

**The League of  
Women Voters of  
Alameda**

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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 41  
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# VOTER

**Political Responsibility through Informed and Active Participation**

## January League Program Meeting

### Funding of Campaigns for Public Office: The Local Experience

Is the price of running for local office eliminating good candidates from the pool? Are candidates compromised by the campaign dollars they accept from donors? Come and learn about an issue that impacts Alameda residents, whether they are a candidate for office, a volunteer or relative of that candidate, or simply a voter.

On Thursday January 29<sup>th</sup>, The Alameda League of Women Voters will present a speaker and a panel of current and prior council members who will discuss funding of campaigns for local offices. The featured speaker will be Daniel Purnell, Executive Director of the City of Oakland Ethics Commission who will present the Oakland experience with an Ethics committee and with partial funding of campaigns for local office. The panel members, current and former members of elected offices in Alameda, will discuss their experiences and concerns about funding of their campaigns.

The event is open to the public will be held at the Alameda Main Library on 1550 Oak Street at 7:00 p.m. in the Stafford Room

### **YOU ARE INVITED TO THE ALAMEDA LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY**

JOIN US ON **FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup> AT 6 P.M.** FOR A LOVELY EVENING OF GOOD FOOD, DRINK, AND CONVERSATION. THERE WILL BE DOOR PRIZES AND A RAFFLE, TOO!

PLACE: LI VOLIN'S HOME AT 1506 EASTSHORE DRIVE, ALAMEDA.

THE MEAL WILL BE POT-LUCK. BRING YOUR FAVORITE MAIN DISH, SIDE DISH, APPETIZER, DESSERT OR DRINK TO SHARE.

PLEASE R.S.V.P. TO MARIAN KAPPELLAS AT TEL **523-9814** OR E-MAIL [mekapellas@yahoo.com](mailto:mekapellas@yahoo.com) by DECEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>. LET HER KNOW HOW MANY ARE COMING (SIGNIFICANT OTHERS AND GUESTS ARE WELCOME) AND WHAT YOU ARE BRINGING.



## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Kate Quick, President, League of Women Voters of Alameda

Gee, gosh, did you ever think this election marathon would ever be over? I have been decompressing over this past week. Election night was quite a high with so much at stake and such a long and complex period of time during which we "Leaguers" were more like "Beleaguers"!

Lots of registrations and first time voters, which means we did a lot of voter education. Our League telephone line was ringing off the hook for a week ahead all the way up to election day (starting at 7 a.m.!) with lots of questions about voting – where to go, what to do, how to resolve registration issues, how does the League feel about . . . . Thanks to the smartvoter.org and Alameda County Registrar's web sites, we had a lot of ways to offer good information and got a lot of "I'm so glad I called you – now I know just what to do." compliments.

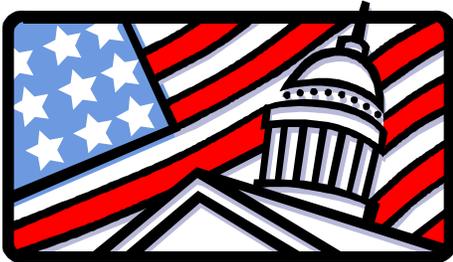
Our pro and con forums and candidate's nights were better attended this year than any election I can remember. Our advocacy effort was well organized and effective. Two issues we felt strongly about, local Measure P, the increase in the documentary transfer tax rate, and Proposition 11, the state redistricting measure both passed – with the slimmest of margins, but passed. I personally am sorry that Proposition 8, the measure denying the rights of same sex couples to marry, passed. I am hoping that equality under the law will trump the voters wish to deny it.

The Presidential campaign and the election night drama was exciting, no matter which candidate you were pulling for. Both men gave gracious speeches; I'm sure the League will be watching to see how the transition plays out.

It looks as if we may be sponsoring with the Library an Inauguration Day event where we have the community watch the ceremony together, and get an opportunity to do some good civics education at the same time. More on that elsewhere in this VOTER.

My greatest thanks to all our League members who worked long hours in organizing and pulling off this election, and the two before it. We did it! We ran the race and we won! We involved more members and did more than we have been able to accomplish for a long time. Our community is proud of us, and I am, too. Many, many, many thanks for a job well done.

*-Kate*



**Save the date!**  
***January 20 Inauguration***

**Don't miss this historic event.**

**View the inauguration on wide screen TV**

Join us at the library and share the fun and goodies, games and prizes.

