

**The League of
Women Voters of
Alameda**

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Alameda, Ca 94501
www.lwvalameda.org

The VOTER is published by the
LWVA Communications Committee.
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The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization that 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 reached consensus on. 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 46, Number 9, November-December 2015

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LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF ALAMEDA

Getting On & Off the Island: Alameda's Transportation Future



Thursday, November 12 • 7-9 PM

City of Alameda Free Library

1550 Oak Street @ Lincoln (enter from rear parking lot)

Panelists

Jennifer Ott – Chief Operating Officer, Alameda Point

Michele Bellows – Chair, Alameda Transportation Commission

Robert del Rosario – Dir. of Service Development, AC Transit

Michael T. Nguyen – Caltrans Office of Advance Planning

Forum info:

events@LWVAlameda.org

<http://www.LWVAlameda.org/calendar.html>

Forum cosponsor: 



ALAMEDA HOME TEAM
Home is the Heart of Alameda



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Alice Fried, Co-President

League of Women Voters of Alameda

In November 2014, Kate Quick ended her president's message with this quote from Carrie Chapman's 1917 address to Congress: *The enemy of democracy is not communism or socialism or fascism, but complacency. And women must not, having suffered beatings, imprisonment, forced feedings and many privations to gain the right to vote, ever become complacent. They must register to vote and they must advocate for the right to vote as well as good government.*

In the spirit of Carrie Chapman's mandate, on September 21, the LWVA held its Fall Membership meeting where League officers and committee chairs introduced their goals and specified tasks, and asked for volunteers. The committee reports are on our website, www.LWValameda.org/Volunteer.html.

With that same focus on empowerment and engagement stressed in Carrie Chapman's address to Congress, LWVA members also registered voters at the College of Alameda on **September 22, National Register to Vote Day**. And on October 21, in keeping with the League's function of education and advocacy, our Community Forum: **California's 'Top Two' Open Primaries: How Democratic Are They?** provided us with data and insights from a dynamic panel that included State Controller, Betty Yee, former Eden League President, Jennifer Ong, and Ethan Rarick, Associate Director of the Institute of Governmental Studies at UCB. The audience was engaged and complimentary at how informative the event was.

On Saturday November 7, the LWVA will co-host a Community Forum: **The Ongoing Story of Development in Alameda**. Co-sponsored by the Alameda Home Team and the Alameda Association of Realtors, this forum, which includes a lunch and a bus tour of Alameda development sites will be held at the Alameda Elks Lodge. Details on this and other events are at www.LWValameda.org/calendar.html.

As co-presidents of LWVA, Anne Spanier and I are committed to re-energizing our membership as well as engaging new members in advancing the League's goal to empower citizens to shape a better community and provide the power of collective decision making for the common good. But we need your help. We need you to visit our updated website, to read the monthly VOTER and to view the bimonthly eblast messages to keep abreast of League activities, events and positions. The LWVA Board meetings are held from 7-9 PM on the third Thursday of every month. Elected officers are expected to attend, but board meetings are open to all members and we encourage you to participate.

The success of LWVA and the fulfillment of the League's covenant to promote positive solutions on key community issues at all government levels depend on the collective efforts of all members to: 1) attend Board meetings—elected officers to meet voting quorums and volunteers to offer ideas and services; 2) encourage family, friends and neighbors to use the League's tools such as pro and con studies, community forums, hot topic discussions, etc., to participate in the democratic process; and most importantly, 3) register voters and advocate for the right to vote. To do so will not only acknowledge the wisdom and courage of Carrie Chapman in 1917, but will achieve the promise of the League of Women Voters since its creation in 1920 which is to **make democracy work**.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Visit LWVAlameda.org/calendar.html for more information

- Fri. Nov. 6th**
5:30 PM
First Friday no-host social dinner
[Applebee's Grill and Bar, 2263 South Shore Center](#). Everyone welcome!
Reserve by noon Fri. 6th with connie.hanna@comcast.net
- Mon. Nov. 23rd**
3:00-4:30 PM
LWVA Book Group: *What a Wonderful World* by Ricky Riccardi, on the life of Louis Armstrong. [Applebee's, 2263 South Shore Center](#).
- Sat. Nov. 7th**
9:30 AM-12 noon panel
1:00 PM – 2:30 PM tour
Community forum and bus tour: “[Alameda in the Making: The Ongoing Story of Development in Alameda](#).” Panel of developers & City Planner Andrew Thomas. With Alameda Home Team & Alameda Association of Realtors. RESERVE at www.eventbrite.com
[Alameda Elks Lodge, 2225 Santa Clara next to City Hall](#).
- Thu. Nov. 12th**
7:00-9:00 PM
Community forum: “[Getting On and Off the Island: Alameda's Transportation Future](#).” Jennifer Ott, COO Alameda Point; Michele Bellows, Alameda Transportation Commission; Robert del Rosario, AC Transit; Michael Nguyen, Caltrans. [Alameda Free Library](#).
[Parking behind library at Santa Clara Ave. and Oak Street](#).
- Thu. Nov. 19th**
7:00-9:00 PM
LWVA Board meeting: all members are welcome to attend.
[Alameda Hospital, Conference Room C \(first floor\)](#)
- Sun. Dec. 13th**
5:30 PM
Holiday Party: POTLUCK SUPPER AND CELEBRATION for members and guests at the home of Alice Fried, [742 Palmera Court](#).
- Thu. March 31st**
5:30-7:30 PM
****MEET YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS (MYPO):** Annual Fundraiser:
[Speed date your representatives](#); raffle; silent auction; food, drink, and community celebration. [Harbor Bay Community Center](#)

