

The League of Women Voters of Alameda

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



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VOTER

**Political Responsibility through Informed and Active
Participation**

LWVUS Convention Delegate Report

It was my pleasure to represent LWV Alameda at National Convention from June 12-15 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Over 600 delegates representing Leagues from across the USA attended, plus many visitors and non-delegate members.

As the first Plenary Session did not begin until 1 p.m. on Saturday, Nancy Van Huffel from the Eden Area League organized a morning tour of Atlanta for eight of us from the East Bay. We were fortunate to see the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center and grave site, as well as the Ebenezer Baptist church where he preached so eloquently. We also toured the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Center, the Cyclorama which is a depiction of the siege of Atlanta in Civil War times; saw the Margaret Mitchell ("Gone With the Wind") home, and drove through the exclusive mansion area where the CEO's of Coca-Cola, Home Depot, and CNN live. As a special treat, we stopped for lunch at a fabulous barbeque stand.

So much for the fun and games – then we got down to the serious work of Convention. There were caucuses and workshops from early morning until late at night. I went to the "Improved Medicare for All", "Sustaining Democracy and Citizen Participation in the Digital Age", "The Federal Role in Public Education", "How Can the LWVUS Become More Responsive to State and Local Leagues", and "Utilizing Online Tools to Connect With Your Community" workshops/caucuses. I tried to find someone to answer our Treasurer's questions about online tools for financial recordkeeping for local Leagues, but struck out. Sorry, Robby.

Most of the work of the Convention as a whole was done during the morning and afternoon plenary sessions. We passed the Health Care Resolution for single payer legislation; supported marriage equality; the National Popular Vote; changing the SARA Principle in Voting to SARAT: Security, Accuracy, Recountability, Accessibility and Transparency; and urging immediate response to the millions of gallons of oil fouling our gulf coast.

We also elected new officers, with Elisabeth MacNamara of Georgia our new President.

The details of the convention and the handouts from the many workshops will be posted on the LWVUS web site at www.lwv.org and I encourage you all to go to the site to get more details.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your delegate at national convention.

Kate Quick



CO-PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

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



June finally arrived as did the sunny weather. It has been a long and busy year for our able board members. In September, Marilyn Ng began the year's programming with a report from the City Treasurer, Kevin Kennedy, about the state of Alameda's financial health. Each month our Program Chair brought interesting speakers and events to the League and citizens of Alameda. In June, the Annual Meeting was a success, as we elected a new Board and new Officers.

Our Voter Service Chair, Joanne McKray, worked diligently on three elections, The Alameda Point Initiative, Measure B, the May Primaries and Measure E, the Alameda Parcel Tax ballot measure. Each event required preplanning with a cadre of members, helping to publicize and to keep the forums running smoothly. In addition, we enlisted the aid of Jeff Cambra in video filming these events and Karen Scanlon, our able and talented Voter Editor, in linking them to our website, www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org for those who could not attend the event.

Our Action Chair, Karen Butter, kept the Board apprised of issues before the council that were of interest to our League. Particularly compelling interests were those that gave the appearance of violating accountability and transparency. Just last week, for instance, the city council presented a hastily developed ordinance for campaign finance reform that our League members believed needed more time for review. The League spoke out at the Council meeting convincing three council members to vote to evaluate the proposed ordinance more thoroughly and to ask for input from their sunshine committee. Council member Marie Gilmore asked for League input as well.

Our April fundraising event, the MYPO was another successful and fun evening with good food, plenty of public officials to mingle with and lots of prizes including gourmet dinners. Audrey Lord-Hausman, Juelle Ann Boyer, Doris Gee and Dorothy Fullerton were just a few of the committee members who helped to "make it happen."

At the June Annual Meeting, the nominee for president, Anne Spanier was accepted by the members. In addition, Jeff Cambra's name was placed in nomination from the floor to be elected as a co-president and was approved by voice vote. We will have two co-presidents again this year. A very smart move, as the job itself is really an intense one for one person. With two people as we had this last year, it was a collaborative and educational experience. I look forward to working with Jeff. Kate Quick will continue to offer her strong leadership skills as Administrative Vice-President.

Cindy Silva became our Program VP, and we retained Robertamarie Kiley as Treasurer, Earleen Hamlin as Secretary, Joanne McKray as Voter Service Chair, Karen Butter as Action Chair and Dorothy Fullerton as Affidavit Program director. Elected Board members included two men, Ted Frey as Budget Chair, and Mike Robles-Wong as member-at-large. Another new board member Laurel Pantel joins Sally Faulhaber as an at-large member for the coming year. This year our League will not only have a male co-president, but at least two male Board members. Is this a first?

