



Inside this issue: Guides to State and Local ballot measures!

## Come to Candidates' and Pros & Cons forums

The Nov. 2 election has more than 16 propositions to vote on, and more than 21 candidates to get to know. Here is a list of forums to help you decide.

The League of Women Voters' Smart Voter website has information on candidates at [www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org). And you can catch re-runs of some forums on public access channels 28 and 31.

### PROS AND CONS FOR BALLOT MEASURES

● **Wednesday, Oct. 13**, 7 to 9 p.m. Temple Israel, 3138 Mecartney Road.

### CANDIDATES' FORUMS

● **Wednesday, Oct. 6**, 7 to 9 p.m. Temple Israel, 3183 Mecartney Road. **Alameda Hospital Board.**

● **Thursday, Oct. 14**, 7 to 9 p.m. Harbor Bay Community Center, Community Room, 3225 Mecartney Road. **City Council.**

● **Wednesday, Oct. 20**, 7 to 9 p.m. Mastick Senior Center, 1155 Santa Clara. **Alameda Unified School Board and Peralta Community College District.**

### The candidates are:

**ALAMEDA CITY COUNCIL** (Two Open Seats)  
Marilyn Ashcraft, Pat Bail, Vernice Boone, Doug de-Haan, Betsey Elgar, appointed incumbent Marie Gilmore and Ruben Tilos.

### ALAMEDA UNIFIED SCHOOL BOARD (Three Open Seats)

Vernice Boone, David Forbes, incumbent Janet C. Gibson, Karin Lucas, incumbent Bob Reeves and William Schaff.

### ALAMEDA HOSPITAL BOARD (Two Open Seats)

Incumbent Jephtha Boone, Vernice Boone, Elliot Gorelick, Tom Pavletic and incumbent Lena Tam.

### TRUSTEE, PERALTA

### COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD, AREA ONE (One Seat)

Harry Hartman and Bill Withrow.

## Speak out on Health Services allocations

### Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Later this month the Alameda County Board of Supervisors will begin a series of 10 public hearings about Measure A funds.

The Measure implemented a temporary half-cent sales tax with its revenue to be used to provide additional support for health care services. Seventy-five percent, by ballot definition, is designated for use by the Alameda County Medical Center. The purpose of these public hearings is to advise the Board of Supervisors on the use of the remaining 25 percent.

While we expect the Measure A sales tax to generate \$90 million, there is still more need than can be funded. The Board of Supervisors will be making decisions as to how to allocate these precious resources. As your representative on the Board of Supervisors, I need to hear from you. What do you think are the most

important health needs in your community and in the county as a whole? What programs and services should be funded?

By approving Measure A-The Essential Health Care Services Sales Tax-you ensured health care for seniors, children and families. I hope your participation will not end there. I recognize the sales tax represents a sacrifice for many of you and I want these funds to be used carefully and rationally.

### The hearings in District 3 are:

**Oct. 18**, Fruitvale Senior Center, 6:30 p.m., 3301 E. 12th Street, 2nd Floor, Oakland.

**Oct. 21**, San Leandro Library, 6 p.m., 300 Estudillo Ave., Estudillo Room, San Leandro.

For more information, call 272-6693 for a schedule of the hearings or go to [www.acgov.org/board/district3](http://www.acgov.org/board/district3).

*Sincerely,  
Alice Lai-Bitker.*

# Get out and vote and then get someone else out to vote

*"Democracy cannot be saved by supermen, but only by the unswerving devotion and goodness of millions of little men and women."*

--Adlai Stevenson

Well, now we are in the thick of it, doing our League fundamentals of Voter Education and Service. My thanks to all of you who have stepped up to take on some task, and my plea to the rest to come forward this month to help, because we still are in need of presenters for our Pros and Cons!

The list of October dates for our candidate's forums and Pros and Cons presentation meetings is in this *Voter*. Please get your friends and neighbors to come. Personal invitation is always the best route. Also, it doesn't hurt to ask folks if they are registered to vote and if they aren't, have available either a registration form or specifics about where they can go to get one. The deadline for

this election is Oct. 18. And, a follow up call to be sure they have a way to the polls and actually get out to vote on Nov. 2 is a good idea, too.

