

## The League of Women Voters of Alameda

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[www.LWVAlameda.org](http://www.LWVAlameda.org)

The VOTER is published by the LWVA Communications Committee. Current and past issues of the VOTER are posted on LWVAlameda.org.

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**The League of Women Voters** encourages informed and active participation in government. We work to raise understanding of major policy issues and influence public policy through education. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. We advocate only on issues that members have studied and on which a consensus has been reached. In an era of proliferating powerful special interests, the League's advocacy in the public interest is increasingly recognized as an essential voice of democracy.



# VOTER

Promoting Political Responsibility through Informed and Active Participation

Volume 49, Number 1, January-February 2017

**VOTER CONTENTS:** Event calendar p. 2; President's message and California League positions p. 3; LWVA January meeting on California priorities p. 4; League position on electoral college p.5; Membership news p. 6.

## SATURDAY JAN. 28, 9AM-3PM IN SAN JOSE

The poster features a blue background with a large red diagonal section. At the top left, it says "BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY 2017" and "HTTP://BT.LY/2017LEAGUEDAY". On the right is the LWV logo and "LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE BAY AREA". The red section contains the text "BAY AREA HOUSING CRISIS" in large yellow letters, followed by "JANUARY 28, 2017 | 9 AM - 3 PM", "CAMDEN COMMUNITY CENTER | 3369 UNION AVE. SAN JOSE", and "\$35 PRE-REGISTRATION | \$40 AT THE DOOR | LWVBAYAREA.ORG". Below this is a photo of Tony Thurmond, Assembly Member for District 15. To the right of the photo are four panel descriptions: "PANEL 1 - Measuring the Affordability Gap & Its Impact", "PANEL 2 - The Relationship Between Housing Production & Affordability, & Displacement", "PANEL 3 - State, Regional & Local Roles in Addressing Affordability", and "PANEL 4 - The Agenda Moving Forward". At the bottom, it says "4-Panels plus Key Address by Tony Thurmond".

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2017

Visit [LWVAlameda.org/calendar.html](http://LWVAlameda.org/calendar.html) for more information

- FRI. JAN 6**  
5:30 PM  
**FIRST FRIDAY SOCIAL DINNERS ARE BACK!**  
Thank you Anne McKereghan! Join members and guests at **Chef's Wok**, 1821 Webster St. b/w Eagle & Buena Vista. \$25 special menu, cash bar. RSVP by 5 PM Jan. 5 to [anne@youreastbayagent.com](mailto:anne@youreastbayagent.com) or 407-0175
- THU. JAN. 19**  
7:00-9:00 PM  
**LWVA BOARD MEETING**  
All members are invited to attend. **Alameda Hospital**, Room C, first floor.
- FRI. JAN. 20**  
8:00 AM  
**INAUGURATION DAY CEREMONY: WATCH AT THE LIBRARY**  
Swearing-in ceremony at 9:00 AM PST; LWVA with Friends of the Library. **Alameda Free Library**, 1550 Oak @ Lincoln.
- SAT. JAN. 21**  
10:00 AM-3:00 PM  
**WOMEN'S MARCH IN OAKLAND.** March for women's rights/human rights. Follow <https://womensmarchbayarea.org/about>. Watch our website & e-blasts!
- MON. JAN. 23**  
3:00-4:30 PM  
**BOOK CLUB:** *The Unwinding: An Inner History of the New America* by George Packer. **Applebee's Restaurant**, 2263 South Shore. Felicez@ymail.com
- THU. JAN. 26**  
7:00-9:00 PM  
**OPEN MEMBERSHIP MEETING TO PROPOSE ACTION PRIORITIES FOR THE CALIFORNIA LEAGUE** (details on page 4)  
Be sure to attend this important annual planning meeting and share your ideas! **Alameda Hospital**, 2070 Clinton Ave. @ Willow, Room A (second floor)
- SAT. JAN. 28**  
9:00 AM-3:00 PM  
**BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY 2017: BAY AREA HOUSING CRISIS**  
Assembly member Tony Thurmond (District 15) and panelists (see front page) Reserve at [http://www.lwvbayarea.org/2017\\_League\\_Day.html](http://www.lwvbayarea.org/2017_League_Day.html). **Camden Community Center**, 3369 Union Ave., San Jose.
- FRI. FEB 3**  
**FIRST FRIDAY SOCIAL DINNER** Check website for details
- WED. FEB. 15**  
6:30-8:00 PM  
**AMERICAN MUSLIMS, FACT VS FICTION: DIALOGUE**  
LWVA with AAUW, Friends of the Library. **Alameda Free Library**.
- THU. FEB. 16**  
**LWVA BOARD MEETING** **Alameda Hospital**, Room C, first floor
- SUN. FEB. 26**  
2:00-4:00 PM  
**LWVA NEW MEMBERS COFFEE/TEA**  
Venue TBA: check our website and e-blasts for information.
- MON. FEB. 27**  
3:00-4:30 PM  
**BOOK CLUB:** *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson  
**Applebee's Restaurant**, 2263 South Shore. Felicez@ymail.com
- THU. MAR. 16**  
**LWVA BOARD MEETING** **Alameda Hospital**, Room C, first floor
- THU. MAR. 30**  
5:30-7:30  
**MEET YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS (MYPO) MIXER & FUNDRAISER**  
Speed date your representatives; auction, raffle, food, drinks. ENJOY!  
**Community Center at Harbor Bay Isle**, 3195 Mecartney Road, Alameda