Our annual retreat to be held in late July will focus on goals for the coming year. Come with ideas and a willingness to participate in a new and exciting year.

Anne Spanier

Remembering Nikki Harris

Reprinted from the Oakland Voter

It is with great sadness we write that long time League leader Nikki Harris passed away on May 6, 2010. Some of you know that she had been fighting cancer valiantly over the last few years. In true Nikki fashion, with her mighty zest, passion, and energy, she was doing work for the League up to the day before she died.

Nikki loved the League and gave much of herself, working to further it as an organization and to further its aims. In return, the League sustained her as she and her husband, Craig Spitzer, moved from Los Angeles to the Bay Area to Philadelphia to Los Angeles to New Jersey to Buffalo and finally, to Oakland. Everywhere she lived Nikki was an active member of the League. She felt that helping the League do the good that it does was one of the best parts of her life.

Nikki served on the LWV Oakland board as the voter service chair and program chair; on the LWV Bay Area Board as the education fund vice president; and on the steering committee for Smart Voter. She was an energetic and enthusiastic MTA (Management Training Advisor) for three other Leagues, providing them skillful assistance in both the minutia of League governance and energetically cheerleading as they strove to maintain strong Leagues. She had served on the LWV California board as development director and voter service director. Her tireless energy for membership development, voter service and a good financial base for the League set an example.

Given Nikki's devotion to the League, and especially in recent years to training and coaching Leagues, her husband has endowed a fund with the League of Women Voters of the United States that will be called the Nikki Harris Online Training Series Fund. This fund, which will further Nikki's work in developing local League leadership, honors Nikki's life and her efforts to help build the future of the League.

To contribute, please make a gift to the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF), and put "Nikki Harris Online Training Series" on the notation line. Send any gifts to the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) office at 1730 M Street NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20036.

CITY CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

The Alameda City Council was about to vote on a little publicized or reviewed Campaign Finance Reform Ordinance at its June 1st meeting when Alameda League Co-President Kate Quick and others voiced concern that it needed more review and public input. At our Annual Meeting, our Action Committee was asked to write to the Council regarding our concerns, and Action V.P. Karen Butter drafted the following letter.

"Mayor Johnson, Vice Mayor deHaan and member of the City Council:

In 1973 the League of Women Voters of California adopted a position on campaign finance reform and we have been strong advocates since then. We were pleased that the Alameda City Council considered the issue for local campaigns at its June 1st meeting.

A quick review of the ordinance by League members identified a number of problems and questions. I've attached a copy of a revised document with our concerns highlighted. The League urges the council to extend the review period beyond June 15th to make sure the new ordinance addresses our concerns and those of the community. The review period established by the council is too short and the fact that council members spent 30 + 45 minutes at the June 1st meeting trying to understand the measure and its implications indicates to us that the ordinance needs a more thorough review. We would urge the council to form a small working group to revise the ordinance with a short timeline for presentation back to the Council. The newly appointed Sunshine Committee is a body that is well qualified to review the ordinance as well.

We thank the council for promoting transparency in government and urge its consideration of this additional step in open government."

To read the complete text of the Ordinance and League comments, visit the Current Issues page on our Web site at <http://alameda.ca.lwvnet.org/Actions.html>

MYPO FUNDRAISER A SUCCESS

Thanks to everyone who contributed, invited guests, obtained prizes, prepared food, and helped in numerous ways to make the April fundraising event a success. And most importantly, for attending and joining in on the conversations and welcoming potential new members whom we are certainly going to cultivate.

The event raised \$1,900 which will be put to work on the numerous educational efforts during this election year.

The committee especially wants to thank Doris Gee and Dorothy Fullerton for their hard work in creating an exciting and varied raffle! The gifts included so many wonderful items from winery tastings and tours, tickets to Rhythmix Cultural Works, gift certificates, Oakland A's tickets, cruise on USS Potomac, and much much more.

And the Live Auction with our own Wine Man, Jeff Cambra, was a highlight and the winners are enjoying some special experiences:

- Tucker's: Make Your Own Ice Cream Cake and Eat it Too - with friends.
- Five-Course Homemade French Dinner delivered to your door by Natalie Dolgireff
- A-Z Dining around Town, beginning at Asena and concluding at Zeytini, guided by Jeff Cambra.

