

**The League of  
Women Voters of  
Alameda**

P. O. Box 1645  
Alameda, Ca 94501  
Voice mail: 510-869-4969  
[www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org](http://www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org)

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

**ELECTED BOARD**

Co-President: Kate Quick  
[katequick@comcast.net](mailto:katequick@comcast.net)  
Co-President: Anne Spanier  
[anneleague@comcast.net](mailto:anneleague@comcast.net)  
Program VP: Marilyn Ng  
[mjklm@yahoo.com](mailto:mjklm@yahoo.com)  
Secretary: Earleen Hamlin  
[Erhamlin@earthlink.net](mailto:Erhamlin@earthlink.net)  
Treasurer: Robertamarie Kiley  
[rkiley@alamedanet.net](mailto:rkiley@alamedanet.net)  
Voter Service: Joanne McKray  
[joannemckray@gmail.com](mailto:joannemckray@gmail.com)  
Budget Committee: Li Volin  
[allenejr@aol.com](mailto:allenejr@aol.com)  
Affidavits: Dorothy Fullerton  
[dorothy.fullerton@gmail.com](mailto:dorothy.fullerton@gmail.com)  
Action Chair: Karen Butter  
[karenbutter@comcast.net](mailto:karenbutter@comcast.net)  
At-large: Sally Faulhaber  
[ssyhf@comcast.net](mailto:ssyhf@comcast.net)  
At-large: Elizabeth Rogers  
[Edr1940@aol.com](mailto:Edr1940@aol.com)

**APPOINTED BOARD**

Web/VOTER: Karen Scanlon  
[yakitt@aol.com](mailto:yakitt@aol.com)  
E-Comm: Donna Vaughn  
[dbvaughn@comcast.net](mailto:dbvaughn@comcast.net)  
Health Care: Shubha Fanshe  
[shubhaf@aol.com](mailto:shubhaf@aol.com)  
Community Ed: Doris Gee  
[geewiz@alamedanet.net](mailto:geewiz@alamedanet.net)

SMART VOTER: Andrea Pook  
[apook@hotmail.com](mailto:apook@hotmail.com)  
Juelle Ann Boyer  
[jab@borupp.org](mailto:jab@borupp.org)

**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 42  
Number 9  
December 2009/  
January 2010**

# VOTER

**Political Responsibility through Informed and Active  
Participation**

## **Alameda Point Initiative Pros and Cons January 7<sup>th</sup> at the Library**

The citizens of our city have an important decision to make on February 2, 2010. The outcome of the election on that date will determine whether the city moves ahead with the plan put forward by the developer SunCal for the redevelopment of Alameda Point. Since the Point covers one-third of the city, the manner of its redevelopment will have effect on all Alamedans for generations to come.

Our League's prime mission is to help citizens get the information they need prior to voting, so we've scheduled a public event regarding the initiative on January 7th, at 7:30 p.m., at the Alameda Main Library, 1550 Oak Street. Featured will be three speakers. Pat Keliher of SunCal will present the arguments for voting yes, and Dave Needles of Protect the Point will give arguments for voting no. The third speaker is Anne Marie Gallant, the Acting City Manager, who will have the role of clarifying what the initiative actually says and its implications.

The goal of the evening is to help voters come to informed decisions; after brief presentations by each speaker members of the audience will have the opportunity to ask the presenters questions to help them to do so.

*Joanne McKray, Voter Service Chair*

### **Proposition 11 Update**

The time draws nearer for applying to be a member of the Citizens Redistricting Commission that will draw legislative and State Board of Equalization district lines after the 2010 census. The regulations governing the selection of the commission have been completed and sent to the federal Department of Justice for review. Applications will be accepted online from December 15 until February 12, 2010

Consider applying to serve on the Citizens Redistricting Commission, and encourage people you know who would be good candidates! Learn more at the Auditors web site, <http://wedrawthelines.ca.gov/>.



## **CO-PRESIDENTS MESSAGE**

Anne Spanier and Kate Quick  
Co-Presidents, League of Women Voters of  
Alameda

### **Giving Thanks for the Work of the League Members**

This year, at our Thanksgiving feast, I plan to give special thanks for the work of all our League members who contribute in so many ways to make our League a “good thing” in our community. For those who work on membership, write articles, distribute pros and cons on ballot measures, arrange for candidate’s forums, moderate, get out the VOTER, maintain the web site, organize the Meet Your Public Officials, collect raffle prizes, fill the voter registration form boxes, write letters, appear before public bodies, contact their legislators when calls to action are being answered – and do so many more tasks required, I am truly thankful.