President's message  
**DEMOCRACY IS  
 NOT A  
 SPECTATOR  
 SPORT**

Alice Fried

The League of Women Voters was born out of a long struggle to gain the right to vote for women. We have always been sensitive to the issue of voters who have that right, yet find it hard to exercise it. As we begin 2017, I am reminded that it is the League's mission to protect our right to vote. In the past that has meant making sure that citizens are encouraged to register and to learn about the issues as well as the platforms of the people running to solve those issues on their behalf.

However, this election has given substance to the notion, 'my vote doesn't count.' In my opinion, this outcome is the result of the fact that too many of our citizens do not know how our democracy works and thus cannot appreciate the role of government in our day-to-day lives. The League must add this civics challenge to its objectives. We must ensure that citizens are not only aware of the issues, but are also aware of how proposed solutions do or do not relate to each of them.

It was uplifting to see so many of you at the annual holiday party. Your presence heartened me and renewed my faith in the notion that *Democracy is not a spectator sport*--that you are ready to hit the ground running in 2017 to ensure that no group, including women, is marginalized in our governance. Indeed, I am hopeful that the outcome of this year's presidential election will evoke a civic-minded spark strong enough to energize Leaguers and all concerned citizens to protect and grow an inclusive democracy.

**January meeting (see next page):  
 What are the League's Key Issues  
 in California?**

Every two years, members of California Leagues engage in *Program Planning* for the state League. Based on the results of this, the LWVC Board of Directors makes recommendations to the biennial convention delegates about the program to be adopted for the coming two-year period. [LWVA's membership meeting in Jan. 2017 will feed into this process for the June 2017 state convention.]

The **Issues for Education and Advocacy** adopted by Convention 2015 delegates for 2015-2017 are:

- [Money in Politics](#)
- [Climate, Sustainable Water, and Protecting the Environment](#)
- [Election Reform and Voting Rights](#)
- [Minimum/Living Wage](#)

[Public Higher Education Study](#): This three-year study was adopted at Convention 2013. The study committee is working on the materials for Leagues and members, and you're invited to join a Yahoo Group that has been created for discussion.

The LWVUS top-priority Legislative Priorities are [Money in Politics](#) and the many facets of [Voting Rights](#) and [Election Administration](#). The second-tier priorities are [Climate](#) and [Environmental Protection](#), [Immigration](#), and [Health Care](#) (including [Reproductive Choice](#)).