The LWV Alameda, the Friends of the Library and the Alameda Free Library are hosting a community viewing of the historic inauguration of our 44<sup>th</sup> President on January 20<sup>th</sup>.

Starting time and details to come. Plan for early morning and brush up on what you know about past and present presidents, their special day, their family and the world around them -- you could win a prize!.

## Voter Education Team Delivers!

The historic election of November 4, 2008 is over, and we in the Alameda League have played our part. It's time to acknowledge those who contributed their time, skills, knowledge, good humor, and legwork to our efforts at enabling citizens to cast informed votes.

The Alameda League presented three public and several private forums where the pros and cons of the state and local propositions were examined, and four candidates nights featuring presentations by those running for City Council and the AUSD Board of Education. Presenters at the pros/cons forums were Karen Butter, Sally Faulhaber, Dorothy Fullerton, Karen Guthrie, Golda Mason, Kate Quick, Helen Sause, Anne Spanier, and Felice Zensius. Moderators were Kate Quick and JuellaAnne Boyer, and a number of League members acted as pages and timers.

Prior to the events, election materials - Pros and Cons on the issues, Easy Voters Guides in a variety of languages, and sheets explaining the League stands on the various issues - were delivered to 30 different sites, courtesy of Sally Faulhaber, Dorothy Fullerton, Karen Guthrie, Earleen Hamlin, Honora Murphy, Li Volin, Helen Waldear, Cara Watkins, and Felice Zensius. Before that JuellaAnne Boyer, Luann Dewitt, and Li Volin were most helpful in sorting and packing the 4 to 5000 pieces of literature. The material on Propositions 1 through 12 came from the state League; Pros/Cons for the city issues were locally written by Karen Butter and Kate Quick. Cara Watkins helped with printing.

During the election season Anne Spanier and JuellaAnne Boyer were not merely committee members; instead they were full partners in the voter education efforts. Anne volunteered to take on task of arranging and overseeing the pros/cons nights, and JuellaAnne the candidates forums. Along with Karen Scanlon they helped with publicity. And then there was

Wonder Woman, AKA Kate Quick. Kate is the consummate pro at all things League. She was most generous with her knowledge and her time regarding all our education efforts throughout election season.

Many, many thanks to all of you. The good news is that, barring special elections, we don't have to do all this again until 2010!

Joanne McKray  
Voter Education Chair

## Governor Once Again Vetoes Single Payer Health Care

No, it's not déjà vu. For the second time, the Legislature passed SB 840 (Kuehl), the single payer health care bill, and on September 30 the Governor once again vetoed it, dashing hopes that affordable health insurance for all Californians would be achieved in this legislative session.

Although Senator Sheila Kuehl will be termed out of office this year, she has announced that Assembly Member Mark Leno will reintroduce the legislation after his expected election to the state Senate in November. When the bill is reintroduced, the LWVC will redouble our efforts to educate the public and to build support for the measure—until we finally win. Check the LWVC web site for the latest news, including Senator Kuehl's statement about the veto



Next Board Meeting is  
Thursday, January 15<sup>th</sup>,  
7:30pm,  
Conference Room C,  
Alameda Hospital  
2070 Clinton Avenue  
Alameda

## Victory for Prop 11!

It passed by a whisker, but it passed. It was never behind, but the fate of Proposition 11, a measure of major interest to the League statewide and locally, was uncertain for a number of days following the election. With the vote-count finally complete....the victory celebrations can begin!

Prop 11's subject, the post-census redrawing of election district boundaries for state legislative seats, made it a hard sell to the electorate. The matter is of supreme interest to elected officials, but prior to this election was of virtually no interest to most citizens.

However pre-election polling showed that, when the significance of taking the power to draw their own districts was taken away from incumbent legislators and given to an independent citizens' commission was explained, most citizens thought it was a good idea. Voter education, in which the League was involved in a major way, involved showing how accountability of elected officials could be increased if, instead of representatives choosing their voters, voters had more opportunity to choose their representatives.

The word gradually got out; newspapers up and down the state began saying Yes on 11. The opposition, predominately party leaders who will cede their previously held power very reluctantly, may well challenge its passage in court. But the measure was drawn up over a three year period by representatives from the government, think-tanks, and good government groups including the League, and ought to prove constitutionally sound.

The days of gerrymandering are numbered! As the San Francisco Chronicle put it, a vote for Proposition 11 was a vote for democracy itself.

