



Alameda Voter

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Membership renewals needed; new student rate offered

By Jean Fong
Boardmember

Before we focus our time and attention to activities for the November Special Election, please take a few minutes to send in your membership renewal for the coming year. **Dues:** \$53 for a single membership; \$20 for an additional member at the same address. Fill out form on page 6.

Due to the number of elections to be held in the next 12 months, the League anticipates more programming and accompanying expenses than usual. Your continuing financial support will therefore be doubly appreciated.

We are also asking your ongoing assistance in recruiting new members. In addition to strengthening our membership base, we would like to incorporate a broader cross-section of the Alameda community.

Students who are 18 years of age and enrolled at an academic institution, either full or part-time, can now join for \$25."

Jean Fong,
membership committee

Students who are 18 years of age and enrolled at an academic institution, either full or part-time, can now join for \$25 – a rate that our Board felt would be attractive and affordable for them.

This welcome change is due to the State voting at the last annual convention to follow the National League in accepting one-half the per member payment for students.

(The PMP is the annual assessment of local leagues paid to the State LWV, LWVUS, and the ILO.) This new category is not on the application forms as yet and will need to be written in until new forms are available.

Lastly, our local League offers a limited number of partial and full scholarships for prospective members. These are based on financial need and are granted on a case-by-case basis. These requests may be submitted with the completed application form.

If you have any questions, please contact Jean Fong at jsfong1@comcast.net.

The Membership Committee, along with our Treasurer, looks forward to receiving your renewals and new membership applications during this month.

Again, thank you for your continuing support!

Hear pros, cons of Nov. 8 ballot measures

Take the work out of studying all the ballot propositions for the Nov. 8 election.

The League of Women Voters Alameda, the Isle City Business and Professional Women and the American Association of University Women present three opportunities to hear the basics of each proposition and provide opportunity to have questions answered by speakers versed in each measure.

Event Information:

Doors open at 6:45 p.m. for all events, the program begins promptly at 7 p.m. and is scheduled to end at 9 p.m.

Dates and Locations:

Oct. 26 St. Barnabas, 1427 Sixth St.;

Oct. 28 Harbor Bay Community Center, 3195 Mecartney Road;

Nov. 3 Alameda Hospital Room A, 2070 Clinton Ave.

State ballot propositions 73 through 80 will be covered. Please refer to the enclosed Pros and Cons pamphlet for more information on each measure and see Page 3 for League positions.

All forums are free and open to the public.

What's Inside

- Issues and Challenges of developing Alameda Point 2
- Former League president takes aim at Prop. 77 3
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Important Dates for Voters

- Last day to register to vote: **Oct. 24.**
- First Day you may "early vote:" **Oct. 10.** at the County Courthouse in Oakland.
- Applying for an absentee ballot deadline: **Nov. 1.**
- Absentee ballots may be returned by mail or turned in at your polling place before polls close.

Board Briefs for September

■ appointed Karen Scanlon, Dorothy Fullerton, Li Volin, Liz Rogers, and Karen Butter as directors;

■ appointed Linda Hudson, Dorothy Fullerton, Karen Scanlon, Karen Butter, and Pat Caito to the executive committee;

■ discussed our scholarship policy and efforts to recruit student members, for whom dues would be reduced;

■ received a report that six meetings have been arranged to present pros and cons on ballot measures for the November special election;

■ heard a report on plans for the September general meeting; and

■ discussed, but did not decide, whether to ask the City Council to put an initiative on the ballot to exempt Alameda Point from Measure A.

'Issues and Challenges' lays out Point process

By Sheila Turner
Program Committee

On Sept. 29, the first of two informational meetings was held to review the Issues and Challenges at Alameda Point. The meeting was co-sponsored by the Alameda LWV and the Alameda Ministerial Association.

Guest speakers were Barbara Hawkins, City Engineer, City of Alameda; Stephen Proud, Alameda Point Project Manager; and Andrew Thomas, Supervising Planner, City of Alameda.

Proud discussed the status of the turnover of the land at Alameda Point to the City.

He has been in heavy discussions (negotiations) with the Navy for the past 18 months, for the sale of the Point. At this time Proud believes that the negotiations are almost ended.

