

**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.



**Volume 43
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VOTER

**Political Responsibility through Informed and Active
Participation**

Meet Your Public Officials – April 22nd You Don't Want to Miss This!

The Meet Your Public Officials (MYPO) invitations are in the mail and we encourage all Alameda League members to purchase or sell the tickets to this great event. Electronic flyers will be available to send to all of your friends, relatives, and organizations that you are involved with.

Meet Your Public Officials is the League's only fundraiser and the funds are used to ensure that we can hold various informational meetings throughout the year. This year in particular, with elections looming, the League will be holding ballot Pros and Cons meetings, Candidates' Forums, and current issues discussions. All of these are put together to ensure that Alamedans have the information they need to make thoughtful and clear decisions.

MYPO is an opportunity to meet and mingle with the elected and appointed officials (Commissions, Boards, etc.) who represent Alameda and have a direct influence on current issues. It is also an opportunity to bring guests who might be potential League members – this is the League in action and a perfect way to introduce someone to the organization.

Please mark your calendars and help by:

- Donating items for the raffle
- Buying and selling tickets
- Bringing guests (including teens)
- Distributing flyers

Light food and beverages are provided and we need League members' help in bringing finger food, wines, mineral waters, etc. Please contact Audrey at 522-4651 and let her know what you will bring. We are also looking for volunteers to help with set-up and selling raffle tickets.

There will be a raffle held throughout the evening. A LIVE AUCTION will have two great items: Progressive dinner, led by Jeff Cambra, at various Alameda restaurants; and a Behind the Scenes experience at Tucker's Ice Cream.

We look forward to your support and to seeing you on Thursday, April 22, 5:30 – 7:30 pm, at the Harbor Bay Community Center, 3195 Mecartney Road.

MYPO Committee: Audrey, 522-4651; Liz, 865-1786; Li, 522-3242



CO-PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

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

Most of the heavy rains that filled our reservoirs seem to have abated and just in time I might add. Spring is bringing new challenges to our League and good weather always makes the job easier. The nominating committee is working hard to fill the ranks of officers for next year and to bring in new board members with diversity as its theme.

Directly on our radar is our yearly community event “*Meet Your Public Officials*” bringing our citizens and officials to the Harbor Bay Community Center for a wine and cheese party. An able group of League members, under the direction of Audrey Lord-Hausman, have already set the plans in motion for this fundraising event scheduled for April 22, 2010. It will be fun and entertaining and all members are urged to attend bringing friends and neighbors.

March is Women’s History Month and the Alameda League joined with the Alameda Multicultural Center in honoring the work of an African Woman and Nobel Prize winner, Wangari Maathai, who fostered a successful *Pro-Democracy* movement in Kenya with the help of the impoverished women of that country.

Plans are in the works to sponsor a Social Networking Workshop at the Main Library in early May. If you are interested in keeping up with your children and grandchildren using the latest communication strategies such as Facebook and Twitter, see the information on page 5... and save the date.

There will be two elections this spring, keeping our Voter Chair, Joanne McKray and her committee very busy. The first election will be on June 8, 2010 and will cover the five State Propositions 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17. In addition there will be elections for state, local and federal candidates as well. The League will present the Candidate Forums and Pros and Cons in May. Watch for details on the dates and places in your May Voter and on our Web Site at www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org. In the latter part of June there will be a mail in election on the Parcel Tax Measure for the Alameda Schools. An informational workshop on this issue will be presented by Alameda League on June 10th.

In conclusion, it appears that all of the hard work done by grassroots and good government organizations have finally produced some changes in the health care industry which will make the lives of millions of our citizens more humane. Many thanks to Shubha Fanse, Dr. Robyn Young and Marilyn Ng for their work over the many months that this issue has been before us.

Anne Spanier

”Alone among all advanced industrial countries, the United States leaves health care to for-profit industries, that then distribute health care as a market commodity according to the ability to pay and not according to medical need.”

-Marcia Angell, MD

Harvard Medical School

Share the Benefits of League Memberships with Others

On May 22nd there will be a coffee for prospective members to learn about the League. Who are these prospective members? They are the friends, neighbors and family that **you** know who would like to join us in making democracy work in Alameda. Give their names and addresses to Anne Spanier at anneleague@comcast.net so that we can issue them a personalized invitation.

Regional Matters

The nine counties that border San Francisco Bay have a lot in common, not the least of which is car and truck traffic and its effects on the air. This has been one of the main concerns of the League of Women voters of the Bay Area. The LWVBA is the regional level of the League. The list of its positions – Regional Government, Regional Planning, Environment (Air, Land Use, Water, Solid Waste), Natural Resources/CEQA Mitigation, Hazardous Materials Management, Housing, Surface Transportation, Airports – makes it clear that environmental issues are its major focus.

It would seem that a regional level of government could best deal with these problems. The Bay Area does not have a regional government. It does, however, have some regional governance, mainly through the ABAG (Association of Bay Area Governments), MTC (Metropolitan Transportation Commission), BAAQMD (Bay Area Air Quality Management District), and BCDC (Bay Conservation and Development Commission), and the Joint Policy Committee which brings these four agencies together. At some time in the 60s a LWVBA study led to a position supporting a “multipurpose regional planning agency ... with directly elected representatives” Local governments, as we in Alameda can well appreciate, have resisted such a change. Now our position supports “in the interim, state or local government action to consolidate existing regional agencies. The JPC is a step in that direction.

Policies of cities and counties to increase their tax base and/or control residential density have led to housing and jobs located in different areas and to increasing urban sprawl, which in turn has led to more cars, more still-congested freeways, and more air pollution. While this process itself is now widely understood, how to get local governments to help with the solution is not, and local governments still make most land use decisions.