I guess what I am trying to say is that we each need to take personal re-

and I continue to be in awe of the magnificence of nature in this beautiful State. Also, its not hard to see the places where man has been allowed to intrude and disrupt the serene beauty. At Icy Point Straight we saw first-hand the ravages of clear-cutting whole mountain sides for timber, and the resulting erosion and muddying of the waters at the foot of the mountain where the salmon will no longer be able to enter their spawning streams, and the bears will no longer find the salmon they eat this time of year to prepare for their winter "nap-time".

I am always glad to know that organizations such as the League, Sierra Club, the Nature Conservancy, and others, are working so hard to preserve and protect our Planet. These trips convince me how fragile our land, air and water are and how much more we need to do.

*Kate*



Kate Quick

- See times, dates for forums on cover
- See insert on state ballot measures, and local measures on pp. 3, 4 and 5

sponsibility for our Democracy to work, and that means grass roots at the personal level at election time.

On a lighter note, I just returned from 12 days cruising to Alaska. We visited some new places this time,

## There are still opportunities to volunteer

Here are upcoming dates and volunteers needed:

**Oct. 6** Temple Israel - need two pages

**Oct. 13** Temple Israel - need two pages; need three

or four additional presenters (perhaps the presenters from 9/30 will share their research?)

**Oct. 14** Harbor Bay Community Room - Need

four people to set up room and clean up; need one page

**Oct. 20** Mastick, one question sorter

If you've not yet volunteered for a League activity,

consider one of the above opportunities. Or the County Registrar of Voters is looking for poll workers Nov. 2.

Call 523-6548.

### The League of Women Voters of Alameda

President: Kate Quick

Vice President Administration:

Luann DeWitt

Vice President Program:

Linda Hudson

Secretary: Sally Faulhaber

Treasurer: Pat Caito

*Voter* Editor: Cara Watkins

The current and past issues of the *Voter* are posted on our website:

[www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org](http://www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org)

The *Voter* is published 10 times a year by the League of Women Voters of Alameda

## Check your Membership Directory for errors

Included in last month's *Voter* was a "Membership Directory" containing contact information for all members. There were several mistakes, so we are including a new one in the November *Voter*. Please check your directory for incorrect information about you, and contact Donna Vaughn at 523-8308, dbvaughn@comcast.net, or 400 Harbor Light Drive, to make the correction.

## September Board Briefs

At its September meeting, the Board;

- re-adopted our non-partisan policy;

- planned for an ambitious schedule of candidates' forums and pros and cons presentations on ballot measures for the November election;

- heard about plans for registering voters;

- reviewed the recent Board retreat;

- heard the action chair had sent letters to Gov. Schwarzenegger supporting AB 2106, the California Tax Expenditure Act, and SB 116, a revenue bond measure for library construction; and

- heard a progress report on our housing study.

# League stands on props 59, 72 and 69

As you may know by now, League is supporting Proposition 59, which will put much of our good government platform into the State Constitution. It would make public access to meetings and public records a constitutional right.

We are also supporting Proposition 72, a Referendum Petition to Overturn Amendments to Health Care Coverage Requirements. This support stems from our support of SB 2, a bill which required certain employers to extend health care benefits to their employees. A "no" vote on Prop 72 would allow employers to continue to choose whether to pay health benefits and would not establish a new program to provide assistance to low in-

come employees in paying premiums for workplace provided health care coverage.

League opposes Proposition 69, which deals with DNA Samples. Our opposition is based on the invasion of privacy implicit in collecting such samples from all persons charged with felonies, rather than, as at present, those convicted of "certain sex offenses or other violent crimes."

League remains neutral on the other Propositions. But remember to come to the Pros and Cons nights, and to study up! There are many competing measures, and confusing ones, too.

