



Sunshine Week 2007 materials now available

L league members are hard at work preparing for Sunshine Week 2007, which will take place March 11-17.

First launched in 2002, Sunshine Week seeks to enlighten and empower citizens to play an active role in their government at all levels, and to give them access to information that makes their lives better and their communities stronger.

Please visit www.sunshineweek.org for additional materials.

LWVUS is partnering with other organizations in a kick-off event for Sunshine Week on March 12 at the National Press Club in Washington D.C. The program, entitled "Closed Doors; Open Democracies?", will include a panel discussion, audience questions, and ideas for action, and

First launched in 2002, Sunshine Week seeks to enlighten and empower citizens to play an active role in government at all levels.

will be webcast to sites around the country.

The purpose is to share this discussion of national experts with local communities, providing them with material to educate the public on this important issue. In most cases, libraries will be the local host sites.

In addition to these activities, The

American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) is coordinating a national freedom of information audit, whose results will be released during Sunshine Week 2007. During an information audit, requesters visit pre-selected government offices, ask for copies of particular public documents (in this case, documents related to emergency preparedness) and then record how well the agency responds.

The project plans to pair newspapers with local civic groups in order to engage citizens in the audit process. The audits were to be conducted in early January with results released in March.

For more information about this effort, please contact ASNE Sunshine Week Coordinator, Debra Gersh Hernandez at dghernandez@asne.org.

We invite new and prospective members to join us for orientation March 3

By MARILYN NG
Membership Chair

This year, in lieu of the traditional Open House venue, the orientation for new and prospective members to the League of Women Voters Alameda will be held at the Main Library, 1550 Oak Street.

It will be on Saturday, March 3, from 10 a.m. to noon in Community Meeting Room B.

Among our presenters will be Kate Quick who will give an overview of the League and its operations on national, regional, and

local levels.

Juelle Ann Boyer will speak on the various voter education and election activities we have been involved in.

Karen Butter will address action and advocacy on issues such as housing, transportation, and healthcare and insurance.

A continental breakfast will be served.

Prospective as well as new members are encouraged to attend. If you know of someone who would be interested, I can be contacted at mjklm@yahoo.com.

Inside

- Board Briefs 2
- Clean Money workshops 2
- State Convention 3
- Reproduction Freedom Day 4
- 'Bay Area Decisionmakers' 5
- Chamber candidate forums 5
- Events calendar 6

January Board Briefs

At its Jan. 18 meeting the Board:

■ heard that 40 dues renewals had been received, and others would be pursued;

■ discussed timing of a letter to editors re a separate public meeting on Measure A, deciding to wait to see the Planning Board's response to our request;

■ discussed whether to put ads in the VOTER; and

■ heard a request for support for using the Carnegie library building as an art museum, but tabled the item due to a question whether we have a position to support it.

Keep in touch

Have you moved? Have you changed your phone number or email address? Send any new contact information to Golda Mason, 406 Central Ave. Apt. B, Alameda, 94501. Call her at (510)812-2873 between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m.; e-mails to ImaBagLady@aol.com.

March workshops on city-level Campaign Finance Reform

California Common Cause and the California Clean Money Campaign are jointly hosting two conferences on city-level implementation of Clean Money Reform in March.

The two conferences will be on March 15 at the Pasadena Civic Center and March 23 at the San Jose City Hall. The conferences will be identical and provide the training and tools to assist interested cities and activists in adopting local and municipal Clean Money reform efforts.

The conferences will run approximately from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The tentative schedule for the day includes:

■ 9 a.m. Registration & Breakfast

■ 9:30 a.m. Welcome & Speaker

■ 10 to 11 a.m. **Panel 1: Clean Money Basics:** Hear from activists and elected about clean money sys-

tems and developing city-level proposals.

