

**The League of
Women Voters of
Alameda**

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The VOTER is published 9 times per year. Current and past issues of the VOTER are posted on our website

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The League of Women Voters; a non-partisan political organization – encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major policy issues, and influence public policy through education. The League never supports or opposes any political party or candidate. We advocate only on issues that members have studied and come to a consensus on. In an era of proliferating and powerful special interests, the League's advocacy in the public interest is increasingly recognized as an essential voice of democracy.



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VOTER

**Political Responsibility through Informed and Active
Participation**

HEALTH CARE ISSUES AND STATUS:

A Public Program
Co-Sponsored by LWV-Alameda
and by Mastick Senior Center, Alameda

Date: March 25. Time: 7-9 P.M.
Place: Mastick Senior Center, Alameda., 1155 Santa Clara Avenue
Speaker: Dr. Deborah LeVeen, PhD, Professor Emerita, SFSU

Dr. LeVeen received her doctorate in Political Science from the University of Chicago in 1978 and currently teaches Public Policy at SJSU. She has been deeply involved in the national Health Care Reform effort and will help us understand the current status of the Health Care bill that is before the House and Senate.

There are so many misconceptions going around about Health Care Reform. It is very confusing for most of us. At this forum we hope to resolve your confusion and deepen your understanding of the current state of Health Care Reform Legislation. Please, join us on March 25th. There will be time for questions from the audience.

This program will build on our successful program on Health Care Reform in partnership with the Rotary club where Dr. Loni Bistow gave us a 'Physician's perspective on Health Care Reform'. At this forum Dr. LeVeen will primarily discuss the current status of the Health Care Bills in the House and Senate.

We are very fortunate to have Dr. LeVeen as our speaker. This program is free and open to the public. Please join us on March 25th and make this program a success

Leadership Council 2010

The Next Ninety

We invite you to our LWVC Leadership Council 2010 in Sacramento May 14-16. Each League sends its President, who is the only voting delegate, but all leaders, members, prospective members, and partners are welcome. Come join us for an intimate weekend of full of leadership development, networking, and decision making.

Register at www.ca.lwv.org/membersonly/



CO-PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Anne Spanier and Kate Quick
Co-Presidents, League of Women Voters of
Alameda

The League, as it always does, did a fine job of voter education for the one-item February election. Thanks to the stalwart team of Karen Butter, Joanne McKray, Juelle Ann Boyer, Sally Faulhaber, Li Volin, Jeff Cambra, Anne Spanier, and others, we spent the very short time we had over the holidays and in January getting questions for the proponents and opponents prepared and answered. We disseminated the material in binders at the libraries and at the Mastick Senior Center, had it published in the local papers, videoed it and got it up on the web and as a link from our web site, Smartvoter.org and some of the local blogs. Not to mention the forum we held, which was so well attended we had to ask some of the people crowding the room to wait outside so that the fire marshal didn't shut down the meeting!

The Alameda Point Initiative was indeed an emotional subject, and a lot of pressure was put on the League to join the "con" side with a position against it. Some of this came from the community and some from our own members. In another place in this issue of the VOTER there is an article that explains how the League arrives at a decision to support or oppose a measure on the ballot and how our non-partisan stance should not be confused with the possibility that we might also advocate for or against a matter which we have studied and arrived at consensus. The League only speaks from its established positions, be those established through national, state or local studies and consensus. In the case of the Alameda Point Initiative, our existing positions did not cover the many aspects of the measure, so we remained neutral and did the extensive educational effort.

It is nominating season, and once again we are asking League members to step up to the plate and take on leadership positions. Yes, it is work, and yes, it is going to take some of your precious time, but also, yes, it will mean that you have the opportunity to make a significant contribution to the betterment of our community and its government. So please consider saying "yes" when you get that call. We have posted all the Board job descriptions on the League web page, and feel free to contact any of us on the current board to ask what it means to be a League leader. Frankly, having served as president and co-president several times, I feel very proud of our board. It is a highly functional body with very little in the way of contention and a good deal of mutual respect and helpfulness among its members. While discussions may be vigorous and opinions strongly stated at times, there is also humor, friendship and camaraderie. If you feel that you just couldn't possibly volunteer for something you might not be adequate to undertake, just remember, all of us were new to League leadership at one time and found our way, with the trust and help of the more seasoned leaders.

As we approach the next election cycle – June is not so far away, please consider how you can help to insure good voter education by volunteering. And after June, there will be November, when we will have many municipal candidates as well as a plethora of ballot measures! Our work never ends, as long as there are elections and issues and voters to be educated.

