

The League of Women Voters of Alameda

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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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October 2010

VOTER

**Political Responsibility through Informed and Active
Participation**

LWVA Sponsoring Four General Election Candidate Forums - Three with Pros & Cons

by Jon Spangler & Joanne McKray

The League of Women Voters of Alameda will present four candidate and issue forums covering citywide political candidates and state and local ballot measures leading up to the November 2 general election. All of these events are free and open to the public, and all locations are handicapped-accessible/ADA-compliant.

Members of the community will have the opportunity to pose questions to the candidates at each forum. League members who are informed on the state ballot measures will offer balanced "Pros and Cons" on each measure and respond to audience questions at the three October forums. These events will be videotaped for community viewing and be available on our LWVA web site.

The first forum (7:00 p.m., Wednesday, September 29, at Mastick Senior Center) will feature Alameda's 8 City Council candidates: Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft, Rob Bonta, Adam Gillitt, Tracy Jensen, Beverly Johnson, Jeff Mitchell, and Lena Tam.

The second forum (7:00 p.m., Monday, October 4, Alameda Free Library) will be devoted to hearing from Alameda's five mayoral candidates (Tony Daysog, Doug deHaan, Marie Gilmore, Kenneth Kahn, and Frank Matarrese) and will include "Pros and Cons" presentations on the nine state ballot propositions.

Council and mayoral candidates will be asked the following questions:

1. What method for developing Alameda Point do you believe is preferable: setting up a city-supervised non-profit development corporation, contracting with a master developer, or something else? Give reasons for your choice, and include how infrastructure will be paid for.
2. Financial sustainability of the City is becoming an increasingly urgent problem, particularly with escalating employee retirement costs and decreasing revenue as a result of the economy. What steps would you take to increase fiscal stability?

The third forum (7:30 p.m., Monday, October 11, Temple Israel) is for candidates running for the Alameda Unified School District's Board of Education (Mike McMahon, Sheri Palmer, Clay Pollard, James Pruitt, Marjorie Sherratt, and Rand Wroebel.)

Candidates for the Board of Education will be asked the following:

1. The AUSD is facing a financial crisis. If a new school parcel tax does not pass next spring, and the present parcel taxes sunset in 2012, how will you approach making up for the \$11 million shortfall?

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CO-PRESIDENTS MESSAGE



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

While there were no formal events scheduled in August, the League played a pivotal role in keeping our government “open and transparent” by advocating for the Sunshine Task Force which held its first public workshop on September 11. We lobbied at city council meetings to support the Sunshine Task Force (STF), by not disbanding it, and by providing funds for publicity to alert the public to these meetings. We wrote 2 articles and letters to the editors of our local papers urging the council to fund the announcements of the meeting and while no money was allocated for publicity, they did vote 3-2 to keep the Task Force in operation until the STF had completed their work. The League Board then allocated funds from our own educational monies for the publicity. League members attended the forum and spoke out in favor of campaign financing reform. We were off and running in keeping with our goal for this year of “governmental reform” and “maintaining visibility in the community.”

When isn't the League's plate always full? Certainly not this year with a mayoral, city council, hospital board and school board election upon us. Add to that the 9 propositions on the ballot and you have a busy 8 weeks for Voter Service and the general membership that offer their time and expertise to the four forums scheduled in the community. The Voter Service crew under the able direction of Joanne McKray, Dorothy Fullerton, Felice Zensuis, Marilyn Ng and publicity Jon Spangler are always available for queries, accolades and of course, volunteers. Again, we honored our members survey responses by devoting a major effort to our Voter Service Activities.

Another goal of increasing membership which promises to be more fun are the two membership events scheduled for October. On October 13 at 3:30 we begin our first book club meeting and already have about 7-8 members signed up. While all cannot attend every meeting we will try to make the event as inclusive as possible so call 522-3426 if you want to be considered for a future meeting. The book for October is **The Nine by Jeffrey Toobin**. It is really a fascinating read. The second event is the Saturday morning drop-in coffee at the High Street Station at 9:30 until ? Drop in for a cup of coffee and pastries on us. Bring a friend and chat for a few minutes on your way to the market or wherever. We would love to see you.