■ 11 to 11:15 a.m. Break

■ 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. **Panel 2: Know the law: what are the constitutional and legal issues facing clean money systems?**

■ 12:30 to 1:30p.m. LUNCH with speaker

■ 1:45 to 2:45 p.m. Workshops-Three will be offered:

■ The inside story: Campaigning and governing in a clean money system

■ Winning with Clean Money: Successful campaigns at the ballot box or in the Council

■ How to fund a clean money system.

■ 2:45 to 3:30 p.m.: Wrap up & speaker-closing, coffee and cookies.

For more information or to register: www.conference@cacleancities.com.

Help pack donations to Zimbabwe

The Isle City Business and Professional Women is again shipping hospice supplies to the Zimbabwe clinic

for women and children supported by BPW Zimbabwe.

Because we partnered with Alameda County Industries (ACI) and the City of Alameda for its annual America Recycles Day, we have many more donations than in previous years. We need helping hands to sort and box these.

We have set aside weekends (from 2 to 4 p.m.) to box donations: Feb. 24-25, and March 3-4. The sorting will take place at JoAnn Ainsworth's home at 299 Begier

Ave., San Leandro 94577 (510) 553-0591.

Please email her (joann299@sbcglobal.net) if you, your family or your friends have time on these afternoons to help.

The clinic desperately needs medical gloves and so far we haven't had any donated. If you are able to buy gloves and bring them February or March or contribute a check made out to Isle City BPW and earmarked for Project Africa gloves, your support will be greatly appreciated.

The League of Women Voters of Alameda

Current and past issues of the *Voter* are posted on our

website: www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org
The *Voter* is published 10 times a year by the League of Women Voters of Alameda
The *Voter* Editor is Cara Watkins

Officers:

Secretary Sally Faulhaber:
ssyhf@alamedanet.net
Treasurer Pat Caito:
patricia.caito@gte.net

Elected Directors

Juelle-Ann Boyer: jab@borupp.org
Marilyn Ng: mjkl@yahoo.com
Donna Vaughn: dbvaughn@comcast.net
Cara Watkins:
geekspeak@compuserve.com

Appointed Directors

Board Co-Convenors- Dorothy Fullerton:
pandata1@earthlink.net

Karen Scanlon: yakitt@aol.com

Administrative Committee

Kate Quick: katequick@comcast.net
Pat Sahadi: pmsrps@aol.com
Lena Tam: ltam@ebmud.com
Liz Rogers: edr1940@aol.com

Action Committee

Karen Butter: kab@library.ucsf.edu
Audrey Lord-Hausman: alord@ix.net-com.com
Felice Zenzius: n/a

Communications Committee

Luann DeWitt: ldewitt@alamedanet.net
Lucille Harrison: n/a
Andrea Pook: apook@ebmud.com
Li Volin: n/a
CaraWatkin

Membership Committee

Marilyn Ng: mjkl@yahoo.com

Program Committee

Diane Lichtenstein: dlooo@juno.com
Helen Sause:
Shiela Turner: sturner@sbcglobal.net

Registration for the May state convention gets underway

It is not too early to plan for the League of Women Voters of California biennial Convention 2007, "Rally in the Valley," to be held May 18 -20 at the Doubletree Hotel in Bakersfield.

The LWV Bakersfield is eagerly preparing for this event and promises to make it one of the best conventions ever. We are pleased to announce that Dolores Huerta, activist and co-founder with César Chávez of the United Farm Workers, will be the speaker at the Saturday banquet. We are inviting several other special guests and their acceptance of our invitations will be announced in subsequent mailings, LWVC News, and on the Web site, www.lwvc.org/lwvonly/conv_council/2007/.

Convention Business

Convention delegates meet to determine the direction of the League of Women Voters of California for the next two years. Adoption of program for the next two years is an important item of business. Guided by the LWVC program planning materials, local Leagues have reviewed existing positions and suggested issues on which we should focus our education and advocacy efforts in 2007-2009. The LWVC board recommendations and all local League suggestions, even those not recommended by the LWVC board, will be included in the convention workbook and may be considered by the delegates.