Kate Quick

In Memoriam

Lib Zackheim, gifted artist and long time member of the Alameda League passed away on February 26, 2010. We will miss her incisive wit and fine mind. Our condolences to Lib's family and friends.

Ron Hamlin, the husband of our Secretary, Earleen Hamlin, passed away in February from a form of ALS. The many speakers at his memorial service revealed how his dedication to community improvement and social good touched many lives. He and Earleen have been tireless in their work for others, and we offer our condolences for the loss of this good man.

To Bid or Not to Bid?

That is usually the question at the League's annual "Meet Your Public Officials" fundraiser. Each member can make it an easy answer by being creative and donating a meaningful auction item to this year's event. Close your eyes and let your mind wander for ideas such as:

- Theatre or symphony tickets
- Sports shops or professional game tickets
- Gift certificates of all kinds: movies, restaurants, stores where you buy coffee or shop, specialty stores, etc.

Do you, or do you know someone, who has a special talent (musician, quilt maker, landscape architect, masseuse, for example)? How about a gift certificate for a lesson, or introduction to a craft or skill? In order for the League to raise sufficient funds to allow for providing important educational and informational community meetings, we need your help to make our April 22 "Meet Your Public Officials" annual fundraiser a huge success.

Doris Gee is the contact for all donations. Talk to Doris about getting the item/s to her. She can be reached at: 521-2117 or by email: dorisgee48@gmail.com

Questions about the event: Audrey, 522-4651; Liz, 865-1786; Li 522-3242

We Need League Members' Help

Meet a Member; Make a Friend

How many of us drive to various LWV events or meetings alone in our car? I've done that and then am sitting in the meeting and see others who live close by and say to myself, "I should have called her/him to see if we could go together. Wouldn't it be more fun, and environmentally friendly, to carpool whenever possible? It would also be an opportunity to talk with another member and share ideas and information. Many of us know each other quite well on a "League" basis but this could be a fun way to learn more about one another on a personal basis.

Next time when attending a League function – and if your schedule permits – pick up the roster and call another member who lives close by or on the way and ask if carpooling is a possibility. Rather than seeing 15-20 individual cars in the parking lot, half that number would be a tremendous sight to see and it would be a way for our organization to show its active support of environmental legislation as well as setting an example to our own community. Keep that roster handy and pick up the phone when coming to the next meeting.

Audrey Lord -Hausmen

Free Movie a Success

The celebration of the league's 90th Birthday held at the little theater of the Alameda High School saw almost a dozen young students, including a few young men as well viewing the movie in rapt attention. More than 50 adult women and a few men joined them in viewing what was a well acted made for TV movie about the struggle for the 19th amendment during the years of 1912-1920. The actors included Hilary Swank who played Alice Paul the upstart radical reformer and Angelica Huston playing Carrie Chapman Catt who later founded the League of Women voters. Mrs. Catt resisted the radical approaches of Alice Paul and Lucy Burns until she finally realized that after years of being told to "wait a little longer" President Wilson was not going to sign the amendment. Alice Paul and her cohorts understood this and took to the streets landing in jail, brutalized and force fed after a hunger strike. When news got out about the brutality, President Wilson capitulated and signed the amendment. The drama was quite compelling. Everyone was glued to their seats.

The response was quite enthusiastic. League volunteers were busy handing out extra Voters and envelopes advising all about how to join the League. Volunteers also distributed *the Know Your Representative* to audience members. Many women commented favorably about the information and it is hoped that we sparked a membership interest in a group of people who appeared to be our target group.

The best news yet was this message received from an attendee to Robby Kiley:

I wanted to thank you for inviting us to see the Iron Jawed Angels movie about the women's suffrage movement. It was great and very moving. I'm suggesting it to my boss to see at lunch time at my company next month for Women's History month.

AnneSpanier

The League of Women Voters-Strictly Non-partisan

Ninety years ago, Carrie Chapman Catt first proposed a League of Women Voters to “finish the fight” and work to end all discrimination against women. And so the League of Women Voters was founded on Valentine’s Day in 1920, six months before the ratification of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote.

Today we are a grassroots organization with 850 Leagues throughout all 50 states. During the 1970s, the League supported the equal rights amendment, and conducted presidential debates. In addition, the passage of the motor voter act, campaign finance reform and the redistricting act in California were activities that the League members throughout the country, and here locally, worked tirelessly to effect. Although the League is known widely for our voter education efforts, the League of Women Voters has been an institution in Alameda for over 30 years, educating Alamedans through pro and con forums and candidate’s nights, distributing voter education materials, working on education and library issues, and serving as citizen advocates for good government.

