

Call to Early Fall Meeting, Garden Luncheon, & Tour on Sun Aug 27



Sign up now for our early Fall Meeting on Sunday, August 27, 11:30-3 pm, at the UC Botanical Garden. Doors open at 11:30; lunch served at noon; the business meeting starts at 1 pm. Optional Garden Tours begin at 2 pm. Costs: lunch \$35; garden tour \$10. All members

are encouraged to attend the business meeting at 1 pm, whether or not they reserve a meal or a tour.

Program Director Jessica Powell has organized this refreshing change from our usual Fall Meeting with lunch and optional tours of the expanded UC Botanical Garden. The August date means that we can ride the free “Bot Bus” shuttle from Downtown Berkeley to the Botanical Garden. If you have mobility issues and need to drive, let us know on your sign-up form—we will reserve parking for you in the lot near the Garden. Lunch will be in Julia Morgan Hall, very close to the Garden entrance.

Sign up for the Fall Luncheon online on www.eventbrite.com. Search for “League of Women Voters Botanical Lunch.” A small fee is added for online registration. Or mail in a check with the form on page 3. **Please do not phone to reserve.** We can only accept pre-paid online and mailed-in reservations.

Members: This is your call to an all-member business meeting where you will vote on an additional membership category and a proposed local study. At the Business Meeting at 1 pm members will consider:

1. Adding a “choose-your-own” dues of \$20 or more membership option.
2. A proposed new local study comparing proportional election methods to current plurality at-large and single-seat ranked choice methods. See stories on page 2 for details.

Cont'd on p. 3

President's Message



Greetings, LWVBAE!

Thank you for electing me as president for 2017-2018. I am proud to be the first woman of color and the youngest president of the Berkeley, Albany, Emeryville League. I think this is a step towards becoming a more inclusive and diverse organization. This year we will take a hard look at barriers to increasing our diversity, particularly in the areas of race and age.

To meet our larger goals, our League needs to turn its focus inward to become a more relevant and effective organization. My priorities for this year are to further integrate technology, establish strong organizational structures, and create a more supportive, inclusive culture.

Technological tools will help us work more efficiently. Strengthening structures and updating policies and procedures will ensure that the League runs smoothly—with clear steps on how to take action. Over the next year, LWVBAE will provide more opportunities for community building among League members—building the bonds that will sustain us into the future.

I am strongly committed to upholding our nonpartisan policy and maintaining the reputation that we have built over the past 106 years. I hope that you all will reach out to me with your questions, comments, or concerns. Your feedback will help make the League better.

I also ask that you all continue to support the League by volunteering your time. Democracy is not a spectator sport, and at this time, when our democracy is threatened, it's more important than ever to be involved in your community. Only together can we make democracy work.

Adena M. Ishii, President
president@lwvbae.org

August 27th Business Meeting Agenda Items

Proportional Representation Study Vote

Should LWVBAE undertake a study comparing proportional election methods to the plurality at large and single-seat ranked choice methods currently used in our three cities?

Scope: This proposed study would compare proportional election methods to the plurality at large and single-seat ranked choice methods currently being used in our three cities. Which method would be better—more representative, more responsive to the will of the people, more fair? It would be limited to: methods useable in our local nonpartisan elections. It would focus on comparing one proportional method, multi-seat ranked choice, with the current methods.

Background: In Berkeley, the Mayor is elected citywide and Berkeley City Council members are elected by district using the single-seat ranked choice method (or “instant runoff voting”). This method ensures that the Mayor is elected by a citywide majority and the member elected in each district wins a majority of votes in that district. The Albany and Emeryville City Councils, all three cities’ school boards, and Berkeley’s Rent Stabilization Board are elected by plurality at-large. Each voter may vote for the same number of candidates as there are seats to be filled: the candidates that get the most votes win the seats. Neither of these methods ensure that a majority of the body will be elected by a majority of the voters city-wide. Even a large minority of voters may not be able to elect any candidates to the body.

Why should LWVBAE do this study?

We summarize the main points below. Please read the full proposal in the article posted at the top of the webpage at lwvbae.org about the agenda of the August 27 Early Fall Meeting or search for “Vote on.” It would fill in a gap in LWVBAE local election positions.

- It is closely related to our statement of Principles and several LWVUS and LWVC policy positions.
- The League is a very appropriate organization to do such a study.
- A related proposal will come before the Albany City Council in the spring; if the study is completed, we might comment.
- We have someone to lead the study and people ready to serve on the study committee. *Cont’d on col. 2*

“Choose-Your-Own” Dues Vote

At the Fall meeting on Sunday, August 27th, the LWVBAE Board will ask members to approve the addition of a membership level that would allow members to set their own dues—with a \$20 minimum. Our current membership levels are: regular member (\$75), additional household member (\$40), and student member (\$20). The change will help achieve diversity in our membership and allow members who are unable to afford a regular membership to have a voice and a vote in our League. We will also invite members who can afford to do so to add larger additional contributions when they pay their annual dues—to support our work and our PMP [per member payments] to the other levels of League.

The Board believes that the more than 100 new members who joined for free last year are more likely to continue in the League with this option. It will also help our League sustain itself financially. Members are often unaware that most of the \$75 membership fee—\$61—is sent to the regional, state, and national levels of League to support staff who lobby legislators, educate the public and provide services to local and state Leagues.

Jinky Gardner, Membership Director
membership@lwvbae.org



Join us at 3rd Thursday
Happy Hour Revival Bar
2102 Shattuck, Berkeley
4:30pm-on

Meet and chat about politics, the League and more with some League members! Soft or alcoholic drinks—with discounts on draft beer, cocktails, and house wines.

