



VOTER

FEBRUARY 2015
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Kate Quick – Co-President
katequick@comcast.net

Felice Zensius – Co-President
felicez@ymail.com

Welcome to 2015 and we are up and running. We started off the year speaking before our city council on their proposal to nullify an ordinance passed by the outgoing council regarding the Del Monte Development Agreement and the Del Monte Master Plan. The League was very concerned that these repeals did not meet the standards in the Sunshine ordinance, specifically Section 2-91.5 e requiring that “All documents material to an agenda item must accompany the agenda”. We pointed out to the Council that there were no staff reports or any justification offered for repeal. There was no information provided to the public and therefore no way for the public to act or react to this repeal. The council chamber was standing room only and approximately 60 people spoke. An overwhelming number were against the repeal, many stating that the community had worked on this issue for years and although it is a compromise, there is no reason to throw it all out. Our comments on the Sunshine Ordinance were in keeping with our long standing position on open government and transparency, both of which were lacking in their proposal. After several hours of testimony the city council voted unanimously to uphold the existing ordinances... a big victory for the public and for the League.

Now we start the process of looking over all the Programs from the State. Do we want to recommend a new study on some topic of importance or update an existing position? This is the time when the local leagues have a say in what the State will be working from 2015 – 2017. The committee held its annual dinner meeting at my house. We had 13 members which is a very good showing for that wonky type meeting. Kate was feeling miserable but she’s a real trooper as we all know and she walked us through all the League State stuff...couldn’t have done it without her. We have also asked several individuals to help with updating the local positions. We will take all the recommendations on the State and Local positions to the February board meeting for review and adoption.

Our committees are busy at work. Membership is working on renewals before the end of January. In addition to bringing in new members, there is the even more important job of connecting them to the League in a way that reflects their interests while boosting our standing in the community. A new forum called Hot Topics is an example of how a new member can get involved in a topic of concern in order to educate themselves and the public. The Nominating Committee is hard at work talking to folks about their board or committee commitments for next year. In addition, they have handed out revised job descriptions of every officer and chair assuring that they conform to our current practices and bringing them up to date. We will be voting on the final language at the February board meeting. Action committee has a meeting planned with the new AUSD Superintendent of School. Our meetings with elected officials are a major part of what we do and how we learn and educate at the same time. MYPO, which for you new members, means Meet Your Public Officials is our annual fund raising effort and a fun party too. They have put together their poster and are working on invitations. The Book Club is reading Ari Shavit's book My Promised Land: the Triumph and Tragedy of Israel for January and will read Spiral Staircase, by Karen Armstrong for the February selection.

All said there are many ways to get involved in the League even when there is no election in the immediate future. So call Kate or myself or anyone you know in the League and get involved. You will be assisting your community while educating yourself.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY

Friday, February 6, 5:30 pm. First Friday no-host social dinner, Pier 29, 1148 Ballena Blvd (west end of Alameda). (See Social Committee report). RSVP by noon Friday deadline to Robby Kiley, rkiley7@comcast.net.

Thursday February 19 7-9 pm. LWVA monthly Board meeting, Alameda Hospital Conference Room C (first floor). All LWVA members are welcome.

Saturday February 21 2-4 pm. "Hot topics" small group political discussion on "Voting: How do we elect our representatives?" at Alameda Free Library. (See Membership report.) Reservations required.

Monday, February 23, 3 pm. Book Club, Applebee's, South Shore Center. Spiral Staircase, by Karen Armstrong (see Book Club report).

Thursday February 26 7-9 pm. Public forum: "REFORMING IMMIGRATION: ALAMEDA COUNTY PERSPECTIVES Alameda Free Library (enter from rear parking lot). Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan; other panelists TBA. (See Program Committee report).

Save these dates in **MARCH**

Wednesday March 11, 7–9 pm, Alameda Hospital, Conference Room A: Presentation to the Community by Alameda Hospital on Health Care in Alameda and the affiliation with the Alameda Health System, co-sponsored by LWVA.

Monday March 23 3pm Book Club, Applebee's South Shore Center

[MYPO \(Meet Your Public Officials\)](#)

Deborah Wright

wrightwaydesigns@hotmail.com

BE PREPARED TO MEET (AND SPEED-DATE) REPRESENTATIVES at LWVA's popular annual mixer and fundraiser on Thursday April 30th, 2015, 5:30–7:30 pm, at the Harbor Bay Community Center.

The MYPO Committee has been meeting since November to plan the big picture: flyer design, publicity, invitations to elected and appointed public officials, "Speed dating" format for the POs, auction and raffle, food and wine, ticket sales, etc.