## *In-depth analyses of local measures AA, BB, CC and F*

Measure AA Bonds-San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District

### **BACKGROUND:**

Seismic safety construction requirements have changed as analysis of recent earthquakes reveal structural failures. Most of the BART system's overhead tracks, tunnels, and structures as initially built do not meet current structural safety standards; and recent studies indicate the underwater Transbay Tube is susceptible to damage from soil liquefaction. BART's 2002 Earthquake Safety Program study found a massive quake would likely shut down BART for two and a half years or longer and cost taxpayers upwards of \$15 billion to rebuild the system if it isn't strengthened.

The continued operation of the BART system after the Loma Prieta earthquake helped compensate for the rupture in the Bay Bridge and damage to freeways. More damaging earthquakes are predicted for the future and make a strengthened BART system even more important in order to keep traffic moving and prevent large losses to the Bay Area economy.

This measure would authorize the sale of no more than \$980 million dollars in bonds, to be paid by a property tax assessment of approximately \$7 per \$100,000 of assessed value per year over the life of the bonds. Additional funds to pay for BART's \$1.3 billion Earthquake Safety Program will come

## **MEASURE AA**

from a combination of state and federal dollars as well as passenger revenues.

### **THE MEASURE:**

To protect public safety and keep Bay Area traffic moving in the aftermath of an earthquake or other disaster, shall BART, the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District, be authorized to issue bonds not to exceed \$980 million dollars to make earthquake safety improvements to BART facilities in Contra Costa, San Francisco and Alameda Counties, including strengthening tunnels, bridges, overhead tracks and the underwater Transbay Tube, and establish an independent citizens' oversight committee to verify bond revenues are spent as promised?

### **PRO ARGUMENTS:**

●The improved safety measures funded by bond revenues could prevent massive gridlock, save lives and save taxpayers billions of dollars in BART rebuilding costs should a major earthquake hit the Bay Area.

●Bonds are a cost-effective method of financing the seismic retrofit as the bonds are sold only as funds are needed.

●Since 1962, taxpayers have invested billions of dollars in BART; the Earthquake Safety Program is an insurance policy to protect that large, irreplaceable investment as well as protecting the hundreds of thousands of

people who ride BART every day.

●Raising fares for BART users to pay for seismic retrofit would discourage transit ridership. Less transit use would increase air and water pollution, sprawl and traffic congestion.

●A citizens' oversight committee will insure that funds will be spent as promised.

### **CON ARGUMENTS:**

●Money for retrofit of the BART system should be part of the BART budget. Responsible budgeting and a small passenger fare surcharge could fund needed seismic retrofits.

●Taxes and bridge tolls funded BART's construction, and property and sales taxes still fund over 40% of every BART ticket. BART riders, not property owners, should bear more of the costs.

●The tax to pay for the bond repayment will be borne inequitably by property owners with post-Prop. 13 assessments relative to pre-Prop. 13 home and business owners.

●Since BART systems performed well during the Loma Prieta quake, it may be better to invest in emergency response capability to clear and repair transportation routes and to fund more flexible transit systems such as ferries and buses.

●BART has other sources of revenue, such as parking charges and development of BART station property, that could fund some of these retrofits.



MEASURE BB PARCEL TAX-Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District Special Tax Measure

MEASURE BB

staying local?"

PRO ARGUMENTS:

Given the state financing structure since Proposition 13, this tax is the most feasible way to meet this immediate need. It is the only legally allowable method under current law, other than fare increases, for AC Transit to independently raise additional revenue to operate and maintain service. AC Transit has already frozen staff positions, deferred capital expenses, and taken other measures to control costs.

For transit dependent persons without the ability or resources to drive, cutting bus service would further limit their access to schools, jobs, shopping, and medical services. Reducing service or raising fares would frustrate attempts to bring more equitable transit mobility to low-income communities.

Cutting transit service would also frustrate efforts to build transit ridership among those with a transportation choice. Reduced transit ridership results in increased traffic congestion and pollution, and worsens energy dependence on foreign oil.

AC Transit has a program to provide bus passes for school children for \$15 a month. If this measure is approved the cost of these passes will be kept at the current level.