The true MYPO success goes to those local businesses that supported us this year. We want to give special thanks to them and ask that you express your thanks and appreciation by telling them personally, shopping at their place of business, and telling others:

- Angel Fish Restaurant
- Asena Restaurant
- Books Inc
- Daisy's
- Dashe Cellars.
- Gold Coast Grill
- High Street Station
- Irish Monkey Cellars

- Jazzercise
- Julie's Coffee & Tea
- Nob Hill Grocers
- Pappo's
- Rhythmix Cultural Works
- Rock Wall Winery
- Sahadi Jewelers (Oakland)
- Tucker's Ice Cream
- Zeytini Restaurant
- USS Potomac

Special thanks to the individuals who personally contributed to the raffle:

Shubha Fanse
Jean Fong
Dorothy Fullerton
Doris Gee
Barbara Kahn
Alice Lai-Bitker
Audrey Lord-Hausman
Joanne McKray
Honora Murphy
Marilyn Ng
Kate Quick
Liz Rogers
Pat Sahadi
Chuck Scanlon
Karen Scanlon
Beth Sibley
Anne Spanier
Chef John Vidano
Li Volin
Robyn Young, M.D.

We especially want to say thank you to the behind the scenes folks who staffed the registration tables, tended bar, made punch, helped with set-up and clean-up, made sure that the food tables were always full and inviting to our guests.

We tip our hats with warm thanks to everyone involved!

MYPO Committee

Audrey Lord-Hausman
Liz Rogers
Li Volin

Voter Service Committee Gets Brief Summer Respite

Our spring election duties are done, your Measure E ballots are doubtless in the mail, and it's time to say thank you to the many people who helped with voter service activities.

A major basic undertaking before each election is presenting the pros and cons on the issues facing voters. Proposition presenters at our primary forum and for various organizations included Karen Butter, Sally Faulhaber, Dorothy Fullerton, Janet Gibson for Gretchen Lipow, Kate Quick, Elisabeth Shlifer, and Anne Spanier. Assisting at forums were Sally Faulhaber, Earleen Hamlin, Linda Hudson, Alice Hui, Honora Murphy, Liz Rogers, Karen Scanlon, Jon Spangler, and Felice Zensius. Miriam Schiffman did her usual fine job of creating posters to help secure forum audiences.

A second basic activity is distributing materials, thousands of them, explaining election issues. Some come from the state, others on local matters are created by our own members, this time by Karen Butter and Dorothy Fullerton on Measure E. Sorters and distributors of material to over thirty sites included Sally Faulhaber, Doris Gee, Connie Hanna, Betty Hatch, Robby Kiley, Honora Murphy, Dianne Lichtenstein, Lois Prior, and Li Volin.

Several individuals took on major jobs. Jon Spangler handled publicity, JuelleAnn Boyer the Alameda County Board of Supervisors candidates' forum invitations and appearance. Jeff Cambra once again oversaw forum recording for later broadcast and created videos, this time of candidates' positions and League recommendations on Props 15 and 16 and Measure E, for our website and blogs. The Voter Service Committee, consisting of JuelleAnn Boyer, Jeff Cambra, and Dorothy Fullerton with co-presidents Kate Quick and Anne Spanier as ex officio members, was involved in planning and execution.

Many thanks to all of you. Rest up; November is coming!

Joanne McKray
Voter Service Chair

Annual Board Retreat

On Saturday morning at 9:30 on July 24th we will hold a board retreat for new members and to say goodbye to last year's members. We will review the goals of the Alameda League and discuss how best to be of service to our community. We will be faced with many statewide propositions on the ballot and will also face local and statewide elections. We need to look at activities and decide who can help in the area of Voter Service and Candidate forums. We will also be involved in a city mayoral race as well as council races. Hopefully Measure E will have passed and our city will not be in turmoil. We need a new membership chair to keep our membership growing and good ideas are always needed.

Please save the date. We will follow up with an e-mail when a location is finalized. Also keep an eye on our Web Site Calendar page where the location will also be posted.

Anne

LIKE TO READ?

Want to start a book club with other Leaguers? There are plenty of good books with political intrigue that make interesting reading. Wouldn't it be enjoyable to discuss them?

How about books like "Broken Government" by James Dean or "The Nine" by Jefferey Toobin? There are some wonderful new books on the decline of our "free press" with the closing of newspapers all over the country. Call 522-3426 if this sounds like a fun and stimulating activity.

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.

Want to help the Alameda League Grow?

Join our membership committee and put your good ideas to work. We are especially looking for someone to manage a few simple tasks throughout the year to keep the members welcomed and engaged. Please call (510-522-3426) or e-mail anneleague@comcast.net

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NONPROFIT ORG.
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ALAMEDA, CA
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Return Services Requested

SAVE THE DATE JULY 24TH



Annual Board Retreat – 9:30am
Brunch will be served.
Location to be announced-watch your e-mail.