## Councilman Matarrese Thanks Alameda League for Prop P Support

In a letter to LWV Alameda President Kate Quick, City Council Member Frank Matarrese writes:

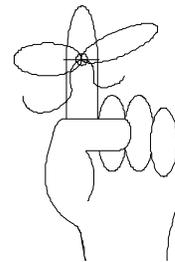
"I want to express my heartfelt thanks to you and the Alameda League of Women voters for your personal leadership and the League's support for Measure P as 'good government'. It means a lot when our respected civic groups stand up for what is best for the community.

Measure P will not only solve our budget problems, but it will cushion us from what would have been devastating cuts of City services.

I am grateful that you and the League, as people truly dedicated to our community, shouldered the task passing a measure that gives us the means to fund those services vital to our community."

Frank Matarrese, City Council

### DUES ARE DUE



**Just a Reminder, if you haven't yet paid your 2009 dues, please use the form on the back page to submit them now.**

## **Measure P**

### **Lena Tam, Vice-Mayor of Alameda**

Thank you Alameda Voters! During this past historical election month, you voted in favor of Measure P, the City of Alameda's real property transfer tax, which will raise the tax charged when a property is sold from \$5.40 to \$12.00 per \$1,000 of value. No one likes paying increased taxes, especially in a difficult economy, so I know this wasn't an easy vote for many people. In fact, my City Council colleagues and I would have liked to avoid placing this measure on the ballot.

Unfortunately, the magnitude of our budget problem required us to act decisively. The gap between our revenues and our expenditures was growing, despite the significant cuts we made earlier this year. As a result, we were facing the very real possibility of implementing even more draconian reductions this year and into the future. Our list of possible cuts included eliminating sworn police and fire positions, closing the Bay Farm Island branch library, and reducing programming at the Teen Center and the swim centers. We even had the closure of the Mastick Senior Center on our list of reductions to consider in the future.

Thanks for your help and your faith in the City of Alameda. Although the slowdown in the real estate market will keep the yield from the transfer tax low for now, the market will eventually recover. Once that occurs, the increase in the transfer tax will ensure that we can not only restore many of the programs we cut earlier this year, but may ultimately be able to expand those direct services that the community values like public safety, libraries, parks, and street maintenance. Eventually, as new development projects get built, new residents will be paying their share in preserving vital city services.

The ground support with walking precincts, talking to voters, mailings and lawn signs made all the difference in the very close vote. Measure P won with a margin of 536 out of 31,820 votes or 1.68%. The objective review by the League of Women Voters of Alameda made the difference.

## **BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY**

### **Water: California's New Gold**

Faced with a changing climate and a drought cycle in California, the Bay Area has a critical opportunity to plan for the future use of water, a finite resource. The demise of a healthy Delta system has raised the question of water use, diversion and storage. Can the Delta fisheries be restored while the farmers continue to use 80% of the water supply passing through the Delta? Is there a conveyance system that can provide protection for the fisheries and an adequate supply of water for the farmers? Can the choice of crops affect the water usage? Should all water users be required to have water meters?

These are the questions we have...come to **Bay Area League Day** and join the discussion in the search for answers

**Bay Area League Day, January 31, 2009**

**MetroCenter Auditorium, 101 Eighth Street, Oakland, CA 94607**

**9AM Registration, 9:30 AM to 2 PM: Program**

# Budget is Dishonest and Irresponsible Says League of Women Voters

By Janis Hirohama, President, LWVC

The Legislature and Governor have enacted a budget deal that is dishonest and irresponsible. It not only fails to set priorities and address serious problems at a time when we face economic uncertainties, but also sets the stage for further and deeper budget problems in coming years.

This is a dishonest budget. It relies on an assortment of gimmicks—including accounting tricks, early collection of tax revenue, and speculative borrowing—to obscure the fact that the money to support the budget really isn't there. As one example, although the claim is made that the plan does not rely on borrowing, in fact it counts on borrowing, through the future issuance of bonds to be repaid from lottery revenue. This speculative scheme depends on voter approval of changes to the lottery system, the hope of increased lottery sales, and the cooperation of skeptical financial markets in tough economic times.

The budget is also irresponsible. By including the Governor's plan to build up the reserve, it reduces flexibility and makes it far more difficult for future legislatures and governors to adjust priorities within limited resources. Moreover, including this provision requires a constitutional amendment that must be approved by the voters. Passage of a future ballot measure should never be the premise on which a budget is based.