Here are some of the things you can do to help:

1. **DONATE** Auction and raffle items! Big-ticket items for the silent auction are especially welcome: think vacation rentals, dinners for six, Bay cruises, season tickets to concerts, theater or sporting events! Raffle items include gift certificates to local businesses and restaurants, bottles of wine, potted flowers, ceramics, artwork, gift baskets, and anything else you can think of. Please contact Doris Gee at dorisgee48@gmail.com, [510-521-2117](tel:510-521-2117) for ideas and to pick up your contributions.
2. **CONTRIBUTE** food and wine to the event! We're soliciting donations of finger-food platters from local restaurants; feel free to do the same. Platters of fruit, cheese and crackers, chips and dip, cold cuts, veggies, cookies, brownies, and other goodies from home are welcome. Wine contributions will go to the bar for sale at \$5 glass.
3. **VOLUNTEER** to help! Join the planning committee; help sign up volunteers! We need greeters, "escorts" for the public officials, food managers, bartenders, ticket takers, raffle and auction helpers, raffle ticket sellers, photographer, setup and cleanup people, and many more. Email Deborah (above) if you're willing to help.
4. **BUY TICKETS!** LWVA members will receive packets in the mail with a MYPO flyer and five \$10 tickets to sell or give to your friends and family, in exchange for a \$50 check to LWVA. This is our big fundraiser for the year, and we're counting on you.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Gayle Thomas – Chairperson

blaze00031@aol.com

Mark your calendars for LWVA's first public forum of 2015:

“REFORMING IMMIGRATION: ALAMEDA COUNTY PERSPECTIVES”

Alameda County Supervisor WILMA CHAN and panelists TBA.

Thursday Feb. 26 7:00–9:00 p.m. at the Alameda Free Library,
1550 Oak Street at Lincoln (enter from rear parking lot).

Our national League has taken a clear advocacy position in favor of comprehensive immigration reform (see www.lwv.org/content/immigration; www.lwv.org/issues/reforming-immigration). The League also supports the President's Executive Order halting certain deportations (www.lwv.org/press-releases/league-praises-immigration-step).

Supervisor (and LWVA member) Wilma Chan is a strong supporter; Google her article, “True immigration reform could be a boon to Alameda County.” A 2013 County resolution in favor of comprehensive reform can be found at www.acgov.org/board/district3/policy.htm.

Immigration reform is essential for strengthening democratic participation and citizenship rights in our community! Be sure to attend this exciting event, share the information with others, and bring your friends.

Mark your calendar for March, too!

Wednesday March 11, 7–9 pm, Alameda Hospital, Conference Room A: Presentation to the Community by Alameda Hospital on Health Care in Alameda and the affiliation with the Alameda Health System, co-sponsored by LWVA.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Ruth Dixon-Mueller – Chairperson

dixonmueller@yahoo.com

New and renewing members:

LWVA has well over 100 active members. Many thanks to all of you who have renewed your membership for 2015! We appreciate your continued support. Welcome also to those who have returned or joined us in the past two months:

Linda Crabbe, lcrabbe@comcast.net

Jeff DelBono, delbonoL689@gmail.com

Solana Henneberry, shenneberry@mac.com

Tracy Jensen and Dave Sayen, tracy@tracyjensen.com

If you'd like to renew or join the League, visit www.LWVAlameda.org or email membership@LWVAlameda.org.

New activity: **“HOT TOPICS”** policy discussions:

The first small-group discussion hosted by LWVA in January at the Alameda Library (“Should the City of Alameda adopt a rent control policy?”) elicited a lot of interest, including a notice in *The Alameda Sun*. LWVA has taken no position on this issue, and the 14 participants from LWVA and the community represented a variety of perspectives.

We’re looking forward to continuing this series of monthly discussions on national, state and local policy issues, with the goal of reaching out to potential new members and promoting open conversation and the exchange of information and ideas.

Next discussion group: Join us on Saturday February 21 from 2–4 pm in the Family Study Room (first floor) of the Alameda Library. Anne Spanier will pose a question about “VOTING: How do California’s election methods determine who wins and who loses?” On the table will be open (two top winners) vs. closed primaries (one winner from each party), single-choice vs. ranked-choice voting, plurality vs. majority winners, voter turnout in primary vs. general elections, and other methods of selecting the people who represent us. What works and what doesn’t? Let’s talk!

Room size limits us to 12 people, so please RSVP to dixonmueller@yahoo.com or call [510-865-2439](tel:510-865-2439) if you plan to participate. If you would like to propose and facilitate a discussion topic for future Third Saturdays, be sure to send us your ideas!

ACTION COMMITTEE

Karen Butter – Chairperson

karenbutter@comcast.net

With leadership from co-president’s Kate Quick and Felice Zensius the League spoke at the January 6th Alameda City Council meeting commenting on concerns about the procedures followed to repeal Ordinance 3116 and 3115. The two Ordinances adopted the Master plan for the development of the Del Monte property which had been approved by the former city council in December 2014. There have been a number of community hearings about development of the property and the Planning Board signed off on the development plan in November referring it to the City Council.

