

## The League of Women Voters of Alameda

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The VOTER is published nine times a year. Current and past VOTER issues are posted on our web site.

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**The League of Women Voters**, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.  
*--LWV Mission Statement*

**The League never supports or opposes any political party or candidate.**



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February 2013

# VOTER

Political Responsibility through Informed and Active Participation

## February 2013 President's Message

January and February turned out to be busy months for us, with many League members contributing great efforts on a broad range of projects.

The Nominating Committee, chaired by Anne Spanier, finished up its work and presented its recommended slate at the February Board meeting. Good work, all!

Membership exceeded its goal of reaching over 100 members to ensure that we had three delegates to convention and grew our membership. Thanks to some rather herculean efforts by our Chair, Gayle Thomas, ably assisted by Anne Spanier, Shubha Fanse entered 111 names into the LWV's national database for the January 31 official member count and we stand at 113 strong. Our Treasurer, Ted Frey, has made progress in straightening out our per-member payment (PMP) with National, and we expect an adjustment on our bill. Again, good work!

The Initiative and Referendum Study Committee was busy planning and rehearsing for our upcoming consensus meeting February 23. Felice Zensius, a first-time study chair, has led this committee like a seasoned veteran. We will report on our February 23 decisions in the next VOTER, after they have been approved by our board and conveyed to the State League (LWVC). Another piece of good work!

Action Committee Chair Karen Butter, with the assistance of Joe VanWinkle, has begun to discuss implementing "sunshine" policies at AUSD similar to the City of Alameda's new transparency and notification policies. They are also working with city officials to implement local campaign finance reform. (There is movement on both fronts.) The Board also discussed watching the new Alameda Point EIR process and the Veterans Administration proposal to "bump out" the land reserved for the bird sanctuary: this would encroach on shoreline access at Alameda Point and reduce previously allocated open space by over 70 acres. Good work on the Action front as well!

Program planning was the topic for our January 24 meeting. We had good attendance at the meeting and we have submitted our recommendations to the LWVC.

Coming soon are a panel on implementing the Health Care Marketplace—part of the new health care act—at 7:00 pm February 28; our First Friday dinner at Linguini's March 8; co-sponsorship of the International Women's Day event on Sunday, March 10, at the International House in Berkeley; and a New Member Orientation over coffee at High Street Station Saturday, March 23, at 10 am. Closing out the month is our public program at Cardinal Point, a "State of the AUSD" forum with Niel Tam and Kirsten Vital on Thursday, March 28, at 7 pm.

Also coming soon is the state convention May 16-19 in San Jose, which I encourage you to attend even if you are not a delegate. (*See related story on p. 2. ed.*)

We are a busy, hard-working League that does good work! 'Nuf said.

*--Kate Quick, LWVA President*

## 2013 Membership at 111 and Growing: New Member Orientation Coffee March 23 at 10 AM

As Membership Chair, I am excited to announce that we reported a total membership of 111 to the national League of Women Voters (LWVUS) on January 31—and added two new members since then for a total of 113 members.

Our ranks have increased by 14 per cent since 2012, when we officially reported 92 LWVA members to LWVUS. (*Our 2012 membership reached 99 following 7 late renewals, so our current year-to-year growth is from 99 to 113. ed.*)

Thanks to all of you who joined and renewed in time to help us increase our total. Thanks also to Shubha Fanse and Ted Frey for carefully processing all of the dues payments and accurately reporting our 2013 numbers to the LWVUS.

Please welcome our two newest members:

Marian Breitbart	510-208-8209	<a href="mailto:mbreitbart@mac.com">mbreitbart@mac.com</a>
Victoria Henley	510-769-7804	<a href="mailto:Victoria.b.henley@gmail.com">Victoria.b.henley@gmail.com</a>

If you know someone who would appreciate being a member, the LWVA's 2013 membership forms are in every issue of the VOTER or at <http://www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org/join.html>. Dues are the same as in 2012: Individual - \$70, Family - \$97, and Student - \$25. Until we introduce online membership forms and renewals later this year, please mail your check to: LWVA, PO Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501.

This year brings new committees, programs, and events for all of us in the League. What motivates *you* to be a League member? As you join the LWVA or renew your support, what are your core goals and priorities for LWVA? What League activities engage your values? How would you like to further League goals this year? Where do you want to get involved in LWVA?

Tonight I plan to watch *Iron Jawed Angels*, the movie that depicts the fight for women's suffrage. It only requires minimal commitment: a TV and a bowl of popcorn. I am certain that this will further my knowledge about the women who laid the groundwork for today's LWV and for so many other benefits. I have this movie handy for anyone who would like to borrow it, so just send me an e-mail to see it. Who knows? After you watch this movie, you may want to "get busy" with the League in a brand new way.

On Saturday, March 23, at 10:00 am, we are hosting a new member coffee and orientation (or re-orientation, if you like) at the High Street Station Café. If you would like to join us, please RSVP to Anne Spanier (510-522-3426; [annespanierleague@att.net](mailto:annespanierleague@att.net)) or to me (510-289-1268; [blaze00031@aol.com](mailto:blaze00031@aol.com)). We would love to share the latest League goings-on with you over a cup of coffee or tea.

--Gayle Thomas, Membership Chair

## Registration Open for LWVC Statewide Convention May 16-19

Registration is now open for this year's League of Women Voters of California (LWVC) statewide convention, to be held in San Jose from Friday through Sunday, May 17–19, 2013. The theme is "My League: Leading the Charge for Change."

Registration and convention information are available at the LWVC's Convention blog: <http://lwvc.wordpress.com/>. The agenda is here: <http://lwvc.wordpress.com/agenda/>. The schedule of caucuses and workshops is here: <http://lwvc.wordpress.com/workshops-3/>.

The convention will be held at the Dolce Hayes Mansion—formerly a private estate—at 200 Edenvale Avenue, San Jose, CA 95136. (*Note: Pre-convention workshops will begin Thursday, May 16. ed.*) A variety of participation options are available for delegates, League members, and members of the public who wish to attend one or more events or days.

Please visit the [Convention blog](http://lwvc.wordpress.com/) at <http://lwvc.wordpress.com/> for more information and updates. A "Connections" tab there offers a great way to communicate with other League members about room sharing and carpooling. Please contact Sharon Stone at [sstone@lwvc.org](mailto:sstone@lwvc.org) if you have any questions.

--from LWVC sources

## Treasurer's Report – February 1, 2013

LWVA Treasurer's Report as of February 1, 2013, prepared for February 2013 LWVA Board meeting:

Beginning Cash 2/01/2013	\$14,426.92	Total Assets (February 1, 2013)	
Receipts (primarily 2013 dues)	\$2,103.00	Cash	<u>\$16,316.22</u>
Expenditures	\$141.70	CD	\$10,000.00
<u>Ending Cash</u> 12/01/2012	<u>\$16,316.22</u>	<u>Total Assets</u>	<u>\$26,316.22</u>

--Theodore D. Frey, Treasurer

(NOTE: Please update Ted's email address in your address books to: [Frey.Ted@Gmail.com](mailto:Frey.Ted@Gmail.com). ed.)

## Twenty LWVA Members Contribute to Lively Initiative & Referendum Consensus Meeting February 23

The LWVA's League Consensus meeting on the Initiative and Referendum Study was an unabashed success. Twenty of our active and knowledgeable members gathered at Alameda Hospital on Saturday, February 23, for a full day of discussion and debate, fortified by coffee and tea donated by Starbucks, League-provided snacks, and lunch ordered from Panera at South Shore Center.

Discussion leader Miriam Schiffman, assisted by several I & R Study Group members, led us through the state League (LWVC) questions and to a consensus on most issues. (NOTE: *The consensus view generally supported a vigorous, democratic, and accessible initiative and referendum process in California but with some significant reforms.* ed.)

The LWVA's consensus findings will be forwarded to the LWVC for inclusion in the discussion at the statewide convention in San Jose May 17-19. I will offer a more detailed report in the March VOTER and at the Annual Meeting. For now, I wish to thank all who participated for making it an excellent experience.

--Felice Zensius, LWVA Initiative & Referendum Study Chair

## First Friday Dinner at Linguini's—on March 8

The March First Friday Social Dinner will be at Linguini's Restaurant at 6:00 pm on **Friday, March 8—the second Friday**—because of the joint IAFF and AEA “Crab Fest ‘Fun’ Raiser benefit on Friday, March 1. (For more info on the March 1 event visit <http://www.alamedafirefighters.com/>.)

The LWVA First Friday dinner will be in the banquet room at Linguini's, 1508 Park Street (510-521-2141), at 6:00 pm. We hope to see a lot of you there. Socializing begins over drinks at 6:00 pm. and dinner lasts until 7:30 or 8:00 pm. Linguini's is across from Ole's, between Santa Clara and Webb Avenues.

Google Maps Link:

<https://maps.google.com/maps?q=1508+Park+Street,+Alameda+CA+94501&oe=utf-8&client=firefox-a&hnear=1508+Park+St,+Alameda,+California+94501&t=m&z=16>

“...League members, spouses, and guests...have a good time together,” according to organizer Connie Slattery-Hanna. “There are no agendas...It's nice to just get together socially.”

These dinners, which move to a different Alameda restaurant every month, usually draw a dozen or more League members and their families. Please RSVP to Connie with how many people you are bringing. (She needs to provide an updated count to the restaurant even though reservations are made in advance.)

--Connie Slattery-Hanna

## Meet Your Public Officials Set for April 25 at Elks Lodge

Mark your calendars—this year's Meet Your Public Officials (MYPO) is Thursday, April 25, from 5:30 – 8:00 pm in the historic Alameda Elks Lodge Rathskellar at 2255 Santa Clara Avenue, next to City Hall.

At this unique LWV of Alameda (LWVA) fundraiser, League members, guests, and community members will have the opportunity to mingle and speak with elected and appointed public officials in a relaxed, social atmosphere. Supporting MYPO is a fun, rewarding way to contribute to the LWVA's work of providing non-partisan information and resources such as candidate forums, Pro and Con ballot measure panels, youth outreach, and public forums throughout the year.

The Rathskellar in the Alameda Elks Lodge is located in the basement. (The building entrance, elevator, and parking lot are all behind the lodge.) Please come with family, friends, neighbors, and enjoy good food and drink in the company of those who are elected or appointed to represent us.

In addition to the food catered by Dragon Rouge Vietnamese Bistro, C'ere Una Volta Italian Restaurant, and Asena Restaurant, we are asking LWVA members to bring baked goods, fruit plates, vegetable and dip combos, cheese and cracker trays, or other foods not requiring kitchen prep or refrigeration. (You can also donate cash to help pay for food.)

If all of our members support this fundraising activity with energy, creativity, and enthusiasm the LWVA can meet its goals for the event. For MYPO 2013 to succeed we are asking you to not only attend, but also to:

- Solicit and/or donate auction and raffle items  
(Contact Doris Gee, Raffle Coordinator at 521-2117 or [dorisgee48@gmail.com](mailto:dorisgee48@gmail.com))
- Donate wine
- Provide ready-to-serve food items April 25 (baked goods, fruit, vegetable and dip combos, or cheese trays with crackers, please—no kitchen or refrigeration will be available), or
- Make a cash donation for food
- Assist the MYPO Officials Coordinator with invitations, name badges, welcoming, etc.
- Tend bar
- Prep and set up tables for food, etc., before the event
- Sell at least five tickets (cost: \$10 each)

Special thanks to our cosponsors, the Alameda Elks Lodge and the Alameda Chamber of Commerce, for their support.

For more information and to volunteer please contact:

Event Coordinator Alice Fried (510-593-9572; [alicefried@comcast.net](mailto:alicefried@comcast.net))

Program Chair Ruth Dixon-Mueller (510-865-2439; [dixonmueller@yahoo.com](mailto:dixonmueller@yahoo.com))

Assistant Event Coordinator Jeff Cambra (510-865-3636; [jeffcambra@earthlink.net](mailto:jeffcambra@earthlink.net))

## Health Care Committee Meets March 12, 7:30 PM

Because this is an important time for health care the LWVA Health Care Committee will resume its meetings at 7:30 pm on Tuesday, March 12, at 19 Kilkenny Place on Bay Farm Island.

With the new Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare") becoming effective in January 2014 we have much to study and discuss about health care. I urge current and new members to join us as we start our deliberations. Please RSVP by March 5 to Shubha Fanse ([shubhaf09@gmail.com](mailto:shubhaf09@gmail.com); 510-865-0548).

*--Shubha Fanse, Health Care Chair*

## Book Club to Skip March but Meet Twice in April

The LWVA Book Club will meet twice in April—April 1 and 22—instead of meeting on the fourth Monday in March. Book Club meetings begin at 3:30 pm at the South Shore Center Applebee's Restaurant.

We will discuss **Wild** by Cheryl Strayed on Monday, April 1 at 3:30 pm in the Applebee's Restaurant conference room at South Shore Center. **Wild**, a New York Times best-seller, is the amazing story of a woman who hikes the Pacific Crest Trail in an attempt to deal with grief and loss.

On Monday, April 22—also at 3:30 pm—the book club will review **When Jesus became God** by Richard Rubenstein. It chronicles the rise of Christianity during the Roman Empire and how different political cultures viewed the life and the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth.

Contact Anne Spanier (510-522-3426; [annespanierleague@att.net](mailto:annespanierleague@att.net)) for more information. Please join us at Applebee's on April 1 or 22 at 3:30 pm.

*--Anne Spanier, Book Club*

## Alamedans Approve Measure D to Protect Parks

With 23,260 votes in favor (79.17 percent of votes cast), Measure D was the big winner in the Alameda election last November, passing by a wide margin. By comparison, Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft received the highest number of votes for a City Council candidate at 12,116 (24.93 percent) and Trish Spencer received 14,823 votes (21.49 percent) as the top Alameda Unified School District Board candidate.

The LWVA Board remained neutral on Measure D after a lengthy discussion of several potentially applicable but conflicting League positions.

Culminating five years of controversy over the finances, condition, and future of the Chuck Corica Golf Complex, Measure D amended the Alameda City Charter to require that a majority of Alameda voters approve the sale, swap, or disposal of any portion of public city parks, including the golf course. Previously, the City Council could vote to trade or "swap" parkland, which led to Harbor Bay Island Associates' proposal to "swap" land it owned near the Harbor Bay Business Park for the current Par 3 Mif Albright course at the golf complex.

In supporting Measure D, Alamedans clearly expressed their belief in the vital role of parks as city assets. The proponents qualified the measure very quickly using volunteer petition circulators. The results of the grassroots Measure D effort mirrored support for a similar parks-related charter amendment some twenty years ago.

The complete initiative and other official Measure D ballot information are posted on the LWVC's Smart Voter site (<http://www.smartvoter.org/2012/11/06/ca/alm/meas/D/>).

*--Joe VanWinkle*

## Nominating Committee Seeks Volunteers to Fill New Positions

Do you like doing oral history interviews, archiving historic records, social media (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.), writing and editing, or working on web sites? The LWVA and the 2013 Nominating Committee are still looking for volunteers to: 1) help document the history of LWVA, 2) launch and monitor social media pages, and 3) help update and organize our web site as part of several teams.

Would you like to serve as the LWVA's History Chair or work on a LWVA History Committee? Or would you prefer to help launch and monitor social media sites for LWVA? (Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, video and photo sites, etc., are all possibilities.) Would you like to help manage and update our LWVA web site? Work on a team to help publicize the LWVA and its events?

Please contact Jon Spangler (510-864-2144; [jonswriter@att.net](mailto:jonswriter@att.net)) for details.

*--Jon Spangler, 2013 Nominating Committee member*

## **LWVA Nominating Committee Submits 2013-14 Recommendations**

The League of Women Voters of Alameda's 2013 Nominating Committee has presented a complete slate of officer and board member nominees for the 2013-14 year, completing its work.

Members will receive the Nominating Committee's recommendations in their Annual Meeting packet later this spring.

All of the LWVA offices have been filled, and LWVA will again utilize a co-presidency model. We have also revised job descriptions and added a new Web Manager portfolio this year. Board member nominees represent both new and experienced members, broadening our leadership base.

The Nominating Committee was unable to find anyone interested in being the Historian, but this board position is still available to someone interested in documenting our League's history and its activities by conducting oral histories, organizing digital records, and archiving paper documents. Please contact 2013 Nominating Committee member Jon Spangler ([jonswriter@att.net](mailto:jonswriter@att.net); 510-864-2144) for more information on the Web Manager or Historian positions.

Six officers and board members will be elected at the Annual Meeting in June. Additional members will be voted on by the newly elected directors at the first official board meeting of their 2013-2014 term.

The committee wants to thank all of the individuals who helped us present a strong slate of talented nominees to carry out the LWVA's mission in the coming year.

*--Anne Spanier, Chair, 2013 Nominating Committee*

## **Saturday Morning Coffee for New League Members March 23 at the High Street Station Café, 10 AM**

Please join us on Saturday, March 23, for coffee (or tea), sweet rolls, and a League Orientation Session at the High Street Station Café (1300 High Street, at Encinal: [www.highstreetstationcafe.com](http://www.highstreetstationcafe.com); 510-995-8049).

Meet other new members of the League of Women Voters of Alameda (LWVA), long-time LWVA members, as well as members of our Board.

We will describe our League, our principles and programs, and the work we do. We will do our best to answer your questions. If you are interested in participating at any level we will have information on that, too.

(Established members are also welcome to attend for a "re-orientation.")

Please contact Anne Spanier (510-522-3426; [annespanierleague@att.net](mailto:annespanierleague@att.net)) or Gayle Thomas (510-289-1268; [blaze00031@aol.com](mailto:blaze00031@aol.com)) for more information or to RSVP. We would love to share the latest League goings-on with you over a cup of coffee or tea.

*--Gayle Thomas, Membership Chair*

## **‘State of the Schools’ Forum Features Niel Tam, Kirsten Vital at Cardinal Point March 28, 7-9 PM**

Board of Education President Niel Tam and Superintendent Kirsten Vital of the Alameda Unified School District (AUSD) will highlight the district’s accomplishments and successes during 2012 and describe the challenges facing AUSD in 2013 during the League’s next free public forum on Thursday, March 28, from 7:00 - 9:00 pm at Cardinal Point.

President Tam and Superintendent Vital will address current AUSD challenges as well as achievements, from budget and finances and facilities upgrades to student test scores and graduation rates. They will discuss issues including the moving and combining of schools like ACLC and Wood Middle School and the effects of state and federal budget cuts and legislative actions on local school financing.

A question-and-answer discussion period will follow the presentation at Cardinal Point, a wheelchair-accessible residential facility at 2431 Mariner Square Drive near the estuary in west Alameda (888-271-7115). The public is welcome at this free program. Parking is nearby and the main entrance is on the estuary side of the building.

### **About AUSD Board President Niel Tam**

AUSD Board President Niel Tam served as an AUSD teacher and administrator for 39 years before being elected to the Board of Education in 2008, reelected in November 2012.

Before becoming Principal of Miller and Washington Elementary Schools, Tam served as a Vice Principal at Wood Middle School after teaching both special education and regular education classes at several Alameda campuses. He received his B.S. degree in Occupational Therapy from San Jose State University, an M.A. in Special Education from San Francisco State University, and an M.A. degree in School Administration from St. Mary’s College.

Tam currently serves on the Alameda Family Services Board, Alameda Multicultural Community Center Board, the Alameda Community Fund Board, and the Advisory Board of the Alameda Boys and Girls Club. He also serves on the City Commission on Disabilities Issues and the Police Chief’s Community Advisory Committee, and was formerly on the boards of the Alameda Food Bank, Alameda Point Collaborative, and Girls Inc.

Niel Tam’s children are graduates of the Alameda schools. He received the Alameda Red Cross Award for Community Service in 2008 and the San Francisco Koshland Civic Unity Award in 2002.

### **About Superintendent Kirsten Vital**

Superintendent Kirsten Vital was appointed Superintendent of the Alameda Unified School District in 2009. Since then, AUSD students have increased their proficiency by 33% on the California Standards Tests, increased the AUSD’s Academic Performance Index proficiency by 35 points district-wide, and achieved a 90% high school graduation rate. Superintendent Vital is implementing a performance management system with student milestones, department scorecards, and a school tiering system. She recently wrote a community-based five-year Strategic Plan for AUSD, and placed a successful \$12 million parcel tax on the ballot in 2011.

Vital previously held administrative posts in the Oakland and Los Angeles Unified School Districts, taught at the college level, and been a consultant on school reform. Ms. Vital earned her BA degree from Northeastern University and her MA in Education at Whittier College and is currently pursuing her doctorate at Saint Mary’s College of California.

For more information on this forum visit the LWVA Public Events page ([http://alameda.ca.lwvnet.org/Public\\_Events.html](http://alameda.ca.lwvnet.org/Public_Events.html)) or contact LWVA Program Chair Ruth Dixon-Mueller (510-865-2439; [dixonmueller@yahoo.com](mailto:dixonmueller@yahoo.com)).

Bring your friends and neighbors to our schools forum at Cardinal Point on Thursday, March 28!

*--Ruth Dixon-Mueller, Program Chair*

# Join or Renew Your Membership in the Alameda League Today!



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Other Names \_\_\_\_\_

(if a family membership)

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

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

\$70 Single Membership     \$97 Family Membership     \$25 Student Membership. (Dues year is Jan. 1 – Dec. 31.)

Dues assistance is available for those on limited incomes – Contact us at 869-4969. Make checks payable to

**LWV Alameda** and mail to: League of Women Voters of Alameda, PO Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501

## All Donations are Tax Deductible

Donations to the League of Women Voters of Alameda, a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit, are tax deductible.

Consider sending a check for \$5 or more made out to LWV Alameda with your renewal, or at any time to:

League of Women Voters of Alameda, PO Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501

## Turn Cans into Cash for the LWVA Education 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

- 3/08 – First Friday Social – 6:00 pm  
@ Linguini's, 1508 Park Street.
- 3/12 – Health Care Committee – 7:30 pm  
@ 19 Kilkenny Place  
(Shubha Fanse: 510-865-0548).
- 3/21 – LWVA Board Mtg. – 7:30 pm  
@ Alameda Hospital (Conf. Room).
- 3/23 – New member Coffee – 10:00 am  
@ High Street Station Café,  
1300 High Street @ Encinal Avenue.
- 3/28 – AUSD Forum – 7:00 - 9:00 pm  
@ Cardinal Point  
2431 Mariner Square Drive, Alameda.
- 4/01 – Book Club – 3:30 pm  
@ Applebee's, South Shore Center.
- 4/18 – LWVA Board Mtg. – 7:30 pm  
@ Alameda Hospital (Conf. Room).
- 4/22 – Book Club – 3:30 pm  
@ Applebee's, South Shore Center.
- 4/25 – MYPO – 5:30 – 8:00 pm  
@ Alameda Elks Lodge (Rathskellar),  
2255 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda.
- 5/17-19 – LWVC State Convention  
@ Hayes Mansion, San Jose.

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