COMMUNICATIONS SUBMISSIONS

The Communications Committee communicates the work of the League to LWVA members and the community. We generate and disseminate publicity through multiple media channels. To submit material for distribution please contact Georgia Gates Derr at t.derr@comcast.net or call 263-9075.

The VOTER is published monthly on the 1st; submission deadline is the 25th of the preceding month. **Eblasts** are sent bi-monthly on the 1st and the 15th; submission deadlines are the 25th and the 10th. **Website** updates (LWVAlameda.org) are aligned with eblasts. Our **Facebook** page is updated almost daily. **Let us hear from you!**

LWVA ISSUES & ACTION 2015-2016

LWVA's Action Committee is focusing on three issues this year. Interested in joining the Committee? Please contact Robby Kiley, Chair, at rkiley7@comcast.net, phone 764-1022.

Felice Zensius is the point person for the "Make It Fair" Initiative: felicez@ymail.com (yes, that's a "y"), 865-4329. Visit lwv.org and lwvc.org to learn about national and state issues and actions.

California's "Make It Fair" initiative: education and advocacy

LWVA is engaged in education and advocacy efforts in support of [Make It Fair](#), a movement (co-sponsored by LWVC) to reform Proposition 13. The initiative prescribes the way in which commercial properties are assessed for tax purposes but does NOT affect assessments of residential property. Analysts estimate that if commercial property in California were taxed at full market value, the increased revenue statewide from property taxes would be about \$9 billion per year.

For more information, visit the Make it Fair website at <http://www.makeitfairca.com/>.

Campaign finance reform in local elections

Campaign finance reform to make elections fair and to reduce the impact of money on politics has long been a League priority at the national, state and local levels. The LWVUS is conducting a study and update of the campaign finance position to address the question of whether financing a political campaign is protected speech under the first amendment. The LWVUS provides a number of resources to understand the issues at forum.lwv.org. Here in Alameda, LWVA supports the adoption of a Fair Campaign Practices/Code agreement by the City Council for the local election of public officials and promotes increased transparency and timely reporting in the tracking and identification of financial contributions to candidates from all sources.

Transparency in local government

A key element of the League's support for good government is the insistence on the public's access to information, transparency of the decision-making process, and full citizen participation. The City of Alameda's Municipal Code contains a Sunshine Ordinance (Article VIII) with strong language supporting public access to meetings and to information (<http://alamedaca.gov/city-hall/key-documents>; click on Sunshine Ordinance). LWVA monitors selected meetings to ensure compliance with the Sunshine Ordinance and collaborates with the City's Open Government Commission (<http://alamedaca.gov/city-hall/open-government-commission>)

NEWS: California Will Automatically Register Millions Of Voters

On Saturday [Nov. 10th], California Governor Jerry Brown signed a bill that will allow the state to automatically register millions of residents to vote, using their DMV records. Starting in 2016, every eligible California citizen who goes to a DMV office to get a driver's license or renew one will be [instantly registered](#) to vote, unless he or she chooses to opt out.

"Citizens are currently forced to opt-in to their fundamental right to vote through registration," said Secretary of State Alex Padilla, who wrote the bill and pushed for its passage. "We do not have to opt-in to other rights. We do not have to opt-in to free speech or due process. The right to vote should be no different." ... Padilla told ThinkProgress the new law could help bring the [6.6 million](#) California citizens who are eligible but not registered to vote into the democratic process. ...

Automatic registration is expected to particularly benefit voters of color. Currently, only [62.8 percent of Latino and 50.7 percent of Asian-American](#) residents are registered in California. Latinos, who recently surpassed whites to become [the largest demographic group](#) in the state, have the [lowest participation rate](#): just 28 percent of them cast ballots in 2014. ...