Anne

Alameda League Book Club

The debut of our book club is tentatively set for Wednesday October 13 at 3:30 pm. The book chosen is "The Nine" by Jeffrey Toobin and it is a best seller on the Supreme Court covering the last 3 decades". Please call 533-3426 if you would like to read the book and participate.



Next Board Meeting

Thursday, October 21st 7:30 pm
Alameda Hospital
Conference Room C
2070 Clinton Avenue
Alameda

Should I renew my membership?

This year the League of Women Voters celebrated their 90th Anniversary. In celebrating that event, our local League sponsored a showing of the film "Iron Jawed Angels" the story of how the nineteenth amendment was won by a group of stalwarts. Women, some no more than 25 years of age, organized, lobbied, and marched on the White House during a war to protest their lack of a right to vote. For that privilege they were bullied, spit upon, beaten and put in jail where they were further beaten and force fed. When news of this brutality reached the newspapers, President Woodrow Wilson having been humiliated, relented and signed the amendment for suffrage. It took another year of hard work to ratify this amendment in the various states. The story is true that one young man, named Harry Burn of Tennessee, cast the deciding vote to ratify after his mother sent him a telegram urging him to do so. It is a truly compelling story with young actors and if you haven't seen it I urge you to rent it and show it to the young in your household.

More importantly you must be aware of how important the nineteenth amendment has been in establishing women's full participation in American life through the right to vote. You wouldn't have joined the league in the first place. You must be aware of how that right to vote influences the way we live. But did you realize that the women who fought for that amendment went on to form the League of Women Voters? Do you also know that the League of Women Voters is actively engaged every day assuring the rights not only of women but men as well? In fact our league has a co-president and two other board members who are men. The members of this volunteer non-governmental organization work diligently to keep our elected officials accountable and to keep government processes transparent. Renewing your membership and asking some of your friends to join us as well will keep the dreams of young women like Alice Paul, Lucy Burns, and Inez Milholland alive.

The alternative of not having accountability and transparency is unthinkable. Without the League members in cities all across America lobbying their city councils, mayors and state officials about open government and fair elections, corruption of at all levels of government would be rampant. The fact that newspapers report on lapses of officials and corruption in both the public and private sector is a testament to the ideals of our society. And the League is there speaking out in public forums whenever possible representing citizens and keeping pressure on our officials to "do the right thing." In September the League of Women Voters of Alameda testified twice before the City Council (after midnight I might add) urging them not to pass a campaign finance ordinance without proper vetting before the Sunshine Task Force and more importantly, not to disband the Task Force before it begin its work. They were indeed considering it. Since then the Task Force has begun a fruitful process of defining "open government" for Alameda.

We urge you to renew your membership and consider a friend or two in your circle to join us as well. In numbers there is strength and today is certainly a time for unified strength in the League.

We have enclosed an envelope for your convenience in mailing your membership form (on page 8) and your check today. We need you!

Anne Spanier

(continued from page 1)

2. What do you see as the role of the community in mitigating the effects of necessary cuts?

The forum will also include discussions of the state ballot measures.

The final forum (Saturday, October 16, 11:00 a.m., Cardinal Point) will cover the four candidates (Stewart Chen, Robert Deutsch, Elliott Gorelick, and Leah Williams) for the City of Alameda Health Care District Board (Alameda Hospital board.) Board candidates will be asked the following questions:

1. The new health care reform measure is expected to bring sweeping changes to health care delivery in the next several years. What do you view as the top one or two challenges facing Alameda Hospital as its various provisions are implemented, and as a member of the Hospital Board what actions would you recommend to meet these challenges?
2. Given the ongoing need for fiscal sustainability, would you favor reaching out for financial partners, and, if so, how would you go about doing it?

The forum will also include Pros and Cons on the state ballot measures.

For nonpartisan election information please visit the League of Women Voters' SmartVoter.org site. Information is also available from the office of the California Secretary of State, which produces the Voter Information Guide, or from the Alameda County Registrar of Voters.

Forum cosponsors include the Isle City of Alameda Business and Professional Women and the Alameda Branch of the AAUW. The League of Women Voters, a 501(c) (3) nonpartisan and nonprofit public policy educational organization, offers voter service and citizen education activities to increase citizen participation in our democracy, study community issues, and support positive public policy solutions.