I wish you all a most joyous holiday season. This is a great time of year for friends and family, and a particularly good time to remember those less fortunate than ourselves. I know that 2010 will bring us even more successes as individuals, more closeness in our friendships, and an even more vibrant League where we can go forward together to make this a better community.

*Kate*

### **Annual Program Planning Meeting January 28, 2010**

Each year, we gather the membership to review our League Program, either for state or national levels, depending on which convention will be taking place in May of that year. This January, we will be reviewing the national program; that is, the positions taken over the years at the national level of League. We talk about them and then prepare our opinion for submission to the LWVUS. All the Leagues across the nation are doing the same and when the LWVUS gets the submissions, it collates them to see where the local Leagues want the League to act on a national level. The results are announced at the convention. We usually take some time to review our local positions as well.

This year, those who wish to attend this important meeting for members only will also have the opportunity to enjoy a soup and bread dinner with Co-President Kate Quick (tours of the new kitchen/bath/laundry are also to be held!), who will be leading the discussion.

The meal and discussion will begin at 6:00 p.m. Bring a bottle of wine or your favorite beverage or dessert. The soup and bread will be provided, as well as coffee and tea.

Please R.S.V.P. to Kate by January 15<sup>th</sup>, so adequate provisions can be laid in for this special occasion. Her contact information is on page 1 of this VOTER. E-mail reminders will be sent in early January.

## A Physician's Perspective on Health Care Reform

Dr Lonnie Bristow, former President of the American Medical Association, reviewed America's current system of payment for and provision of health care at a joint meeting of the Alameda Rotary Club and the Alameda League of Women Voters. The theme of his presentation was "What are Your Core Values?" thus challenging each listener to examine their personal perspective of health care and the proposed reforms.

Some basic facts: there are 45 million residents without any form of health insurance in our country. But we collectively spend \$2.5 trillion per year; 31% for hospital costs; 21% to caregivers; 10% to "pharma" (pharmaceutical companies for drugs); 8% to nursing homes, administration and labs, ambulance and other ancillary services; and, 30% to insurance company profits. That means \$750 billion in profits.

There are five major systems which interact upon each other in the health care arena. First, let's define "system". A system is a collection of resources organized to produce an outcome according to Dr. Bristow. The five interactive systems are health insurance, "pharma", hospital corporations, caregivers and us, the public or health care consumers. The first four systems act on we consumers to produce a result; improved health (hopefully!). But do we understand the leverage points and use them to our best advantage?

Historically, health insurance, begun in 1929 by Blue Cross for hospital costs, was non-profit. Blue Shield was later organized on the same basis for doctor care. But in 1980, federal legislation allowed insurance providers to become for-profit or stockholder owned corporations. The focus shifted from the cost of hospital/doctor services to the cost plus stockholders profit. Early in American history, hospitals were either government, charity or medical school operations and therefore not for profit until post WWII. With the passage of Medicare, there was a demand for more hospital beds because Medicare would pay for hospitalization. Further, in 1980 with the adoption of managed care under Medicare there

was a further demand for more beds. Thus the hospital corporation owned by stockholders was born.

Pharma is the third major system. Federal law provides a fourteen year period of exclusivity for new drugs approved by the Federal Drug Administration. This was done to provide stockholders with a period to regain their investment in research and development of new drugs. This 14 year period is expanded now to as much as 21 years. This is done by manipulating the chemical structure slightly and asking for a new or extended drug patent, allowing for the immense profits with protected patents.

The final system is that of caregivers (doctors, nurses, therapists, *et al*). Until federal legislation adopted in 1980 to allow them to operate in groups, most care was provided by individuals. After this waiver of the anti-trust laws, medical provider groups began to form. Today 52% of all providers are in multi-group organizations. Physicians felt this was the only way to protect their interests as the government has never fully compensated them for care provided under Medicare, and their rates of compensation continue to decline. Dr. Bristow stated that doctors typically have overhead costs of 50%, and Medicare reimburses only 53%, providing miniscule compensation to the physician.

There is no single payer system in the world today. All systems including Canada use some form of private -public partnership. He went on to say that he was not opposed to profits, just that there needs to be some rationality in these systems to make profits more tenable.