The convention delegates will adopt the LWVC budget for 2007-08, necessary to fund the program decisions, and elect the officers and directors who will guide the League during the next two years. The slate of nominees will be announced in a subsequent mailing.

Workshops

Workshops on Friday and Saturday will provide educational opportunities for all who register, even those who are not voting delegates. A two-part track will focus on the California state budget: Part I will be a presentation by Next Ten on the budget and how we fund infrastructure; Part II--Follow the Money--will provide information on how to track the spending in your own community.

Both will include information pertinent to our three program areas: government, natural resources and social policy. Other workshop topics

being considered include alternate board organizational structures, marketing voter service print materials, maximizing online voter service outreach, "green" communities, a League study process tutorial, and health care.

Other Activities

Local Leagues and ILOs are invited to sell League publications and merchandise in the Convention Marketplace. Reservation information will be included in the registration packet.

Arrive on Thursday afternoon, May 17, to attend one of our special activities.

There will be a half-day training with certification for Neighborhood Association Election Management and a visit to the Kern County Water Agency hosted by the LWV Bakersfield. In addition, the Smart Voter team invites everyone to a pre-convention dinner.

Representation

The First Call to Convention gives details of the representation at convention and the applicable bylaws provisions.

Each local League and ILO is entitled to send its president or an alternate as a voting delegate. In addition, each local League may send voting delegates based on the size of its membership. Each member-at-large unit is encouraged to send its president as a non-voting member. Other members, in addition to your voting delegates, may attend as nonvoting members. Nonmembers are welcome to attend as guests.

Registration

For the first time, there will be an inclusive registration fee (\$300) that will include attendance at plenary sessions, workshops and all meals (except Friday dinner). Basic registration and daily registration that do not include meals are also available. The registration kit will be mailed around the first of March. You will have the option of registering online, using a credit card, at www.lwvc.org/lwvonly/conv_council/2007/ beginning March 5.

Detailed information about hotel reservations will be on the reservation form. Room rates begin at \$89 per night plus taxes. Reserve by April 17 to receive the special convention rate. Contact your neighboring Leagues if you need a roommate.

Important Dates

March 5: Online registration available

April 17: Deadline to register without incurring late charge; Deadline for hotel guarantee rate of \$89; Deadline to register for Marketplace table; Deadline to pre-register for caucus room (assigned on first come basis)

May 10: Deadline to submit Local League and ILO Convention Registration Master Form

California League victorious in voting rights case

On December 21, 2006 the Court of Appeal of the State of California handed down its decision in a case brought by the League of Women Voters of California and other voting rights groups and individual petitioners involving the right to vote of those serving time in a county

jail sentence as a condition of proper interpretation of the wording of article II, section 4, of the State Constitution. The Court ruled in the League's favor, saying that those persons confined in local jail as a condition of proba-

tion for a felony or in cases where a trial court has imposed a lesser penalty than imprisonment in state prison do have the right to vote.

The Court's opinion can be found at www.courtinfo.ca.gov/opinions/documents/A114988.PDF. We hope members will read it carefully.

Reproductive Freedom Day March 21 – Take action, create change

League members are invited to attend the Reproductive Freedom Day to be held at the Sacramento Convention Center from 9 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. March 21.

At this yearly event, sponsored by the California Coalition for Reproductive Freedom, we come together to educate our legislators on important issues

for the year and to caucus with other women's health advocate groups from all over California.

Registration is available at www.ccrf.eventbrite.com. For more information, including registration fee subsidies, call 415-346-0563. We hope to see many of you at this event.

A simple way to gain members

You most likely encounter individuals every day in your community and think, "He/she would make a great League member!"

Why not carry a membership brochure with you so you can easily pass along your League's membership information? It is an effortless way to invite your friends, neighbors and other community leaders into the League. You can purchase membership brochures for \$.05 each (minimum order of 50) from LWVUS by emailing pubsales@lww.org. Or you can download them for free.