The budget deal calls for reducing the reserve fund for this year to less than a billion dollars, shifting this year's shortfall into next year through a variety of accounting changes, and opening major new loopholes in the corporate tax that businesses will pay in future years. Meanwhile, it does nothing to address the continuing structural deficit caused by previous tax reductions and spending decisions.

The budget also includes a proposal giving the Governor new authority to make unilateral midyear budget cuts. Mid-budget adjustments should only be made through joint action of the executive and legislative branches so that our system of checks and balances—an essential component of responsible government—is maintained.

Still, despite these serious defects and the painful impact of the severe cuts it makes to essential services, a budget had to be passed. Without a budget, many important programs were jeopardized because they were not receiving the funding they depend on. The budget impasse deprived schools, medical providers, nursing homes, and child care providers of the money they need to continue to provide vital services.

The state also faced cash flow problems that could mean borrowing at a time when money is less available than usual, and likely to be more expensive. The state could not wait any longer for a budget, especially when the minority in the legislature had made it clear that they would not budge from their pledge not to raise any taxes. That pledge has once again enabled a minority to hold the entire budget process hostage to their wishes. This is not responsible representative government.

While there is plenty of blame to go around, there is a silver lining to the mess in Sacramento. The voters will be able to pass judgment on at least two components of the budget deal in a special election. More important, many people are now saying that it's time to look at real budget reform, particularly at eliminating the two-thirds vote requirement to pass a budget. Now that the people of our state have been treated to a stark example of the utter dysfunction in the budget process, we hope they will join us in fixing this broken system and replacing it with a process that really works. The people of California deserve no less.

## Post Election Press Release from LWV Alameda

November 21, 2008

There will be many memorable images from the historic election of 2008, but perhaps none is more heartening than that of Americans voting in staggering numbers. It is an affirmation our democracy is alive and well. Voters deserve to be congratulated for their deep commitment to voting and for their patience and perseverance. They showed dedication by voting early, sometimes standing in long lines, and making sure that their voices were heard.

The League of Women Voters of Alameda saw a lot of people at its candidate's forums and ballot measure pros and cons presentations. We had big demand for our printed explanations of the ballot measures, and a lot of traffic on our web site, telephone line and SmartVoter.org sites. People asked very intelligent questions and seemed eager to really understand what they were voting on. Registration of new voters was brisk, and we had trouble keeping the registration form boxes at the library, post offices, and other venues we service, full.

Democracy got a big boost this election with such enthusiastic participation from voters, especially younger voters ages 18-29, but there is always more to be done to make it work well for all of us. As a leader of the Alameda League of Women Voters, I work year-round with other League volunteers to safeguard democracy at all levels of government. I was immensely gratified to see so many people engaged in the political process. As the League's work continues, I invite others in the community to maintain their commitment to civic improvement by joining the League. Together we can keep our community strong, healthy and vibrant. Go to: [//www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org](http://www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org), click on the join us area, and fill out the form. The web site will tell you all about the League, our activities and our positions on matters of public policy. All our meetings are open to everyone.

What's next, between elections? In the winter and spring, some interesting meetings on local campaign financing, government ethics, and health care. Right now we are planning a community viewing of the historic inauguration of our 44th

President on January 20th, in conjunction with the Library and the Friends of the Library. We welcome your help with advance stories and calendar items for this wonderful community event. Contact me at 523-3612, or via e-mail at [katequick@comcast.net](mailto:katequick@comcast.net).

Membership in the League is open to both men and women.

Kate Quick, President, LWV Alameda



### Pros and Cons at Alameda Point

Anne Spanier presents Pros and Cons at the Alameda Point Collaborative. The Collaborative invited the League to present the Pros and Cons to its members. Anne, accompanied by Alameda League President Kate Quick, found this group containing many first time voters to be an eager and attentive audience. This was one of many of the groups requesting League presentations in addition to the forums scheduled by the League.

# Join or Renew your membership in the Alameda League Today!



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Other Names \_\_\_\_\_ (if a family membership)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\$65 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.

## Upcoming Events

December 19 <sup>th</sup> 6 PM	Holiday Party Li Volin's Home
January 15 <sup>th</sup> 7:30PM	Board Meeting Alameda Hospital
January 20 <sup>th</sup> 9 AM	Inauguration Viewing Alameda Main Library
January 29 <sup>th</sup> 7 PM	Local Campaign Funding Alameda Main Library
January 31 <sup>st</sup> 9AM	Bay Area League Day MetroCenter Auditorium

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