Do we understand the leverage points? Do our core values suggest that universal coverage (that is everyone has access to affordable health care) is important? Do our core values suggest that we need only one payer (the government)? These are the questions Dr. Bristow left with the assembled audience as the basis for reviewing those bills currently being considered in Congress.

*Juelle Ann Boyer*

# Alameda League Celebrates UN Anniversary

By Anne Spanier

October 24<sup>th</sup> marked the 64<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations. In recognition of its anniversary and the numerous roles it serves in the world, the League of Women Voters of Alameda invited political science professor, Norman Bowen, of California State University East Bay to speak on this multifaceted world organization. He also serves as its Director of the International Studies Program and is a member of the board of the United Nations Association-USA East Bay Chapter. His primary research interest is the history of the United Nations.

Prof. Bowen provocatively entitled his program, "The United Nations: It's More Than You Think, But Less Than You'd Like." He began by telling the audience of the important work that the League of Women Voters had done during the 1940s in lobbying for an organization of nations banded together to ensure international cooperation. The League trained several thousand speakers to help build public understanding about the establishment of the UN and its importance to the world. "Every time I opened up a new archive, I found the League's name referenced as being part of the advocacy for this new organization" he said.

The original United Nations Charter was quite progressive and promised a great many reforms. It promised: 1. economic development for all nations, 2. a more equitable trading system between the rich and poor nations, 3. an international rapid, deployable army to stop armed conflict, 4. a non-proliferation treaty of nuclear armaments, 5. international agreements on climate and environmental issues,

Unfortunately, most of these bill of rights provisions in the Charter were not fully implemented as promised. The language in the Charter was often written in a way as to stymie many of the reforms. Political posturing by countries unwilling to give up their power was a major reason. Therefore, many of the provisions were so under-funded that it is amazing that they accomplished so much with so little.

On the other hand, the UN has had some phenomenal successes which have not been heralded by the news media. Due to this non-recognition, the public doesn't really appreciate its work. For example, Prof. Bowen cited the standards of safety for airline traffic that has been negotiated among countries by a UN agency. Bringing all of the countries into agreement to foster the smooth flow of safe airlines and airports is no easy task. Another important contribution by the UN is global weather reported which helps countries deal with weather crises.

A more well-known UN organization, the World Health Organization, has been in the forefront of fighting world diseases. It was instrumental in eliminating smallpox in the 1970s. This act alone saves the world 1.3 billion dollars every year. If the disease was unchecked, that amount of money would be needed to fight the disease on a yearly basis. Today, the WHO is undertaking the very dangerous mission of immunizing the population of Sudan against polio.

In the area of international security, the UN Charter calls for a vote of the nations when a military action is taken against another nation. For example, in 1990, when Iraq invaded Kuwait, the U.S. President gathered many nations and went to the UN to ask for approval to stop Iraq. All but two member states of the UN sanctioned the military action and as a consequence, the cost and duties of the action was shared by all of the participating nations. When the U.S. attacked Iraq in 2002, Pres. George W. Bush did not ask for the UN to sanction the action and, as a result, the U.S. has borne the full costs of this expensive war. The war itself violated the UN Charter. Studies of military action by nation states have shown that peacekeeping is less costly and more effective than armed conflict. The scandals that have involved the peacekeepers have more to do with the lack of funds for training troops and the proper oversight of those armies.

The Test Ban Treaty first negotiated in 1970 to reduce and finally eliminate nuclear arms has been another attempt by the UN to create peaceful coexistence among member states. The Ban has had its problems but the number of weapons is being lowered and the desire to rid the world of these instruments of destruction is an accepted fact among most peace-seeking nations.

In the area of human rights, the United Nations has been in the forefront. Initially, there was an amendment in the first draft of the UN Charter calling for recognition of human rights. Three countries refused to sign – the United Kingdom, Russia, and the United States. Although the LWVUS lobbied hard for the language in the final bill, the United States realized that they could not sign because segregation was still the law in many states of the union. Therefore, the universal declaration of the amendment was without teeth. Since then however, women's rights have become more respected. In 2000, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This ensured that all developments must have a study to determine how women will be impacted. It also calls for women's participation in the peace process and for prosecution against rape, particularly in situations of war and occupation. (continued on page 5)

(UN Anniversary continued from page 4)

The establishment of the International Court of Law with its tribunals has been another landmark achievement. In the past, the head of a state was considered to be beyond the reach of justice no matter how criminal his conduct. Today the Court is bringing Yugoslavian leaders to trial for their genocide of the Bosnian people during the 1990s. There is still a long way to go, especially in Africa, but the concept of retribution for these leaders is now considered acceptable.