**Find out more about the League's positions on key policy issues.**

For California, visit <https://lwvc.org/our-work/key-issues> and <https://lwvc.org/our-work-positions>. For the U.S., visit <http://lww.org/content/impact-issues>

## **READ ALL ABOUT IT!**

### **Open Membership Meeting to Propose Action Priorities for the California League, January 26**

On **Thursday January 26<sup>th</sup> from 7-9 PM at Alameda Hospital**, LWVA will hold its annual planning meeting to set Education and/or Advocacy Priorities for the State League for the next two years. The outcome will influence our local programming. Leagues all over California will engage in this grassroots process of priority setting. As members of LWVA we have both the opportunity and the responsibility to indicate which issues we believe our state League should emphasize in 2017-2018.

**WHAT IS PROGRAM PLANNING?** For the League, Program describes the issues that we choose for concerted study, education and action at local, state and national levels. The Program Planning process is part of what makes the League a grassroots organization; each League member has the opportunity to influence the selection of issues where the local, state, and national League will focus time, talent and money. It takes the enthusiasm and interest of our members to keep our program vital!

The process starts for us in Alameda on Jan. 26, 2017 with our Program Planning meeting. We'll discuss what we believe should be the top priorities for education and action for the California League for the next two years, and whether we would like to see any positions updated or new studies initiated. LWVA's

Board will review and vote on the recommendations emerging from the January meeting on Feb. 16<sup>th</sup> and send our report to LWVC by Feb. 24<sup>th</sup>.

The state Program Committee has the task of reviewing all the responses from local Leagues across the state. In early April 2017, the state Board will send our their Recommended Program for 2017-18 to all local leagues for review. The program planning process culminates in the delegates' adoption of the statewide program at the June 1-4 2017, convention in Sacramento.

**NEW THIS YEAR:** We will NOT be asked to review all of the current LWVC positions as to whether they should be retained, dropped, or revised. This will be done by LWVC's own program committee. (A summary of positions will be distributed FYI at the meeting, however.) Rather, the basic goal of our meeting is to **recommend Issues for Emphasis**—those timely and critical policy questions on which League resources for study, action, and community education should be concentrated. LWVC would also like to hear our recommendations for possible improvements to the study process and how positions can be acted upon as situations change. We may select a small group of experienced "Leaguers" to address these questions rather than discussing them at the January Planning Meeting.

**BE SURE TO PARTICIPATE! THIS IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE YOUR VIEWS HEARD**



## What is the League's National Position on the Electoral College?

**The League believes strongly that the Electoral College should be abolished and not merely “reformed.”**

One “reform” which the League specifically rejects is the voting by electors based on proportional representation in lieu of the present “winner-takes-all” method. Such a system would apportion the electoral votes of a state based on the popular vote in that state. Instead of making the Electoral College more representative, such proportional voting would increase the chance that no candidate would receive a majority in the Electoral College, thereby sending the election of the President to the House of Representatives where each state, regardless of population, would receive only one vote. Election of the President by the House further removes the decision from the people and is contrary to the “one person, one vote” principle. The League also does not support reform of the Electoral College on a state-by-state basis because the League believes there should be uniformity across the nation in the systems used to elect the President. ...

The 2008 Convention voted to conduct a study of the National Popular Vote proposal, which would establish the popular election of the President through a compact among the states governing how they would cast their votes in the Electoral College. The 2010 Convention amended the national position to support the National Popular Vote compact as another method of selecting the President until such time as the Electoral College is abolished.

*Statement of Position on Selection of the President, as Announced by National Board, January 1970, Revised March 1982, Updated June 2004 and Revised by the 2010 Convention:*

“The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The League of Women Voters believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished. **We support the use of the National Popular Vote Compact\* as one acceptable way to achieve the goal of the direct popular vote for election of the president until the abolition of the Electoral College is accomplished.**

The League also supports uniform voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. The League supports changes in the presidential election system – from the candidate selection process to the general election. We support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates and their positions, public policy issues and the selection process itself. The League supports action to ensure that the media, political parties, candidates, and all levels of government achieve these goals and provide that information.”