To help at any or all of the forums please contact Voter Service Chair Joanne McKray (510-522-6760; joannemckray@gmail.com) or Dorothy Fullerton (769-9159; Dorothy.fullerton@gmail.com)

Free Informational Coffee at High Street Station Café Saturday, October 23, 9:30 – 11:30 AM

Your local League chapter would like to buy your neighbors and friends a cup of coffee and some pastry on Saturday, October 23 from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. at the High Street Station Café.

Please bring anyone interested in the League's educational and action programs to the café for some free coffee and pastry. The public is also invited to drop by the High Street Station Café at 1303 High Street (at Encinal) to learn about the League.

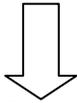
"Come meet members of the Alameda League of Women Voters. We are your neighbors and we'd like to meet you," says co-President Anne Spanier of the LWVA. "Let us buy you some coffee and tell you about the role our organization plays in Alameda. The coffee is good, the sweet rolls are very special, and it's all on us. Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to all women and men," she added.

Members of the LWVA will be bringing their friends, neighbors, and new League members to the event. Our guests will be able to learn more about the League and its voter service, citizen education, and advocacy to support the democratic process. For more information on the informational coffee event, please contact League co-President Anne Spanier (522-3426; anneleague@comcast.net) or visit www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org/index.html.



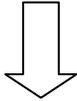
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS RECOMMENDS

November 2, 2010 STATEWIDE GENERAL ELECTION



PROP 20 Redistricting of Congressional Districts OPPOSE

The League **opposes** Proposition 20, which we believe is well-intentioned but premature. California is in the midst of a major reform of our redistricting process, with a new independent Citizens Redistricting Commission drawing the lines for state Senate and Assembly districts. Proposition 20 would significantly increase the commission's workload by adding Congressional redistricting and shortening the time it would have to do its work. We believe the commission should draw Congressional district lines in the future, but the new process should be fully implemented before the commission's responsibilities are expanded so dramatically. In addition, a new definition in this measure could make it harder for the commission to respect California's diverse neighborhoods and communities as it draws district maps. Let's give redistricting reform a chance to work the way the voters intended before we take the next step and add Congressional redistricting.



PROP 23 Suspends Clean Energy and Air Pollution Standards OPPOSE

The LWVC vigorously **opposes** this Dirty Energy Proposition, funded by out-of-state oil companies, because it would virtually kill AB 32, the landmark Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. Proposition 23 would suspend the implementation of AB 32 until the state unemployment rate is 5.5 percent or lower for four consecutive calendar quarters. That has happened only three times in the last four decades! This dangerous proposition would get rid of clean energy standards that will cut air pollution and protect the public health. Proponents say this measure is needed to preserve jobs, but in fact it will jeopardize hundreds of thousands of clean-energy jobs. We must promote California's role as an innovator and investor in a clean-tech economy.



PROP 24 Tax Fairness Act SUPPORT

Proposition 24 would repeal the corporate tax cuts that were passed in closed-door budget deals of 2008-09. These tax breaks cost approximately \$1.3 billion in revenue to the state, while benefiting only two percent of California's businesses. There is no requirement that they actually result in the creation of private-sector jobs. Proposition 24 will make big multi-state corporations pay their fair share and put \$1.3 billion back into the treasury to help our schools, health care, and other essential services that have suffered severe budget cuts in recent years. The League **supports** repealing these tax cuts because this budget crisis cannot be solved by expenditure cuts alone, let alone expenditure cuts combined with tax cuts with no demonstrated value to the economy.

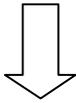


PROP 25 Simple Majority Vote for Budget SUPPORT

The LWVC **supports** this measure, which would change the vote required for the Legislature to pass a budget from the current two-thirds to a simple majority. Majority rule is a fundamental part of democracy. The majority should set priorities for spending and take responsibility for them. This measure will change the negotiations over the budget and reduce the stranglehold the minority now (*cont pg 6*)

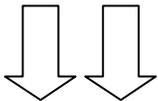
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exercises over the process. Under Proposition 25, legislators will forfeit salary if they fail to meet the deadline for passing a budget. Budgets that are late and full of gimmicks harm all Californians, damage our economy, and hurt the state's credit rating.