Cont’d from col. 1

- It would enable LWVBAE to comment if one of our cities is sued on the grounds that plurality at large elections do not comply with the CA Voting Rights Act. To date, more than 70 cities and 100 school districts have changed from plurality at-large to district at-large methods due to a suit or threatened suit.
- The Timetable describes the steps to complete the Half-Year Study before March 2018.

Preston Jordon, Action Director
action@lwvbae.org

Sign Up for August 27 Luncheon & Tour
UC Botanical Garden, 200 Centennial Drive, Berkeley

Name: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Please fill in applicable spaces:

_____ I will only attend the business meeting.

_____ Total number of lunches at \$35 each.

*One main dish, one side dish, and one dessert per person. *For financial assistance, please email program@lwvbae.org.*

_____ Total Number *Plants of World Tour* at \$10 each

_____ Total number of *People Using Plants Tour* at \$10 each

Mobility Difficulties?

_____ Please reserve a parking space for me. _____ I need assistance from my car to the lunch location.

For lunch and/or tour reservations, please make checks out to LWVBAE. Check Total: _____

Mail with your check to: LWVBAE Fall Meeting, Suite F, 2035 San Pablo Ave, Berkeley, CA 94702.

Questions: Contact Jessica Powell, program@lwvbae.org.

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Cont'd from p. 1 Fall Meeting

Tasty menu choices from Blue Heron Catering:

Mains: 1. **Roast beef**, cheddar, caramelized onion, lettuce, and tomato and horseradish mustard mayo on sliced sourdough 2. **Diestel turkey**, avocado, tomato, lettuce and sweet onion aioli on sliced wheat 3. **Butternut squash** gratin, braised mustard greens and swiss chard

Sides: a. Shaved Brussel sprouts, toasted hazelnut and sweet onions b. Mixed Jayleaf farms baby lettuces; glazed walnuts, Point Reyes bleu cheese & French breakfast radish c. Dilly potato salad, hard-boiled egg, creamy whole grain mustard dressing; Firebrand Bakery bread and creamery butter.

Dessert: Fresh seasonal pies.

Garden Tour Choices:

- **Plants of the World:** Explore the Garden's incredible diversity of plants from six continents, including deserts, tropical forests, redwood forests, and wetlands. The tour will show the Garden's seasonal highlights and unique collections.
- **People Using Plants:** Humans depend on the use of plants to survive, prosper, and enrich our lives. Tour of herb and crop gardens, desert and

rainforest collections, and California plant communities will reveal the everyday uses of plants by different peoples and cultures. In addition, the Garden's special Fiber & Dye exhibit displays the range spectrum of color from plants and the natural history of clothing, paper and other fiber uses.

How to get there:

Free "Bot Bus" shuttle to the garden runs every 30 minutes, with stops near Downtown Berkeley BART on Shattuck and Addison and Underhill Parking lot on Durant and College. Schedule here: <http://botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu/directions>

Reserved Parking for Mobility Difficulties: If you have mobility issues, please indicate on your form; we will reserve a parking space at the Botanical Garden lot for you.

Driving and Parking: Spaces may be available in the pay parking lots across Centennial Drive from the Botanical Garden.

Volunteer to help: Jessica and her Team are organizing the details of the meeting—they'd love your help! Contact Jessica at program@lwvbae.org.

BOARD 2017-2018

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INSIDE: SIGN UP NOW FOR EARLY FALL MEETING SUN AUG 27

Calendar

The VOTER is published four times a year by the League of Women Voters of Berkeley Albany and Emeryville 2530 San Pablo Avenue, Suite F Berkeley, CA 94702-2000 Telephone: 510-843-8824 Email: office@lwvbae.org

Editors: Marian Gonzales
Nancy Bickel

Current and past issues of *The VOTER* are posted on our website www.lwvbae.org/newsletter

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

All meetings at League office at 2530 San Pablo Ave. unless otherwise noted. Before attending please check our on-line calendar at lwvbae.org. Area code is (510) unless otherwise noted.

August

8 Tues 7-9pm **Voter Services Meeting** P. Gale 548-0591
9 Wed 6:15p-8p **Making Democracy Work** M. Falzareno (925) 639-3738
15 Tues 7:00-8:30p **Climate Change Team** R. Beatus 524-6904
17 Thurs 4:30-6p **League Happy Hour** J. Powell (916) 662-6783
19 Sat 10a-12noon **Prop 13 Reform Team** R. MacDonald (847) 309-2707
21 Mon & 22 Tuesday **Voter Registration at Berk. H.S.** " " "
21 Mon 7:30-9p **Membership Team** J. Gardner 548-5292
24 Thurs 7-9p **Action & Program Teams** J. Powell (916) 662-6783
27 Sun 11:30-3p UCB Garden Lunch & Tours J. Powell (916) 662-6783
1 pm All Member Business Meeting
to Vote on New Dues Level & Local Study
28 Mon 7-9p **Board Meeting** A. Ishii (818) 620-5821

September

4 Mon **Labor Day**
11 Mon 6-8p **Nominating Comm.** N. Bickel 684-6302
12 Tues 7-9p **Voter Services Team** P. Gale 548-0591
13 Wed 6:15-8p **Making Democracy Work** M. Falzareno (925) 639-3738
16 Sat 10:30-noon **Reform Prop 13 Team** R. MacDonald (847) 309-2707
18 Mon 7:30-9p **Membership Team** J. Gardner 548-5292
19 Tuesday 7:30-9p **Climate Change Team** R. Beatus 524-6904