Youth targeted with You Tube site

The League of Women Voters of California debuts our newest voter outreach tool – an appeal to young people to vote, made by young people, posted where young people gather – on YouTube.

Here's the link; just click and go to YouTube:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QWchKsYGlcl>

Watch the spot. Then send it to everybody you know. Forward this message to everyone in your address book. Ask them to watch it and pass it on – especially to young people. Send it to your political blogs and e-lists. We need to spread the word.

Voting is easy and young people have the most to gain by voting – or lose by not voting.

Handy Web sites

- Oakland League:
www.lwvoakland.org
- Bay Area League:
www.lwvba-ca.org
- State League: www.ca.lwv.org
- National League: www.lwv.org
- LWV Smart Voter:
www.smartvoter.org
- LWVBA Monitor:
www.bayareamonitor.org
- Sen. Barbara Boxer:
senator@boxer.senate.gov
- Sen. Diane Feinstein:
senator@feinstein.senate.gov
- The White House:
www.whitehouse.gov

Immigration Study update

The Immigration Study Committee continues its work.

Several of the background papers are now posted on the LWVUS Web site; www.lwv.org, including "Immigration and the Economy," "Economic Aspects of Authorized and Unauthorized Immigration," and "Federal Immigration Policy and Proposed Reforms."

More will be posted shortly. The LWV Immigration listserv is now up and running as well. Check the "For Members" section of the LWVUS Web site to sign up.

Obstacle to Bay Area planning: No common vision

■ Planning experts weigh in at Bay Area League Day

Government planners, non-profit leaders and journalists Jan. 27 discussed their views for the future of regional housing in the Bay Area at Bay Area League Day :Vision for the Future of the Bay Area: Focus on Housing. The event took place at the San Mateo Library.

John King, Urban Design Columnist for the San Francisco Chronicle, gave his perspective on development in the Bay Area – the region is so large and diverse there is no common vision, and certainly no regional decision making.

Successful future of development will be infill, particularly in the already-urban areas such as San Jose, Oakland and San Francisco, building more density near transit and in inner suburban cities, and thoughtful reuse of older buildings (even changing uses from industrial, to of-

rice, to housing, etc).

King views the City of Portland as an example of a successful region (except for some recent state-wide land use laws).

The Bay Area "Focusing our Vision" project was explained by Ken Kirkey, Planning Director of the Association of Bay Area Governments, in which a technical advisory committee and sophisticated mapping techniques are attempting to focus on the best potential areas for future housing growth. Only those communities that want to increase density and add housing will receive incentives for participating in target projects.

Bettina Ring, Bay Area Open Space Council, explained their project with Greenbelt Alliance to identify key habitat and resource areas that should be protected and remain undeveloped, as well as working on urban park needs.

Gwen Regalia of the City of

Walnut Creek talked about how that city was able to provide fairly dense housing in the city center, while still having growth and height limits.

The latest round of state-required Housing Element updates are coming again, and Gillian Adams of ABAG explained the criteria for Regional Housing Needs Allocation to assign housing targets, by income categories, to each city and county throughout the region.

Duane Bay, San Mateo County, and Paul Peninger, Non-Profit Housing of Northern California, mentioned various obstacles to building affordable housing, and also ways to be successful.

The League of Women Voters of the Bay Area will keep local Leagues informed as these projects move forward, to help to advocate League positions for regional planning concepts and affordable housing.

Alameda Chamber of Commerce welcomes League members to events; candidates' forums

March 8

New Member Orientation

New Members are invited to learn about the programs the Chamber has to offer and introduce their businesses to the group.

Location: Chamber Conference

Time: 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.