Environmental cleanup

Certain sites at the Point have been placed on the "Superfund" list, as there has been a great deal of industrial contamination.

One of the issues under discussion is the clean-up; which of the sites will be cleaned by the City, and which by the Navy.

Other issues that are still open are the refining of the Preliminary Development Concept; the Environmental Impact Report; and the role of the City.

The Master Developer, ACP, will have the option to go forward (if the project is economically feasible) once the outstanding issues have been

agreed upon and the Plan is presented.

Phase 1 of the Project is expected to begin in 2007. The final phase, Phase 3, should be done by 2023.

Andrew Thomas, Supervising Planner, City of Alameda, spoke about the Preliminary Concept Design.

Some plan specifics

He compared the facets of the "Measure A" compliant and non-compliant plans. Both the compliant and non-compliant plans will have large areas of business, residential, and open (recreational) spaces. Both will have major transportation areas, i.e. ferries and buses.

However, the compliant plan only allows for approximately 1,735 residential units, 612 of which will be "affordable"

The non-compliant plan will have up to 3,000 residential units, 750 of which will be "affordable"; the housing will be different types: above retail stores, on small parcels and on larger parcels.

The non-compliant plan will also have live-work units and multi-family housing, allowing the developer to convert the existing Navy bachelor quarters to apartments or other multi-family uses. Some units will be for rental.

In the compliant plan, there would be 3.2 million square feet of business space, accommodating 9,000 jobs. The non-compliant plan will have 2.5 million square feet of business space, accommodating 6,500 jobs. The mixed-use environment of the Project will de-empha-

size the use of private automobiles, and instead rely on public transit. All neighborhood services will be within a five-minute walk, all public transit within a 10-minute of the residential units.

Traffic, transportation

Barbara Hawkins, Alameda City Engineer, addressed the concerns of the three communities affected by the increase in traffic pursuant to the Project being built: Chinatown, Alameda and the part of Oakland that is close by the tubes.

There are different plans being considered that would help alleviate the impact of the additional automobiles by either creating or changing the 880 ramps, north and southbound.

All three communities must see some benefit to these plans, and, at this time, different plans are being presented.

Improvements should include lanes for buses. The costs of these different plans, at this time range from 15 to 25 million dollars.

Next meeting Nov.16

Part two of the informational meeting on Alameda Point will be held Nov. 16, 7 to 9:30 p.m. at Christ Episcopal Church, corner of Santa Clara and Grand streets. The focus of this meeting will be the specifics of development of the Point, such as housing, financial tradeoffs, environmental impact, transportation and transit and historic preservation.

Call 523-1235 for more information.

Speaking out on redistricting Prop. 77

By Suzanne La Barre
For The Alameda Sun

Longtime Alameda League member Kate Quick was our president for the past two years. (Original article edited for space)

The ballot measure that would change how political boundaries are drawn is under attack by local groups who say Proposition 77 is a redistricting reform misfire.

The proposition, slated for consideration in the special state election Nov. 8, would strip legislators of their power to render legislative districts — a power Proposition 77 proponents say officeholders abuse to ensure electoral advantage. Instead, the initiative calls for a non-partisan panel of three retired judges to draw up districts then subject to approval by California voters. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and his supporters call it the Voter Empowerment Act. Partisan opponents call it a power grab.

Currently, the state legislature delineates districts once a decade for U.S. Congress, state Assembly, state Senate and the Board of Equalizations.



We should have a redistricting system that doesn't give an advantage to anyone except voters."

— Kate Quick,
Communications Director for League of Women Voters California

In the 2004 election, not a single legislative seat switched parties, evidence Proposition 77 supporters say illustrates the need for reform. Placing decision-making powers in the hands of an independent panel will galvanize competition and lead to fairer elections, they say.

The California League of Women Voters (LWV), a longtime nonpartisan champion of redistricting reform, officially opposes the measure on the grounds that a legislature-approved three-judge panel — of older white males, presumably — wouldn't sufficiently represent California's diverse voters.

"We have long advocated what is sort of in this proposition — an independent



Kate Quick

panel — but we have not advocated a panel of three people," said Kate Quick, communications director for the California State LWV and Alameda chapter member.