*Excerpted from LWVUS website. For more information on LWV's involvement visit <http://lww.org/content/selection-president>*

**\*The National Popular Vote Interstate Compact (NPVIC)** is an agreement among a group of U.S. states and the District of Columbia to award all their respective electoral votes to whichever presidential candidate wins the overall **popular vote** in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. For more information on the states that have already signed on, search National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.

**WATCH FOR AN LWVA COMMUNITY FORUM ON THIS TOPIC IN APRIL 2017!**





## Membership News

We're sad to report that long-time League member Joanne McKray passed away on Dec. 7, 20 days after the death of

her husband George. Obituaries for both are at <https://alamedasun.com/obituaries>.

Here is a segment:

*Joanne volunteered as a tutor in a literacy program and as a history docent at the Oakland Museum. Her major efforts concerned a succession of good government issues, working as a State Board member of Common Cause and a member of the League of Women Voters. They included the establishment of the California Fair Political Practices Commission, campaign finance reform, implementation of ranked choice voting, state redistricting for fairer voter representation and government transparency. She was also active in the Alameda Democratic Club.*

**New members:** Welcome Gillian MacMannis, Elizabeth Milnes, Shelley Reed and Lynn Martin who joined us in November-December!

**Volunteers:** Thanks to Adina Springer, our new Budget Chair, and Anne McKereghan, who has taken on the First Friday social dinners (see calendar). Like to volunteer? Visit <http://www.lwvalameda.org/Volunteer.html>

**The Nominating Committee is Looking for Leaders!** The Nominating Committee has begun its work to plan for nominating 2017/2018 officers. If you or someone you know would like to learn more about LWVA leadership needs, or would like to join next year's leadership in any capacity, please contact one of the committee members: Kathryn Duke <[kathryn.saenz.duke@gmail.com](mailto:kathryn.saenz.duke@gmail.com)> , Doris Gee <[dorisgee48@gmail.com](mailto:dorisgee48@gmail.com)>, Anne McKereghan <[anne@youreastbayagent.com](mailto:anne@youreastbayagent.com)>, Patricia Young <[p.young098@gmail.com](mailto:p.young098@gmail.com)> or Dorie Behrstock <[dgbintl@gmail.com](mailto:dgbintl@gmail.com)>.

## Time to renew for 2017!

*Mil gracias* to those of you who have sent in your renewals. And for the rest, please do so soon! All members should have received a renewal kit in the mail with a return envelope for sending in your check: \$70 single member, \$97 family. You can also renew online with a credit card at [www.lwvalameda.org/join.html](http://www.lwvalameda.org/join.html).

**FAQ: What happens to our dues? Why do we need a fundraiser each year as well?**

The answer is PMP: our dues also go to the national ([www.LWV.org](http://www.LWV.org)) and state Leagues ([www.LWVC.org](http://www.LWVC.org)).

**What's a PMP???** Here's what our Treasurer Marian Breitbart has to say:

Member Payments (PMPs) to the National League are determined by delegates at the National Convention. The PMP to "National" for FY 2016/17, \$32 per member, is how local leagues support the national level of the organization. The PMP is a major source of income for LWVUS, providing partial support for advocacy, membership and organizational activities, convention, and council and national board and committee meetings.

The Per Member Payment to LWV California, \$28 for FY 2016/17, supports the services the state League offers to local Leagues and members, as well as advocacy in the state legislature and in state agencies.

Thus, of the \$70 individual membership dues to LWV Alameda, \$32 goes to National and \$28 goes to the State, leaving only \$10 or approximately 14% for our local activities and overhead.

**Watch for news of our annual mixer and fundraiser, Meet Your Public Officials (MYPO 2017) at Harbor Bay Community Center on Thurs. March 30, 5:30-7:30 PM**