Cost: Free

March 22

Candidates Forum

16th Assembly District

Location: College of Alameda

Time: 8:30 - 10:00 a.m. Breakfast

Cost: \$20 members; \$30 non-members

March 23

Networking Luncheon

"Alameda Education Foundation"

Location: Grandview Pavilion

Time: 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Cost: \$25 members; \$40 non-members

March 29

Candidates Forum

County Supervisors

Location: Grandview Pavilion

Time: 8:30 - 10 a.m. Breakfast

Cost: \$20 members; \$30 non-members

March 30

Ambassadors' Meeting

If you are interested in being part of the social team for the Chamber, join us for this one hour meeting and find out more. Ambassadors are the welcoming arm of the Chamber and serve as hosts at our events, etc.

Location: Chamber Office

Time: 8:30 - 9:30 a.m.

Cost: na

Please call the Alameda Chamber of office at 510-522-0414 for more information. <http://www.alamedachamber.com/>

Download your copy of 'Bay Area Decision Makers'

"Bay Area Decision Makers," the LWVBVA Education Fund's Directory of Regional & Subregional Agencies in the San Francisco Bay Area, has been updated and is now available on-line at www.bayareamonitor.org or www.lwvbayarea.org.

It contains agency profiles, key phone numbers, and links to agency websites. Since the links will assure up-to-the-moment information about agency board members, etc., LWVBA Ed Fund will no longer be preparing a printed hard-copy version, as it used to go out of date very rapidly.

Blue bookmarks referencing the new on-line publication are available for distribution to those who used to get the printed version.

Contact editor@bayareamonitor.org for the bookmarks.

Calendar of events

All members and the public invited

- **February 24 and 25; March 3 and 4, 2 to 4 p.m.** – Help pack up donations to be sent to Zimbabwe Clinic for Women and Children. 299 Begier Ave., San Leandro. See story page 2.
- **Saturday, March 3, 10 a.m. to noon** – Alameda League's New Member Orientation, Alameda Library, community meeting room B, 1550 Oak Street. See cover story.
- **Monday, March 5** – Online registration begins today for the May 18-20 State Convention. See story page 3.
- **Sunday, March 11 to Saturday, March 17**– Sunshine Week. See cover story.
- **Thursday, March 15, 7:30 p.m.** – Board Meeting. Conference Room C, ALameda Hospital, 2070 Clinton Ave.
- **Wednesday, March 21, 9 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.** – Reproductive Freedom Day, Sacramento Convention Center. See story page 4.
- **Thursday, March 22, 8:30 to 10 a.m.** – Candidates' Forum for 16th Assembly District, College of Alameda. See story page 5.
- **Friday, March 23, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** – Clean Money Reform Workshops, San Jose City Hall. See story page 2.
- **Thursday, March 29, 8:30 to 10 a.m.** – Candidates' Forum for Alameda County Supervisors, Grandview Pavilion. See story page 5.

Please consider making a donation of \$5 or more to our Education Fund, the lifeblood of our public outreach activities.

No amount is too small.

Your donations are tax deductible.

Mail your check to:

League of Women Voters of Alameda,
P.O. Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501

Include your name, address, phone, and email and the amount you've enclosed.

Thank you!

The League of Women Voters – a non-partisan political organization – encourages informed and active participation of citizens 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.

With membership comes the opportunity to work with well-informed, grassroots activists on a broad range of public policy concerns. Learn valuable, transferable skills, including how to organize and run productive meetings, write more effectively, speak in public, organize and run effective campaigns, conduct research studies, and coordinate general civic leadership training. The League invites your comments, letters and articles. They may be sent, faxed or e-mailed to the LWVA.

Join or Renew

Cut out, fill in and mail this coupon with your check to: League of Women Voters of Alameda, P.O. Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501.

Dues: \$55 for a single membership; \$75 for a family membership.

Students pay \$25, and dues assistance is available. Questions? Contact Golda Mason at imabaglady@aol.com or call (510) 812-2873.

Make checks payable to League of Women Voters of Alameda.

Joining at the local level makes you a member at all levels: Local, county, Bay Area, state and national.

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

The League of Women Voters of Alameda
P.O. Box 1645
Alameda, CA 94501

Return Services Requested

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
ALAMEDA, CA
PERMIT NO. 112