Older residents who cannot af-

ford the tax on their place of residence may have the tax deferred until the property changes hands. An independent oversight committee will review the use of the tax funds and will provide an annual report for the AC Transit board and the public.

CON ARGUMENTS:

There is no guarantee that this special tax will effectively maintain service. If AC Transit revenues continue to decline and/or costs escalate, this measure may not provide enough new revenue to offset these trends and more service could still need to be cut.

A special tax assigned to parcels of property is not an ideal way to fund transit services. The value of transit service to each parcel can vary greatly depending on the size, use and location of the parcel, yet each parcel is assigned the same tax.

Because the first year of the existing parcel tax concluded on June 30, 2004, audited data will not be available until close to the November election, limiting voters to only preliminary results on which to judge the effectiveness of the current parcel tax.

Critics contend that enough money already goes to transit and that the problem is priorities for how taxes are spent, not the need for more money.

(No formal arguments against Measure BB have been accepted.)

BACKGROUND:

Revenues for public transit throughout the state, including the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit) have fallen due to diminished sales tax revenues and an overall economic slump. Most Bay Area systems are raising fares, cutting service and/or laying off workers. The AC Transit board has voted to place a special tax on the ballot in order to maintain affordable services for seniors, youth and persons with disabilities, and to avoid further substantial service cuts. The tax would extend the existing parcel tax of \$2 per month (currently scheduled to expire in 2008) through 2015, and increase it to \$4 per month for that period, beginning July 1, 2005.

THE MEASURE:

To preserve affordable local public transportation services that allow seniors and people with disabilities to remain independent, take students to and from school, help East Bay residents commute to work and reduce traffic and air pollution by reducing the number of cars on the road, shall the Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District (AC Transit) increase its existing parcel tax by \$2 per parcel, per month for ten years with an independent fiscal oversight committee and all money

MEASURE CC PARCEL TAX – East Bay Regional Park District Zone 1

MEASURE CC

BACKGROUND:

Park funding throughout the State has suffered during recent years. The East Bay Regional Park District has lost property tax revenue in the amount of \$12 million due to State budget problems. The District is proposing a parcel tax within a specific zone of the District in western Contra Costa and Alameda counties. The rationale for this zone is that there is greater support for funding for park maintenance and operations in that area, compared to the rest of the District. It is estimated to raise about \$3 million per year to improve and maintain buildings, irrigation systems, trails and other facilities in specified parks, primarily in the older park

properties within the zone. If the measure is approved, by the required 2/3 vote, the District plans to adopt a

policy to ensure that money raised by the tax is spent in parks in Zone 1, including Tilden, Chabot, Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline and the newly created Eastshore Park.

THE MEASURE:

To increase public access to shoreline, hillside and urban parks and trails, enhance public safety (police and wildfire protection), and provide critical environmental maintenance in Zone 1, (western Alameda and western Contra Costa Counties) of the East Bay Regional Park District, shall a resolution be approved authorizing a parcel tax, based upon occupancy, of \$1 per month (\$12 per year) per single family parcel, or 69

Please turn to page 5

# MEASURE F

Prepared by  
Leaguemember Jon Spangler

Author's Note: The following analysis of City measure F is accurate to the best of my knowledge. The LWVA has not taken a position either for or against Measure F. There is a concern, however, that there was no public discussion of the issue of term limits during City Council meetings, and that the term limits issue was omitted from City staff reports and from public election documents.

## BACKGROUND

City Measure F is a proposed amendment to the Charter of the City of Alameda that would remove all references to the Board of Education of the Alameda Unified School District (AUSD) from the City Charter. This amendment was requested as a "house-keeping" charter update by the Board of Education in July 2004. Measure F, if approved by the voters, would make Alameda's City Charter consistent with the de facto independence of the Board of Education and the AUSD from the City of Alameda since the 1960s.

Alameda is a Charter City under the State of California, and the City Charter currently applies only to the election of

school board members, not to the operation of public schools. The Board of Education and the AUSD are governed almost entirely by the State Education Code at this time.