SB 375, enacted into law as a way of implementing the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB32) for cars and trucks, attempts to persuade these entities to help remedy the situation. Since 30% of greenhouse gas emissions are from cars and trucks, providing housing near jobs and public transit is important. A three year planning process to implement SB 375 is now underway, and Bay Area leagues are asked to call the attention of our local agencies to the process and urge their cooperation.

If you would like to help our League with this or other regional issues, please contact Sally Faulhaber at ssyhf@comcast.net. Even in our island city, region matters.

See more on LWVBA at www.lwvba.ca.lwvnet.org.

Sally Faulhaber

Voter Service Many Hands Make Light Work

Your Voter Service Committee has just caught its breath after the February Measure B Election, and is already getting to work on the June 8th Primary Election, as well as the June 22nd School Parcel Tax Election.

Volunteers are needed to assist with the Board of Supervisors Candidate Forum, as well as presenting the statewide proposition Pros and Cons on May 13th. There will also be a Pros and Cons Forum June 10th on the School Parcel Tax. Other tasks are contacting government teachers at High Schools and the College of Alameda to find out the number of Easy Voter Guides they need, as well as encouraging student attendance at the Forums. Easy Voter Guides also need to be sorted and delivered.

Hey! Haven't volunteered because you were unsure of the time commitment? These are jobs that will only take a couple hours time, but are vital to the League's Voter Education mission. Contact Joanne McKray at joannemckray@gmail.com or 522-6760

Sunshine Week

The Alameda League's Co-Presidents submitted the following letter to the editors of local newspapers in honor of Sunshine Week:

Almost 200 years ago, James Madison wrote, "A popular government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy; or, perhaps, both." His words remain a call to action today.

Access to information allows citizens to hold their government accountable at the local, state, and national level. Whether it is to track how federal stimulus dollars are being spent or to attend a local government meeting where land use or school funding decisions are being made, "sunshine laws" afford us access and create government transparency. However, these laws are only as good as we, the people, demand that they be.

March 14-20 is Sunshine Week a national initiative to promote the importance of open government and freedom of information. I encourage everyone to attend a local government meeting or visit the city of Alameda website www.ci.alameda.ca.us to learn more about what our government is doing. As members of the League of Women Voters, we are continuously answering Madison's call to action: we are working to keep our community fair, vibrant and strong—starting with having an open and transparent government. Join us! Go to our web site at www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org to become a member.

Sincerely,

Anne Spanier, Co-President
Kate Quick, Co-President
Alameda league of Women Voters



Debbie LeVeen PhD, Professor Emerita, SFSU

National Health Reform: Celebrate! And Continue the Fight

Over fifty people came away from the March 25th Healthcare Meeting co-sponsored by the Alameda League and Mastick Senior Center with a much clearer understanding of the legislation and the challenges ahead.

Debbie LeVeen, PhD not only gave a lucid overview of the legislation and knowledgeable answers to questions from the audience; she also shared a written summary of the issues, with source documentation for all her facts and figures. With all of the misinformation and distortions flooding the public media, this can be an invaluable resource in bringing accuracy and reasoned dialogue to the issue.

Dr. LeVeen has made this document available for posting on our Web Site. Check it out at www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org on the League in Action: Current News page.

HANDS-ON INTRO TO SOCIAL MEDIA: How to Use Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and More

WHEN: Tuesday, May 4, 4–6 PM

WHERE: Alameda Free Library, Community Meeting Room A

PRESENTER: Carlos R. Hernandez, Social Media Trainer and Connector

BRING: Your laptop computer (Wi-Fi ready) and your questions

Does using social media seem too complicated?

Are Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook are “just for kids”?

Do you think you don’t have time to set up and maintain profiles?

Are you concerned about privacy?

Think again!

You can use social media (SM) to stay in touch with family, friends, customers, and colleagues, help your nonprofit reach and serve your community, and keep abreast of current events. Your friends, family, and colleagues are active on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and other SM sites—and you can be, too.

Carlos Hernandez, a tech-savvy boomer, will show us how to create a dynamic online presence and maintain the right level of privacy. Carlos understands the concerns and reluctance that “people of a certain age” have about using social media. (This session is based on his popular “Social Media for the Uncomfortable” classes.)

Bring your laptop and join us for a hands-on workshop May 4 at the Alameda Free Library in Community Meeting Room A. You will receive plenty of individual attention and come away with material you can use right away in your social media profile. The room has Internet access, so bring your Wi-Fi enabled laptop or desktop computer with you.

Carlos will also demonstrate how nonprofits can adapt their brands and use SM (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.) to engage the community by informing the public, soliciting feedback, marketing special events, recruiting new members, and more.

For more information please contact LWVA member Jon Spangler (510-864-2144; jonswriter@att.net). This event is co-sponsored by the AAUW.

Don’t forget your Wi-Fi ready laptop!

Contact: CarlosHernandezSF@Gmail.com

Connect with Carlos here: www.xeesm.com/carlosrhernandez

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.

Save the Dates!

- April 15th**, 7:30pm, Board Meeting, Alameda Hospital
- April 22nd**, 5:30-7:30pm, Meet Your Public Officials, Harbor Bay Community Center
- May 4th** – 4-6pm, Social Media Training, Main Library
- May 13th** 7:30pm, Candidates Forum & Pros and Cons – Main Library
- May 14-16** – Leadership Council, Sacramento.
- June 5th** – Annual Meeting – Gold Coast Grill
- June 8th** – Primary Election
- June 10th** – 7:30pm, Parcel Tax Pros and Cons – Mastick Senior Center
- June 22nd** – School Parcel Tax Election

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