The newly elected Mayor placed the item on the Council agenda to provide an opportunity for comments by the new Council. The League was concerned that the procedures for the repeal did not meet the standards established the Sunshine ordinance or several city charter sections. For example, there was no staff report to provide background information to the public. The League took no position on the development of the property. The City Council voted 5–0 to uphold the ordinances.

In this next month the Action Chair and co-Presidents will set up meetings with newly elected officials for the City Council and Board of Education and the AUSD

Superintendent to discuss common priorities. The first meeting is schedule with Interim Superintendent Sean McPhetridge, Ed.D. and Board President Kahn. Over the past few years the league has worked with the Board of Education to suggest changes in procedures that promote transparency and open government. We will discuss opportunities to continue this effort.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Connie Slattery-Hanna – Chairperson

connie.hanna@comcast.net

Once a month or so an informal group of LVWA members gathers at a local restaurant for a no-host dinner. It is a congenial way to get acquainted with other members of LVWA. This month's gathering is at Pier 29 on Friday February 6 February 6 at 5:30 pm. Pier 29 is in the West End area of Alameda , at 1148 Ballena Blvd. Connie is unavailable right now, so RSVP by noon Friday to Robby Kiley, rkiley7@comcast.net

TREASURER'S REPORT

Marian Breitbart – Chairperson

mbreitbart@mac.com

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2014

The Treasurer's mood was improving as membership renewals began to be received. We had a cash balance of \$10,889.53 and a CD containing \$10,070 in November. This slight increase from the prior month reflected \$1,207.60 in receipts mostly from renewals and contributions and no expenditures in November.

During December, we received a total of \$4,079, \$2,592 from member renewals/new member payments and \$1,487 from member donations, largely from 1 family. During the month we spent \$472.84 mainly for membership questionnaire and renewal forms (\$264) and Alameda Sun advertisements (\$151). Our cash balance at the end of December was \$14,495.69 in addition to our CD.

We would like to thank Karen Butter and the Butter Family for their continued support through a generous annual contribution. In addition, the Butter Family designated the League to receive donations in memory of their mother, Florence Butter. They provided a good portion of the wind in our sails, for which we are grateful.

BOARD BRIEFS

January 15, 2015

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Marian Breitbart and Ruth Dixon-Mueller nominated to Executive Committee.

The current committee consists of Felice, Kate, Marian and Ruth.

THE MONITOR: The publication of the Bay Area League will be emailed to LVWA members.

ATT Messaging Service: LVWA will terminate their connection with ATT Messaging.

Nominating Committee:

The committee recommends three new Board positions: Communication Chair, Co-Presidents and Vice President, and Fund Raising Chair.

BOOK CLUB

Anne Spanier – Chairperson

annespanierleague@att.net

Spiral Staircase, by Karen Armstrong is the February selection. The author was quoted in Publishers Weekly as saying "Religion is being so misused at the moment," she says. "I think it's important people get a more educated view of what religion is about." (Ed. note).

The League's book club selects and discusses books on a wide variety of subjects. The group meets at Applebee's Restaurant, 2263 South Shore Center from 3 pm to 4:30 pm. on the 4th Monday of the month. Any interested individual who has read the book and is interested in the League's discussion format is welcome to join us. Call *Anne Spanier* at 510-522-3426.

In Memoriam

The League extends its condolences to the families of Sam Sause and Florence Butter both of whom passed away in December.

Florence, a native of Indiana, was a 50+ year devoted member of the League serving on its Board and many committees in both Indiana and California. The family designated both Sutter Care at Home (hospice) and LVWA for contributions in her honor.

Sam, a native of Oregon, a League member and husband of Helen Sause was also an active member of the community in Alameda. He was active in the Seafarer's Ministry, Christ Episcopal Church, Navy League, Alameda Rotary and Alameda Point Collaborative. Donations in Sam's honor may be made to the Alameda Point Collaborative, Alameda Rotary Club or the Seamen's Church Institute-Bay Area.

The loss of Sam and Florence is a loss not only to their families but to the community at large.

Not a member of the League of Women Voters of Alameda?
A membership form is available
at http://www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org/join_form.html

The League relies on membership dues and donations to support our educational programs, candidates forums, and advocacy. The League of Women Voters of Alameda is a 501(c)(3) organization, and your membership dues and donations are tax deductible. You can find a donation at http://www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org/donate_form.html

Our address is PO Box 1645, Alameda CA, 94501
The VOTER editor can be reached at [510-769-6875](tel:510-769-6875)

League of Women Voters of Alameda Board of Directors 2014 – 2015

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