING, LWVBAE OFFICE	S. SMITH, 548.1769

AUGUST

7 FRI.	5:00 PM	<u>DEADLINE FOR SEPTEMBER VOTER</u>	A. KISCH, 985.0651
17 MON.	1:30-3:30 PM	HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE, LWVBAE OFFICE	C. LYNCH, 527.2173
18 TUES.	3-5 PM	ACTION COMMITTEE, LWVBAE OFFICE	S. SMITH, 548.1769
	7:30-9 PM	CIVICS EDUCATION ACTION COMMITTEE LWVBAE OFFICE	J. GARDNER, 548.5292
19 WED.	1:30-3:30 PM	CLIMATE CHANGE TEAM, LWVBAE OFFICE	J. BLUMENKRANTZ, 548.3845
20 THURS.	11:30 AM- 1:30 PM	<u>ANNUAL COMMUNITY LUNCHEON</u> HS LORDSHIPS RESTAURANT (SEE PP. 1, 11)	S. CHUN, 843.7855 S. SMITH, 548.1769
27 THURS.	7-9 PM	BOARD MEETING, LWVBAE OFFICE	S. SMITH, 548.1769

BERKELEY ADDRESSES UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED