

**The League of
Women Voters of
Alameda**

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The VOTER is published 9 times per year. Current and past issues of the VOTER are posted on our website

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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 43
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VOTER

**Political Responsibility through Informed and Active
Participation**

November Speaker - DeAnna Dalton Development Associate for MAPLight.org

The November 4, 2010. general meeting will be held at the Alameda Main Library at 7:00pm

DeAnna Dalton will provide a presentation on MAPLight.org, a groundbreaking public database, which illuminates the connection between campaign donations and legislative votes in unprecedented ways.

Elected officials collect large sums of money to run their campaigns, and they often pay back campaign contributors with special access and favorable laws.

This common practice is contrary to the public interest, yet legal.

MAPLight.org is a tool for journalists, issue-oriented groups, bloggers and citizen leaders to hold legislators accountable.

Make a note to visit their website before the meeting. <http://maplight.org>

This should be a interesting presentation especially being presented two days after the general election.

Vote with the League

No on **PROP 20** Redistricting of Congressional Districts

No on **PROP 23** Suspends Clean Energy and Air Pollution Standards

Yes on **PROP 24** Tax Fairness Act

Yes on **PROP 25** Simple Majority Vote for Budget

No on **PROP 26** Polluter Protection

No on **PROP 27** Eliminates State Commission on Redistricting

No Positions on Propositions 19, 21, and 22

Please visit the League of Women Voters of California Web Site at ca.lwv.org or your October VOTER for details on these positions.



CO-PRESIDENTS MESSAGE



Anne Spanier and Jeff Cambra
Co-Presidents, League of Women Voters
of Alameda

As I sat down to write this month's President's Message, I was trying to recount all the many activities our chapter was involved in. I had notes from our last board meeting, the annual report on the budget, the newly formed book club, our role in the Sunshine Task Force, and the list goes on. To all who are involved and donated so much time to making sure our chapter is successful and financially sound, on behalf of the board, we thank you for your time and commitment to the chapter.

For this Voter, I want to mention two specific activities that define the purpose and mission of the League. The first is voter education. I think we are all familiar with the early days of the League in educating all the women who fought for the right to vote. That core mission has not changed 90 years later. The Voter Services Committee headed up by Co-Chairs Joanne McKray and Dorothy Fullerton had their hands full with four candidates forums and the pros and cons forum for nine propositions. The logistics of finding locations for the forums, making sure the seating, stage, and sound systems are adequate, arranging for video coverage, advertising, contacting candidates, and new this year, printing candidates background materials required smart organized people that could work well together under pressure. Special thanks to Dorothy Fullerton, Karen Butter, Felice Zensius and Karen Guthrie for taking on the task of learning about each proposition and presenting the pros and cons. The attendance for the four forums exceeded 500 residents. The forum videos that appear on our website have been viewed by over 300 people so far. Additionally, Felice Zensius took over the distribution of hundreds of pieces of voter information to over 30 locations throughout the City. I would also like to thank Jon Spangler for his efforts in letting the press know about all of our activities. Yes, we even made it onto Facebook. All in all, our league members did an excellent job in achieving our core objective of educating the community on the important issues that will affect all of us in the future. Congratulations to the Voter Services Committee and our chapter on a job well done.

The second area I want to address is the tone of this year's City Council and Mayoral election. The number of disrespectful and less than truthful robocalls, push polls, and hit piece mailers is disheartening. While our community has experienced some level of divisive campaigning in past elections, this election cycle has taken the political process to a new low.

In response to receiving numerous mailers containing false or misleading information, receiving several robocalls that mischaracterized candidates and their positions, and reading ads in the local papers attacking candidates, I contacted Anne and Kate to discuss an official, public, chapter response to this type of campaigning. Due to the efforts of Anne, Kate, Karen, and others, the statement was created and published. I am happy to be part of a board and chapter that has the courage to take a leadership position in upholding its principles and communicating that position to the community. This is the second time our local chapter took the initiative in reaching out to the community to further League principles. Last month, our chapter assisted the City's Sunshine Task Force in advertising its public workshop introducing the draft Sunshine Ordinance. You can count on this board to be aggressive in educating the community about League principles, especially in situations where others may be afraid to do so. It is my hope that our community will be able to return to normal after such a contentious election. Let's all try to do our part to bring the community together on November 3rd.

Enjoy!
Jeff Cambra, Co-President

Bay Area Monitor

While local issues have consumed much of our attention lately, we are in myriad ways a part of the San Francisco Bay region. Those of you who occasionally cross the Estuary may want to check on regional matters with the Bay Area Monitor, published by the League of Women Voters of the Bay Area.

To subscribe to the online version, (6 issues/year), simply go to www.bayareamonitor.org and check "subscribe."

Alameda League Book Club

The next meeting of our reading club is on November 17, 2010 at the home of Felice Zensius. The time is 3:30 pm. The book is titled **“What’s the Matter with Kansas?”** The author is Thomas Frank who was born in Kansas. The story is about the social, political and economic changes that took place in this small town heartland state with enormous consequences to the citizens.

Last month’s book **The Nine** by Jeffrey Toobin told the inside and little seen details of the nine justices of the Supreme Court from the nineteen seventies until the death of Chief Justice Rehnquist. The term *originalism* and *strict constructionism* were fully appreciated by our members.

Those who are reading "Kansas" and can only make an evening event Please call 522-3426. It is possible to have a second meeting the November 29 or 30, 2010 at Anne's house.

Divisive Election

The following letter was submitted and printed by our local newspapers:

The citizens of Alameda are facing some serious issues confronting their city and this election is one that should be about those issues. In addition to the problems of unfunded pensions and health care costs for retiring city employees, and how to move forward to develop Alameda Point, the city faces problems of declining revenues impacting our schools. To those ends the Alameda League of Women voters (LWVA) has sponsored educational programs for Alameda citizens. In preparation for the November election LWVA has worked hard to produce candidate forums with questions designed to enlighten the public on the candidate’s stance on these important issues.

The voter must also digest the details related to the nine state propositions on the ballot. Most of these propositions will have an impact on the lives of California residents. The LWVA has also provided the citizen with information about these propositions. Suffice it to say there is a lot for the citizens to be concerned about. That is why it is dismaying to see our local election devolve into character assassinations which are not central to the real issues facing our city.

When candidates and their supporters resort to attacks and fear rather than focusing on what they themselves would do as the elected official, the public becomes wary of the process. The strategy turns people away from voting. This tack is distracting us from more important issues and it is intentionally divisive. I urge the citizens to go to the LWVA website and click on to the video link of the candidate forum of Sept 29th and the Mayoral forum of October 4th and listen carefully to how the candidates responded to the questions. Evaluate whether or not they answered the questions or whether they were off point and vague. All of the candidate forums will be available by the time you read this Voter. Ignore the politically provocative calls; they are not intended to educate us. Their purpose is to inflame or confuse.

Let’s get back to the business of making informed decisions. We will all be the better for it.

Anne Spanier & Jeff Cambra Co-Presidents of League of Women Voters of Alameda

Drop In Coffee at the High Street Station

The first prize for bringing a new member went to Jeff Cambra. A longtime friend of Jeff, Chris Towata joined us at the coffee and immediately signed up for the book club. Second place went to Laurel Pantel, a new board member, who brought her neighbor, Tory Henley, another new member. Third place went to Anne Spanier who brought Mark Irons, well known by members at the coffee and also a new member. Kudos to Board Members, Ted Frey, Kate Quick, Joanne McKray and Shubha Fansa for joining the lively discussion and to other League members, Jon Spangler, Linda Hudson and Lyn Groh for their informative participation. WAY TO GO!!

VOTER SERVICE 11/2/10 ELECTION ACTIVITIES

I'm writing this in a state of blissful ignorance, when the November election still has a chance, if not necessarily a likelihood, of coming out according to the League's and my own preferences. Whether it does or not, the Alameda League has carried out its voter service work, with many contributing to the effort.

Prior to each election the League assembles, sometimes writes, prints, and distributes thousands of pieces of election information to over 30 sites. Felice Zensius took charge of this major job this time around. Ten individuals assisted Felice by delivering the material, which included posters publicizing our events created by Miriam Schiffman. Those doing the delivering included Ruth Belikove, Jeff Cambra, Doris Gee, Karen Guthrie, Robert Hasselbring, Helen Sause, Miriam Schiffman, Anne Spanier, Li Volin, and Helen Waldear.

With 32 candidates running for local offices, and 9 state propositions to explain, we scheduled 4 public forums. The first at Mastick Senior Center featured the eight City Council candidates. At three more forums the candidates for mayor appeared at the Main Library, those for the Board of Education at Temple Israel, and those for the Hospital Board at Cardinal Point.

In addition to posing League and audience questions to candidates, at the last three forums League members presented explanations, pros, and cons of the state propositions. Presenters were Karen Butter, Dorothy Fullerton, Karen Guthrie, Jon Spangler, Anne Spanier, and Felice Zensius. Marilyn Ng assembled volunteers to help run the forums: Herb Behrstock, Louann DeWitt, Sally Faulhaber, Alice Hui, Dianne Lichtenstein, Audrey Lord Hausman, Honora Murphy, Laurel Pantel, Miriam Schiffman, Jon Spangler, Li Volin, and Peggy Withrow.

Dorothy Fullerton and Kate Quick presented proposition pros and cons at private club meetings. Felice Zensius gave a program on "The League Recommends" at the request of a church group.

Important responsibilities through the election season were carried out by two individuals. Publicity Chair Jon Spangler searched and found new media outlets to publicize our events, which certainly played a role in securing a total audience of just under 500 people. Michael Robles-Wong served as our Smart Voter liaison, working with local candidates to place their statements on our state League election website, smartvoter.org.

Special personal thanks go to Co-Voter Service Chair Dorothy Fullerton. Dorothy helped plan the entire season, beginning in mid-August, and took charge of the propositions presentation portions of the last three forums. Our Co-Presidents Anne Spanier and Jeff Cambra did double duty, fulfilling their own responsibilities while taking on many voter service activities. Anne presented propositions and moderated at forums, registered voters at East Bay CSU, and distributed League literature at a Chamber of Commerce event. Jeff took on time consuming filming and editing of our forums, and arranging for their presentation and on our alameda.ca.lwvnet.org website and various blogs.

As I look at the list of people involved in voter service, I find it impressive. Much was done by many to help prepare citizens for a most important task: shaping the future of our city and state.

Joanne McKray
Voter Service Co-chair



The Holiday Season is upon us, and we will celebrate with our League Party on Sunday, December 5th. It will be a festive pot luck event, with the location to be announced. Watch your mail and our web site www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org for further details. The membership committee also wants to remind all that December 31st is the dues deadline for 2011.

ANNUAL REPORT*
FISCAL YEAR 2009-2010

BALANCE SHEET	6/30/2009	6/30/2010	CHANGE
ASSETS			
Bank of Alameda	\$4,921	\$4,906	-\$15
Ed Fund	\$7,571	\$5,748	-\$1,823
CD	\$6,854	\$6,965	\$111
TOTAL ASSETS	\$19,346	\$17,619	-\$1,727
			\$0
			\$0
LIABILITIES			
			\$0
PMP Dues	\$3,863	\$3,579	-\$284
			\$0
NET ASSETS	\$15,483	\$14,040	-\$1,443

* Balance sheet items based on statements from banks and LWV California. Income statement reconstructed using fragmented information from existing and historical records.

INCOME STATEMENT	2008-2009	2009-2010	CHANGE
REVENUES			
Dues	\$5,630	\$5,786	\$156
Cash Contributions	\$853	\$1,327	\$474
Net Fundraising	\$339	\$1,438	\$1,099
Annual Meeting (net)	\$0	\$31	\$31
Other	\$111	\$140	\$29
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$6,933	\$8,722	\$1,789
			\$0
EXPENSES			
			\$0
Operating Costs	\$589	\$1,119	\$530
Board/Administration	\$490	\$502	\$12
Meetings	\$1,380	\$1,147	-\$233
PMP Payments	\$3,805	\$3,863	\$58
Printing/Education	\$1,511	\$1,798	\$287
Other	\$61	\$1,132	\$1,071
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$7,836	\$9,561	\$1,725
			\$0
NET CASH FLOW	-\$903	-\$839	\$64



RENEW YOUR LEAGUE
MEMBERSHIP NOW



Join or Renew your membership in the Alameda League Today!



Name _____

Other Names _____

(if a family membership)

Address _____ City _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

\$68 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 9450

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.

Mark Your Calendars

November Program
11/4/2010 7pm
Alameda Free Library
See page 1 for details

Board Meeting
November 18th, 7:30pm
Alameda Hospital

Holiday Party
December 5th, 5:30pm
Watch your mail and our
web site for location

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