The proposition details criteria judges must heed when drumming up districts, such as city and county boundaries. It does not require consideration of "communities of interest," however; populations of ethnic minorities or socioeconomic groups whose voting power may be diminished amid panel-based redistricting.

Locally, it's tough to call whether Alameda's large Asian population would suffer diminished voting clout if district lines cut through the city, Quick said. But under

Proposition 77, an area like Oakland's Fruitvale could be at a disadvantage, since its large immigrant population would lose representation if split up. Quick worries a panel of three judges would not be sensitive to this issue.

In the next year, the timeline set out by Proposition 77 will be expedited, given the measure calls for remapping smack dab in the middle of the 10-year redistricting cycle — just in time for the 2006 elections. This has raised eyebrows among Democrats who accuse the governor of thinly veiling Proposition 77 as a reform measure, when stacking the legislature with Republicans for gubernatorial term two is the grander goal.

Quick acknowledges the mapping machine is "broken" but Proposition 77 isn't the panacea the league and other reform supporters seek.

"The league is not at all interested in partisan politics. It's not interested in giving advantages to Republicans or Democrats," she said. "We should have a redistricting system that doesn't give an advantage to anyone except voters."

Volunteer to defeat Prop. 73

By Natalie LeBlanc
NARAL Pro-Choice
California

I'm serving as the Alameda County Field Director for the Campaign for Teen Safety: NO on Proposition 73.

You can help defeat this initiative. We are currently phone banking four nights per week in Berkeley. We are looking to expand our phone banks to

include Oakland and the southern portion of Alameda County. Join us on one of the nights:

Tuesdays, Wednesdays: at AJE Partners, 1803 Sixth Street, #B, Berkeley.

Mondays, Thursdays: at Mal Warwick & Associates, 2550 Ninth Street, Suite 103, Berkeley.

Call: 415-890-1020 or email: nleblanc@pro-choiceamerica.org

Vote with the League of Women Voters Alameda

League does not support or oppose candidates for public office or political parties. League takes stands on issues. The League recommends the following:

STATE MEASURES:

NO! to Proposition 73 (Parental Notification of Abortion)

NO! to Proposition 74 (Teacher Tenure)

NO! to Proposition 75 (Union Dues for Political Purposes)

NO! to Proposition 76 (Spending Limits & School Funding)

NO! to Proposition 77 (Redistricting)

NO! to Proposition 78 (Prescription Drug Discounts)

YES! to Proposition 79 (Prescription Drug Discounts)

For a review of all the ballot measures go to:

www.smartvoter.org

For more on League's positions go to www.ca.lwv.org

Strengthening California's environmental quality act

By Linda Craig,
President@lwvba-ca.org

Our meeting on CEQA Reform on Sept. 24 was well attended and featured an update on the status of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Many of us remember when CEQA was enacted in 1970 and became an important process for documenting the environmental impacts, reasonable alternatives, and feasible mitigation of significant impacts of both public and private projects. The process required an opportunity for public comment and required that the public agency respond to comments prior to approval of projects. (see the www.opr.ca.gov for requirements).

Over the past 35 years, as a result of the CEQA process, better decisions have been made by public agencies and citizens who were empowered to affect the decision - particularly neighborhood groups who previously were given no opportunity for input on projects or their comments were simply ignored.

Panelists at our meeting generally agreed it was a good law, but it has its flaws and could stand some improvement. Issues cited were that EIRs miss the larger regional impacts because of their focus is project-specific, and an EIR can be challenged in court by NIMBYs (in some cases to gain leverage for union wages) or when a public agency simply "shuts its ears" to the facts. For this reason, EIRs have become very lengthy and technical documents, primarily to avoid lawsuits.

Proposals for improvement of CEQA include doing a more complete initial study, analyzing alternatives, the use of Specific Plans (larger area than a single project) and Master EIRs first (this has been used in the City of San Jose) then have only a "focused" environmental review to determine if the project complies with the plan. Legislation is pending that would provide some of these reforms - SB 832, Perata, is being used as a spot bill for reform language in the next session, and SB 1024 would provide the funding for needed planning as part of a statewide infrastructure bond measure for the November 2006 ballot.

There should be a clear summary of the environmental impact in plain English, clear definitions of what is a significant impact, and retention of a participation process regarding projects at the local level, regardless of the abbreviated EIR review process.