The League is strictly non-*partisan*, but we have always been political, advocating to effect change at the national and local level. As we enter into a new year, we don’t know exactly what new issues will confront Alameda. We do know that the League will be there doing what it has been trusted to do for more than 90 years: discuss the important issues, ask the difficult questions and demand accountability from our local government.

Our members join the League because they know that whatever happens to our democracy over the next 90 years, it should be up to us, the people. The League of Women Voters is *the* organization where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement, and this year, on our 90th Anniversary, we hope you will stand with us in this work. If we don’t do it, who will?



Alameda League Co-Presidents Kate Quick (left) and Anne Spanier (right) are congratulated by Mayor Beverly Johnson on February 16th when the City Council declared the month of February 2010 “Good Government Month” in honor of the 90th Anniversary of the League of Women Voters and the 19th Amendment.

Voter Service Committee Gears up for Coming Elections

The crowded election cycle continues as June 8, the date of the 2010 MID-year primary election, approaches. A lengthy list of congressional, state, and county offices will be contested, as old-timers and newcomers battle to retain or attain their chosen niche. At the federal level Senator Boxer will be challenged, and our Representative Pete Stark probably won't be in any serious fashion. At the state level the contest for Governor will doubtless receive the most attention, and in Alameda, where no local races for offices will be involved, interest as to candidates will probably center on the contest to choose the District 3 representative on the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. The race will involve several Alamedans, the full list to be determined after the March 12 filing deadline.

In addition to evaluating candidates, voters will need to do their homework regarding five state ballot propositions, and perhaps a local school parcel tax measure requiring voters to decide whether to pay more to avoid draconian cuts in AUSD programs. The state propositions include a proposal to change the primary election process, a pilot program to enact public financing for Secretary of State races, a property tax exemption for seismic retrofitting, a two-thirds vote requirement to allow cities to become public electricity providers, and a change in auto insurance pricing.

Enter the Alameda League of Women Voters! One of our major mission is to gather and present information prior to elections to help voters make informed decisions. Presently we're in the process of making plans.

As usual we will be presenting one or more public events where voters can hear local candidates - this time for a county office - speak, and pros and cons regarding ballot measures. This will happen in early May, as the absentee ballots go out. About that time we will be delivering Easy Voter Guides and other materials to over 30 different sites for distribution. (If you know of a location which would appreciate having such materials, please let us know!) Jeff Cambra, who for the last two elections has been producing videos recording events and presenting additional information about issues for our local League, will be at it again, this time filming presentations by candidates in addition to those about ballot measures. As always, we will be making information available on our local website alameda.ca.lwvnet.org and on smartvoter.org.

Much activity means much work to be done. Our plans include expanding our Voter Service Committee, and we invite you to consider joining, choosing tasks you'd like to work on. Please contact Joanne McKray at 522-6760 to talk about it!



USEFUL WEB SITES

LWV of Alameda – www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org
State League – www.ca.lwv.org
National League – www.lwv.org
Bay Area League – www.lwvba-ca.org
LWV Bay Area Monitor – www.bayareamonitor.org
Smart Voter – www.smartvoter.org

Join or Renew your membership in the Alameda League Today!



Name _____

Other Names _____

(if a family membership)

Address _____ City _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

\$68 Single Membership \$85 Family Membership \$25 Student Membership Dues year is Jan 1 – Dec 31.
Dues assistance is available for those on limited income – Contact us at 869-4969. Make Check payable to LWV Alameda and mail to: League of Women Voters of Alameda, P. O. Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501

Education Fund donations are Tax Deductible

Donations to the League of Women Voters Educations Fund are tax deductible. Consider sending a check for \$5 or more made out to LWV Ed Fund with your renewal, or at any time to LWV Alameda, P. O. Box 1645. Alameda, CA 94501

Turn your Trash into Cash for the Ed Fund

Lynn and Jim Groh collect aluminum cans, sell them and give the proceeds to the Ed Fund. Drop your aluminum cans on their front porch at 1546 Eastshore Drive, Alameda, and help the League educate voters.



Dates to Remember

March 18th, 7:30pm, Board Meeting, Alameda Hospital

March 25th 7pm, Program Meeting on Health Care at Mastick Senior Center

April 22nd, Meet Your Public Officials, Harbor Bay Community Center

May 14-16 – Leadership Council, Sacramento.

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