## THE MEASURE

Measure F reads as follows:

"Shall the Charter of the City of Alameda be amended to delete references to the Board of Education, resulting in the Board no longer being subject to, controlled and/or governed by the Charter but instead governed by State law?"

Measure F places the election of AUSD Board of Education (Board) members under the jurisdiction of the California State Education Code, instead of the City Charter. It also removes members of the Board of Education from consideration if vacancies occur on the City Council. The Board will also no longer be covered by term limits, as it was under the City Charter. All of these considerations--except term limits--were discussed in City staff reports and during AUSD Board and the City Council meetings in open session during July 2004. There is no mention of term limits in any of the public election documents addressing Measure F.

Current AUSD Board members state that the Board will probably reexamine

term limits if the voters pass Measure F. According to Section 35107(c) of the Education Code, which will govern the AUSD Board if Measure F is approved, term limits for Board members could be placed on the ballot by either the Board or by initiative petition, but no term limits would apply until after the voters have approved term limits during a regularly scheduled election.

## PRO ARGUMENTS

A YES vote for Measure F will remove all references to the Alameda Unified School District Board of Education from the City of Alameda Charter, placing the Board's elections and operations entirely under the authority of the California State Education Code. There would be no significant changes in the daily operations of the AUSD or of the City of Alameda, but Board of Education members will no longer be subject to the term limits incorporated in the City of Alameda Charter.

## CON ARGUMENTS

A NO vote on Measure F will leave the Alameda City Charter unchanged. There would be no significant changes in the daily operations of the AUSD or of the City of Alameda, but Board of Education members would remain subject to the term limits incorporated in the current City Charter, and would also remain eligible to fill emergency vacancies on the City Council.

## MEASURE C continued from Page 4

cents per month (\$8.28 per year) per multi-family unit, to expire in 15 years?

## PRO ARGUMENTS:

●Regional parks increase recreational opportunities and preserve important natural environments for use by wildlife and people, protect water quality in lakes and streams, preserve open space and natural areas along shorelines.

●With proper maintenance, by removing overgrown vegetation and upgrading fire roads, the risk of wildfires spreading to communities in and around Tilden, Wildcat Canyon, Sibley, Claremont Canyon, Huckleberry, Redwood and Chabot Parks will be reduced.

●Parcel tax revenues from this measure will be used only for the pri-

ority list of projects included in this ballot.

●Each year there will be a guaranteed audit and full public disclosure about how the resources from Measure CC were used.

## CON ARGUMENTS:

●The District does not need more money. General revenues in the District have increased from \$57 million in 1998 to \$83 million by 2003.

●Carving out a special zone from Richmond/San Pablo to Oakland/Berkeley, in which only residents of that zone would pay the parcel tax, is unfair because park users in the rest of the District would pay nothing.

●The parcel tax is unfair because it exempts business property owners.

## Keep in touch with the 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 Palmeta Court, Alameda, CA 94501. Call her at (510) 522-7797. Or email her at [jsfong1@comcast.net](mailto:jsfong1@comcast.net)

# Calendar of events

**Wednesday, Oct. 6, 7 to 9 p.m.** Temple Israel, 3183 Mecartney Road. **Candidates Forum Alameda Hospital Board.**

**Wednesday, Oct. 13, 7 to 9 p.m.** Temple Israel, 3138 Mecartney Road, **Pros and Cons Forum**

**Thursday, Oct. 14, 7 to 9 p.m.** Harbor Bay Community Center, Community Room, 3225 Mecartney Road, **Candidates Forum City Council, treasurer and auditor**

**Monday, Oct. 18** - The deadline for submitting a voter registration form (aka Voter Affidavits) in order to vote in this coming November election.

**Wednesday, Oct. 20, 7 to 9 p.m.** Mastick Senior Center, 1155 Santa Clara. **Candidates Forum Alameda Unified School Board and Peralta Community College District.**

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major policy issues, and influence public policy through education.

## Join the League of Women Voters

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. 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.

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