P.S. - As a result of our resolution at the State Convention in May, LWVC has sent a letter to Gov. Schwarzenegger on the issue of CEQA Reform. Check it out at www.lwvc.org.

Alameda members rally to support Education Fund

Our request for helping with the Education Fund (see back page) was met with a swift and generous response.

In the month of August members gave a total of \$270! Thank you very much to all who donated.

Those who sent donations

in before September included:

Lena Tam
Myra Windmiller
Kathy Rosenblum
Adair Jorgensen
Helen Sause
Pat Caito
Pat Gannon

Handy Web sites

■ Oakland League:
www.lwvoakland.org
■ Bay Area League:
www.lwvba-ca.org
■ State League:
www.ca.lwv.org
■ National League:
www.lwv.org
■ LWV Smart Voter:
www.smartvoter.org

■ LWVBA Monitor:
www.bayareamonitor.org
■ Sen. Barbara Boxer: senator@boxer.senate.gov
■ Sen. Diane Feinstein:
senator@feinstein.senate.gov
■ The White House:
www.whitehouse.gov



Everything you need to know about how to register to vote, how to get informed about an election, and how to vote at your polling place or at home. Go to www.easyvoter.org

Stay informed with Smart Voter

Go to www.smartvoter.org for analyses and full text of the Nov. 8 ballot measures

Smart Voter (www.smartvoter.org) contains election information from candidates and government elections departments.

It provides information from League of Women Voters organizations and links to news media and other election sites. Archives of past elections are also kept.

When you log on you can access such information as your ballot with polling place by simply entering your address.

You can read statements directly from candidates. There are links to League of Women Voters analyses of propositions or measures, as well as links to other sources.

Keep in touch with your League

Have you moved? Have you changed your phone number or email address? Does your League have the best ways to get in touch with you? Don't let the League lose contact with you.

Send any new contact information to Jean Fong, membership director. Write her at 734 Palmera Court, Alameda, CA 94501. Call her at (510) 522-7797. Or email her at jfong1@comcast.net

Post-Katrina reports from Southern Leagues

New Orleans

By Joan M. Sullivan
LWV of New Orleans

Our house is a total loss after having been in water from 10-6 feet for three weeks. We renovated after having been flooded in 1995 with rain water that rose fast and receded quickly. This time we will relocate away from New Orleans, but where we do not know.

We initially evacuated to Baton Rouge Aug. 28 and stayed there for three days. Once we realized that New Orleans and our house was flooded and city services were compromised and would be for some time, we drove to our daughter's house in Silver Spring. We expect to be here through 2005.

While we were in Baton Rouge, I volunteered to help with nursing home patients that had been evacuated from New Orleans

and who were staying in a church parish gym and hall. This nursing home had evacuated to the same location the previous year and had everything with them that was needed for a short stay. There were many volunteers of all ages since the Baton Rouge schools and businesses were closed. There was electricity where the nursing home patients were, but none in most of the city. After three days this nursing home started to move their patients to other nursing homes in Louisiana. Can you imagine the communications problems?

We felt numb initially, but gradually are thinking forward. We feel fortunate to have gotten out of harm's way and to have a place to stay where we are welcome.

Email has been a valuable connection to family and friends. We have been in touch with many and rejoice to hear others are safe. We also rejoice to hear of houses that were not

damaged or are repairable. Our greatest loss is the diaspora of our friends, our worshiping community, and life as we had known for many years.

Our greatest concern was to resume chemotherapy for Jack, my husband, who was to have received his sixth treatment on the day that Katrina struck. We located an oncology group of physicians who were willing to work with us using the medication and diagnostic information that we had. Although we had emailed Ochsner Clinic Foundation in New Orleans, we did not expect to get a response. We were very surprised to receive a phone call Sept. 3 from a social worker who requested a number where she could fax Jack's medical records. Ochsner had moved its base of operation to Baton Rouge and had access to computerized medical records.

Many questions remain unanswered for us. What

damage is covered by homeowners and flood insurances? Will whole neighborhoods be declared unfit for rebuilding and be demolished? What are the homeowner's, city's and state's rights/responsibilities? New Orleans was to have mayoral elections in March with qualifying of candidates scheduled for December. Who is considered a citizen of New Orleans? How can citizens that are dispersed across the country participate in an election? Where are the voting machines?