PROP 26 "Polluter Protection" OPPOSE

Proposition 26 would redefine regulatory fees imposed on companies for harm done to the environment or public health as taxes. Since taxes, unlike fees, require a two-thirds vote for approval, it would be much harder for state and local governments to seek such payments from those making harmful products or creating public nuisances. The likely result is that the fiscal burden of the harm to the environment or public health will fall on the public rather than the businesses involved. The League **opposes** Proposition 26 because we believe that decisions on all revenue measures should be made by a simple majority vote.



PROP 27 Eliminates State Commission on Redistricting STRONG OPPOSE

This measure would kill the major redistricting reform voters just approved in 2008 and return the authority for redistricting to the backrooms of the Legislature. Proposition 27 would allow politicians to draw their own districts to protect their jobs. It would take us back to the days when bizarrely shaped districts were drawn in secret, carving up neighborhoods and communities to keep incumbents safely in office. **Vote NO** to keep the power with voters and the voter-approved independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.

NO RECOMMENDATION ON THE OTHER MEASURES ON THIS BALLOT

PROP 18 Water Bond Measure REMOVED FROM THE BALLOT

On August 10, the Legislature and the Governor moved Proposition 18 from the November 2010 ballot to the November 2012 ballot.

PROP 19 Legalize and Regulate Marijuana NO POSITION

Because League positions do not cover the issues in Proposition 19, the LWVC is **taking no stand** on this measure.

PROP 21 \$18 Vehicle License Fee for State Parks and Wildlife Programs NEUTRAL

Proposition 21 establishes a new earmarked fee. The League does not generally support earmarks but is **neutral** on this measure because there is little left that can be done to raise money for the state parks, which provide a valuable recreation and natural preservation resource for the state.

PROP 22 State Government Prohibited from Taking Local Funds NEUTRAL

This measure would provide some stability in funding for local government. However, it would freeze in place the current dysfunctional system of funding local governments in California. The League will remain **neutral** on Proposition 22.

VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE ON NOVEMBER 2!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CALIFORNIA • 1107 9th Street, Suite 300 • Sacramento, CA 95814
916-442-7215/916-442-7362 Fax/888-870-VOTE Toll-free • lwvc@lwvc.org • www.lwvc.org

Dave McDonald – Registrar of Voters, Alameda County To Address AAUW October 9th

AAUW Alameda Branch extends an invitation to League members to attend their lunch meeting where the Registrar of Voters will speak. Mr. MacDonald served as the Director of Information Technology for the Registrar of Voters in Alameda County for more than 20 years before being appointed acting registrar in May, 2006.

When Mr. MacDonald was appointed the permanent registrar in January, 2007, county officials spoke out in praise of Macdonald, with Board of Supervisors President Keith Carson issuing a statement that the decision to hire Macdonald on a permanent basis “reflects this board’s belief that he performed exceptionally well in leading Alameda County through both the June and November elections,” and County Administrator Susan Muranishi adding that “Dave’s technological expertise helped us greatly as we made the transition to a completely new voting system.”

If you always wanted to know more about what actually happens on election night and what goes into the planning for a county-wide election, here is your chance to find out. For further information, call Dorothy Fullerton at 510-769-9159.

Luncheon, Saturday, October 9
Asena, 2508 Santa Clara Avenue
11:30 am - Social 12:00 pm - Lunch

Menu choices:

_____ Tilapia, _____ Chicken with Capers, or _____ Vegetarian Pasta
Includes house salad, coffee, and dessert.

Please send a check for \$25, indicating choice of main course, and payable to AAUW-Alameda, to Rosemarie Thompson, 1634 San Antonio Ave, Alameda, CA 94501.

The reservation deadline is October 6.



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.

The League of Women Voters' Elections Forums at a Glance

City Council Candidates

Wednesday, 9/29/10, 7:00 p.m.
Mastick Senior Center
1125 Santa Clara Ave, Alameda

Mayoral Candidates*

Monday, 10/04/10, 7:00 p.m.
Alameda Free Library (main)
1550 Oak St, Alameda

AUSD Board of Education*

Monday, 10/11/10, 7:30 p.m.
Temple Israel (Bay Farm Island)
3183 Mecartney Rd, Alameda

Alameda Hospital Board*

Saturday, 10/16/10, 11:00 a.m.
Cardinal Point (Marina Village)
2431 Mariner Square Dr, Alameda

*State ballot measures will be presented at all October sessions. All locations are handicapped-accessible/ADA-compliant.

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