See <http://thinkprogress.org/politics/2015/10/10/3707288/breaking-california-will-automatically-register-millions-of-voters/>

LWVA BOARD MATTERS

The Board of Directors met October 15, chaired by Alice Fried. With some members traveling and attending other LWVA related events, we did not reach a quorum and thus did not vote on any business. A policy proposal on communications presented by Alice for the Board's consideration was tabled until November 19th.

Treasurer's report: for the month of September, expenses exceeded revenues by \$55.05, reducing our checking account balance to \$14,969.96. In addition, our CD balance is \$10,079.81.

Voter services: LWVA will be monitoring the elections for the West Alameda Business Association on October 28th. Thank you to Dorothy Fullerton, Alice Fried and Marian Breitbart for volunteering.

Open primaries project: At our general membership meetings in September, Anne Spanier presented a proposal for a local study of California's experience with open primaries. Anne will consult with Helen Hutchinson on how a local chapter can develop and promote a policy for consideration on the state level.

Youth outreach: Plans for an LWVA Debate Scholarship continue to move forward. Alice has identified several grant sources and is submitting applications. Alice also met with AUSD Superintendent Sean McPhetridge and is contacting other local non-profits. Student videographers may also be recruited to record this and other LWVA events. The committee is looking for more members to help support this new program!

Membership noted that we are coming up on our renewal period for 2016. The Board agreed that dues paid by members who join Oct-Dec. are to be credited for 2016. **Communications** requested that all materials be directed to Georgia Gates Derr, who will direct them to the appropriate committee member. Georgia noted submission deadlines for eblasts and the Voter sent on the 1st of the month (25th of preceding month) and for eblasts sent on the 15th (10th of the month). LWVA members are participating in East Bay League activities relating to the study of **Money in Politics**. Study guidelines and questions are posted on the national website.

Anne McKereghan

INTRODUCING YOUR BOARD MEMBERS (a few at a time)



Marian Breitbart - Treasurer

I am a graduate of P.S. 164, SUNY at Stony Brook and the Wharton School. Prior to moving to California, I worked at Exxon. With a preference for island life, I moved from Manhattan to Alameda in 1985 to work in the County Administrator's Office of Alameda County. I am retired from Zions Bank where as a financial advisor I advised public entities such as San Francisco, Oakland, and EBRPD on the issuance of municipal debt. So from private sector to public sector to private sector, I've seen life from both sides now. Favorite Book: The Portable Curmudgeon; Favorite Song: Money Makes the World Go Round (think of it as an ode to campaign finance reform).



Anne McKereghan - Secretary

I was raised in the South Bay where I attended San Jose State University, graduating with a degree in Accounting. I also began raising my own family there, a son Daniel and daughter Anna. I moved to Alameda 14 years ago and began a new career as a Realtor. Initially, my community activity focused on supporting our public schools and Alameda youth, which continues to be a driving passion today. During my advocacy work, I met LWVA members who introduced me to the great work of the local League. Since joining the ranks about five years ago I have enjoyed many benefits including outstanding programs and enjoyable fundraising events.

BOOK CLUB

Our November meeting will be held at the back of Applebee's on **Monday Nov. 23rd at 3 PM**. We will be reading *What A Wonderful World* by Ricky Riccardi. This book is about the later life of Louis Armstrong, a man whose music we have all heard but know little about.

The December meeting will be on the third Monday, Dec. 21st because of the holidays. We will be reading *I Am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai. This is an easy read about a brave and highly intelligent young Pakistani (ethnic Pashto) woman who simply wants girls to be educated and faces the Taliban and death threats. In December we will also do some planning for the year, so please plan on attending and bring some ideas of books you have read that you think the group might like. Felice Zensius

MEMBERSHIP

Interested in joining the **Membership Committee** or volunteering for special activities from time to time? Next meeting is **Sat. Oct. 31st, 10 am at Peet's Nob Hill** (north end of Broadway on the estuary). Come for coffee, find out what we do, and talk about how to renew and grow our membership and involve our members in LWVA's activities. Contact Ruth at dixonmueller@yahoo.com, 865-2439.

Join the Alameda League or renew your membership today!



Name _____

Other Names _____
(if a family membership)

Address _____ City _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

\$70 Single Membership \$97 Family Membership free Student Membership (full-time, voting age, enroll by mail only) Dues year is Jan 1 – Dec 31. Dues assistance available for those on limited income: e-mail membership@LWVAlameda.org or call 865-2439. Printed and mailed VOTER ADD \$10 (e-mailed newsletter is free).

Please make check payable to LWV Alameda and mail to: LWVA, P. O. Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501.
Membership dues are tax deductible. To pay online, visit LWVAlameda.org/join.html.

Consider a Donation to the League

Please consider sending an additional tax-deductible donation to LWV Alameda, P. O. Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501. We count on your support to do our education and advocacy work in the community.