The more one thinks of the situation and the aftermath, the more complex it becomes. Citizen input and transparency in government remain essential for going forward. The LWV of New Orleans is dispersed, but very much needed in this time of government reorganization. Linda Walker, LWV of New Orleans President, has kept the Board and many members in contact through email.

Mississippi

By Fran Leber
President LWV of Mississippi

It is unbelievable the damage that has been done. One is horrified by the injustice and glitches which have occurred, followed by distraught feelings of those who have nothing

left but their lives, hoping to find tomorrow a better day but it is worse.

Every citizen in our country knows now how unprepared we are and the difference of those who have a lot and those who have little.

And as I write this it is unbelievable the spirit of those who have suffered during these past weeks and the compassion and giving of citizens throughout the country.

We cannot control hurricanes but we can be prepared and rebuild providing better lives for all. Each of us has the responsibility to see that this happens.

We appreciate the calls of concern. So far we know some of our League members in Mississippi have lost homes or have damaged homes. Hopefully there are no deaths.

Donate old car to support League

Now there's a new way to support the League. Donate your car, boat, RV or motorcycle by calling 1-800-320-0476. You'll get a deduction on your taxes, avoid a hassle at the DMV and provide a new source of funding for our organization.

From now until Dec. 31, your local League will automatically receive a portion of the proceeds from any vehicle donation made in your area.

LWVUS never sells, exchanges email addresses

We thank all of you who are working hard to get member email addresses into the online database!

In response to comments we've heard, we wanted to reassure you that the LWVUS never sells or exchanges any email addresses.

Also, we are very prudent about the amount of email we send. Most members only receive the League-Voice, unless they have specifically signed up to receive LWVUS Action Alerts by email. Questions? Contact membership@lwv.org.

Calendar of events

All members and the public invited

- **Thursday, Oct. 20, 7 - 9 p.m.** - Board Meeting. Alameda Hospital, conference room C, 2070 Clinton Ave., Alameda
- **Wednesday, Oct. 26, 6:45 to 9 p.m.** - Pros and Cons of Nov. 8 Ballot Measures, St. Barnabas Church, 1427 Sixth St., Alameda. (See story on cover)
- **Friday, Oct. 28, 6:45 to 9 p.m.** -- Pros and Cons of Nov. 8 Ballot Measures, Harbor Bay Community Center, 3195 Mecartney, Alameda.
- **Thursday, Nov. 3, 6:45 - 9 p.m.** - Pros and Cons of Nov. 8 Ballot Measures, Alameda Hospital, conference Room A, 2070 Clinton, Alameda.
- **Wednesday, Nov. 16, 7 - 9:30 p.m.** - Part Two of "Issues and Challenges at Alameda Point" hosted by LWVA and the Alameda Ministerial Association, Christ Episcopal Church, Santa Clara and Grand. (See page 2 story)
- **Tuesday, Nov. 8 - ELECTION DAY! VOTE!**

Please consider making a donation of \$5 or more to our Education Fund, the lifeblood of our public outreach activities. No amount is too small. Last year we had no donations, so we are trying to increase awareness this year. Your donations are tax deductible.

Mail your check to:
League of Women Voters of Alameda,
P.O. Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501.

Include your name, address, phone, and email and the amount you've enclosed.

Thank you!

The League of Women Voters – a non-partisan political organization – encourages informed and active participation of citizens 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.

With membership comes the opportunity to work with well-informed, grassroots activists on a broad range of public policy concerns. Learn valuable, transferable skills, including how to organize and run productive meetings, write more effectively, speak in public, organize and run effective campaigns, conduct research studies, and coordinate general civic leadership training. The League invites your comments, letters and articles. They may be sent, faxed or e-mailed to the LWVA.

Join or Renew

Cut out, fill in and mail this coupon with your check to: League of Women Voters of Alameda, P.O. Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501.

Dues: \$53 for a single membership; \$20 for an additional membership at the same address. Students pay \$25, and full and partial scholarships are available. Questions? Contact Jean Fong at jsfong1@comcast.net.

Make checks payable to League of Women Voters of Alameda.

Joining at the local level makes you a member at all levels: Local, county, Bay Area, state and national.

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

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