A more well-known agency, UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund), is widely respected around the world for its programs that in particular benefit women and children. They are noted for their efforts to change the long-term dynamics of social and education problems by giving residents tools to improve their lives.

An equally well-known agency, UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), has a world cultural role that is very little known.

It has been successful in identifying, protecting, and preserving cultural and natural heritage through naming historical cities and towns as World Heritage sites. This also serves to contribute to tourism in the country.

Although the United Nations has accomplished much to help the people of the world in many areas of life, Prof. Bowen believes that we must ask the United Nations to deliver on its original charter language and ideas. For example, we can ask for better funding and training of the UN military so that member states are less dependent on their own forces in times of conflict. On a collective level, individuals can join the United Nations Association-USA ([www.unausa.org](http://www.unausa.org)) to educate themselves and advocate on vital UN issues. If the United Nations is to play a more powerful and significant role in the world, it needs the voice of many more citizens behind it. The League of Women Voters of Alameda hopes that its belief in the continued viability of the UN will be shared by many others. Join with us to educate yourself and others in this vital work toward world peace and human development.

*The League of Women Voters of the Bay Area Presents  
Bay Area League Day 2010*

## **“Big Steps, Little Steps to Addressing Climate Change”**

A program about reducing greenhouse gas emissions and confronting climate change, Saturday, January 30, 2010, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the MetroCenter, 101 Eighth Street, Oakland, California

Featuring keynote speaker Mary D. Nichols, Chair, California Air Resources Board

*With additional experts in the morning session addressing:*

- Regional Transportation Requirements of Senate Bill 375 (Steve Heminger, Executive Director, Metropolitan Transportation Commission)
- State Land Use and Smart Growth Policies (Julia Lave Johnston, Deputy Director for Planning Policy, Governor's Office of Planning and Research)
- Environmentalist Visions for the Bay Area in 2035 (Jeremy Madsen, Executive Director, Greenbelt Alliance)
- Regional Air Quality Requirements of Senate Bill 375 (Speaker from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District)
- State Housing Requirements of Senate Bill 375 (Cathy Creswell, Deputy Director of Housing Policy Development, California HCD)

*And an afternoon session showcasing success stories of confronting climate change around the region:*

- City of Berkeley (Tom Bates, Mayor)
- County of Sonoma (Rod Dole, Tax Auditor and Controller)
- City of San Jose (Laurel Prevetti, Planner, and Ashwini Kantak, Assistant to the City Manager)
- City of San Francisco (Calla Ostrander, Climate Change Coordinator)

### **3 Ways to Register**

1. Go to our website [www.lwvbayarea.org](http://www.lwvbayarea.org). Find the calendar page and click on the registration button. That will send you to the Monitor website where you can use PayPal.
2. Or go to the Monitor website, [www.bayareamonitor.org](http://www.bayareamonitor.org) and click on Bay Area League Day in the right hand column.
3. Or send a check, payable to LWVBA, for \$25 to LWVBA, 1611 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 300, Oakland, CA 94612

# Join or Renew your membership in the Alameda League Today!



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Other Names \_\_\_\_\_

(if a family membership)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

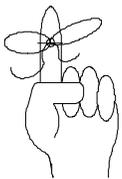
\$68 Single Membership  \$85 Family Membership  \$25 Student Membership Dues year is Jan 1 – Dec 31.  
Dues assistance is available for those on limited income – Contact us at 869-4969. Make Check payable to LWV Alameda and mail to: League of Women Voters of Alameda, P. O. Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501

## 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.



## Dates to Remember

**January 7<sup>th</sup>, 7:30pm, Alameda  
Point Initiative Pros and Cons**

**January 21<sup>st</sup>, 7:30pm, Board  
Meeting, Alameda Hospital**

**January 28<sup>th</sup>, 6:00pm Program  
Planning Meeting, home of Kate  
Quick**

**January 30<sup>th</sup>, Bay Area League  
Day, MetroCenter, Oakland**

**February 2<sup>nd</sup> – Special Election**

The League of Women Voters  
Of Alameda  
P. O. Box 1645  
Alameda, CA 94501

**Return Services Requested**

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U. S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
ALAMEDA, CA  
PERMIT NO. 112