

## The League of Women Voters of Alameda

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The VOTER is published nine 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 reached a consensus.



# VOTER

Political Responsibility through Informed and Active  
Participation

Volume 45, No. 4, May 2012

## County Supervisor Wilma Chan: The State of the County

On Thursday, May 24, 7 p.m., the League welcomes members and Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan to Cardinal Point, 2134 Mariner Square Drive, Alameda. Supervisor Chan will share information about the "State of the County," focusing on the fiscal and policy challenges facing Alameda County in the near future.

This forum is another in the Alameda League's "State of the . . ." series designed to help Alameda's citizens become informed and active participant in government. Watch for the State of the State coming soon.



Supervisor Wilma Chan discusses with one-year-old Leiloa Lyons what the impact of state budget cuts to daycare centers will have on Leiloa's family.

## BOARD SETS CALL DATE FOR ANNUAL MEETING

Our bylaws require the Board to set a date at least 30 days before our Annual Meeting that is the cutoff date for membership that qualifies members to vote at Annual Meeting. At its April 19 meeting that date was set for May 4. This means that anyone who becomes a member before May 4 will be eligible to vote at Annual Meeting on June 9.



## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Jeff Cambra

President, League of Women Voters of Alameda

### **THE LEAGUE YEAR IN REVIEW!**

I was reminded that the May VOTER is the last issue of the League year (July 1<sup>st</sup> –June 30th). Since this is the final VOTER of my current term as president, I wanted to reflect back on the League year. At the beginning of my term, I committed to making our League more visible in the community.

Thanks to a supportive (and tolerant) board, our first visibility events (two Friday Night Flights events and a Mojito Monday at Angela's Bistro) not only brought out League members in force, but the events also generated over \$800 in donations. With Angela's located at the corner of Oak and Central, these events provided the perfect opportunity to display our five foot by six foot League banner at one of the busiest intersections in the City. Other visibility activities included attending the Alameda Chamber of Commerce mixers, staffing a table at the Intercultural Committee festival in February and another table staffing opportunity at the Earth Day Celebration in April.

League programs took center stage in the visibility campaign with the newly conceived "State of the . . ." speakers series. These programs provided public agencies with the opportunity to report out on the agency's accomplishments and describe the challenges they are facing. Special thanks to Jordan Battani (State of the City of Alameda Health Care District), Margie Sherratt (State of the Alameda Unified School District), and Marie Gilmore (State of the City) for taking the time to prepare and present their updates to the community. Later this month, Alameda County Supervisor Wilma Chan will deliver the State of the County address. See program details on the front cover.

Before closing, I want to extend a special thank you to the Alameda Sun. Eric, Dennis, Carrie, and the entire staff were instrumental in advancing our visibility campaign by publishing our articles and photos. Many people have mentioned that they saw our League articles in the SUN.

To all the members of the League of Women Voters of Alameda, thank you for your support and continued commitment to the principles and objectives that guide us.

*Jeff*

### **BOARD BRIEFS – APRIL 2012**

- A small group is forming to study and implement a Sunshine Ordinance for Alameda Unified School District.
- Anne Spanier and Ruth Dixon visited seven Alameda High schools and registered over 200 17- and 18-year-old first time voters. The students were left with information including Smart Voter bookmarks. They will return in the fall when another group turns 17 and 18.



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
RECOMMENDS...**

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 **YES ON [Proposition 28, the Legislative Term Limits Reform Act](#)**

 **YES ON [Peralta Community College District Measure B](#)**

 **YES ON [Alameda City Measure C](#)**

### **Outreach to Alameda High School Youth Vote**

Encinal High School and Alameda High School and ALCL (Alameda Community Learning Center) were the scenes of the final Alameda League's project to register all 17-year-old students who would become 18 this year in time for either the June Primary or the November national election. More than 150 young first-time voters were registered at these three schools.

The students learned about the Registrar of Voters' website and how to register online, how to change registration and a number of other registration issues that will affect them. In addition, the students were shown how to access the SMARTVOTER.org website to find their polling places and to learn about the ballot measures and candidates that will appear on their ballots. Using the computer labs was especially helpful. Earlier in the year we registered almost 100 students at Island High School, ASTI and St. Joseph Notre Dame High School.

### **SUNSHINE ORDINANCE FOR AUSD?**

Members of the League board met with representatives from Alameda Unified School District in March to discuss the development of a Sunshine Ordinance for the School District. Last year, the City of Alameda adopted a Sunshine Ordinance. AUSD is a separate governing body, and the City's ordinance did not apply to it.

Superintendent Kirsten Vital, AUSD Board President Margie Sherratt and General Counsel Danielle Houck provided copies of governing documents as background material. The district is interested in hearing League recommendations. Over the summer the League will form a small committee to review district documents and identify best practices from other districts in order to make recommendations to the district. Members interested in working on the committee should contact Action Chair Karen Butter.

# INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM UPDATE STUDY

As of March 2012, the number of initiatives targeted for the November 2012 ballot is huge: four have qualified, 67 have been cleared for circulation, and five are pending at the Attorney General's office. On average, 21 percent of proposed measures actually make it to the ballot, predicting 20 measures will be decided in November. Had enough? During the May 2011 LWVC Convention, delegates adopted an update of LWVC's study of California's initiative and referendum process. The study committee is working to develop the material that all local Leagues in California will use to come to consensus at meetings later this year or early 2013—after the 2012 presidential election. The Committee is examining history, process (including the practices of other states), and key concerns, sifting through dozens of ideas to reform California's process. They are seeking to identify the deeper policy-based issues that will help shape the League's position on California's Initiative and Referendum process in the future. The reform ideas being examined cover a wide range of possibilities, from throwing out the whole process as suggested by Peter Schrag in *Paradise Lost* to an embrace of the growing trend of direct democracy. Here are some of the more popular themes: Level the Imbalance of Money Interests--Increase Transparency--Engage Citizens--Think Slowly; Work Together--Technology Impacts. For more information, go to the LWVC Initiative and Referendum study Web page.

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ALAMEDA ENDORSES MEASURE C

The League of Women Voters of Alameda Supports: MEASURE C: City of Alameda Public Safety and 911 Emergency Response Measure The declining economy nationwide has affected the ability of cities to maintain essential services. The City of Alameda has reduced expenditures this year and expects additional cuts next year. Cuts alone will not provide the level of service expected by Alamedans and new revenue sources are limited. The City Council placed Measure C on the ballot to fund capital equipment, facilities and the Emergency Operations Center.

The City of Alameda is asking voters to approve a ½ cent sales tax increase for 30 years. The sales tax in Alameda City is 8.75% in line with all communities in the County except for San Leandro (9.00%) and Union City (9.25%). If the Measure is approved Alameda shoppers will pay 9.25% tax on purchases except for food, rent or services, such as medical or dental care. The increase will be effective on October 1, 2012.

Revenue from the sales tax increase will remain in the city and is designated specifically for capital projects except for the salary of an Emergency Coordinator. The ballot measure identifies the following items to be paid for from the Measure C funds: maintaining neighborhood crime patrols, fire protection and 911 emergency response; improve earthquake preparedness, replace an unsafe fire station, establish an Emergency Operations Center, a joint police/fire training facility; replace outdated police/fire equipment and vehicles and other capital equipment and facilities. Measure C requires an annual audit and expenditure reports.

The League endorses Measure C to maintain essential City services. The Measure allocates funds to capital projects and provides transparency and accountability in expenditures. While the League opposes regressive taxes food and services are exempt from sales tax in California reducing the burden of the new tax on low-income residents. The board also notes that the City is required by law to spend special tax monies only for the purposes specified in the ballot measure and outlined in an Ordinance to be adopted by the City Council if Voters approve the Measure.

The City has taken steps to reduce expenditures in line with current revenues and expects continued reductions in departmental budgets. Additionally, the City is developing partnerships with community groups to fund other services and is working with developers on projects that will bring in new revenue in the future.

## Book Club

The Book club met on Monday April 30 and discussed “The Defining Moment,” the first 100 days of the Presidency of FDR. The next book meeting will be on Monday afternoon May 21, 2012 @3:30 pm at Applebees in the conference room. We will be discussing “The Tipping Point” by Malcom Gladwell.

Looking ahead, we will discuss “Galileo’s Daughter” by Dave Sobel on June 18<sup>th</sup> and ”Team of Rivals” by Doris Kearns Goodwin on August 20<sup>th</sup>. We do not meet in July. For further information call 522-3426

## LWVA ANNUAL MEETING ON JUNE 9 – PLEASE BE SURE TO SAVE THE DATE

**On June 9<sup>th</sup>**, the LWV Alameda will be holding its Annual Meeting at Asena Restaurant on Santa Clara Avenue at 11:30 a.m. Members will be receiving their Annual Meeting Kits in the mail in early May. **This is our most important meeting of the year.** It is when we adopt our recommended budget, elect our new officers, and adopt our program for the coming year. The membership also decides whether to undertake new studies, participate in State or National League studies and reviews and readopts its existing positions.

When you get your kit, review it and bring it to the meeting. It sets the ground rules for the meeting, contains the names of the nominees for officers and elected board members, the report of the budget committee and other committees, and the budget proposal. It also has a tear off sheet for your reservation for the lunch. Lunch at Asena is always a special treat. Councilmember Doug deHaan will be the featured speaker and reflect back on the changes he has seen over the last eight years of service to the community.

**Join or renew your membership to the Alameda League today!**

## Privatization Consensus Meeting

The consensus meeting was held on Monday evening April 23 at the Alameda Hospital. Two new league members joined nine others to participate in formulating consensus on matters pertaining to the privatization of public assets. A spirited discussion took place on the pros and cons of the topic. The National LWV will compile and address the information at the National Convention in June 2012.

Once this position statement is finalized, Leagues all over the country can attend city hall meetings and speak out on behalf of best practices that include accountability, transparency and solid financial practices around the privatizing of such things as parks, libraries and animal shelters.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

(if a family membership)

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

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

\$70 Single Membership  \$97 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. Membership dues are tax deductible. Tax ID #94-2650856

**Consider a Donation to the League**

Please consider adding \$5 or more to your renewal check, or at any time to LWV Alameda, P. O. Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501. Voter Service is especially in need of funds to provide factual information to voters in this general election year. All donations are tax deductible. Tax ID #94-2650856

**Turn your Trash into Cash for the League**

Lynn and Jim Groh collect aluminum cans, sell them and give the proceeds to our League. Drop your aluminum cans on their front porch at 1546 East Shore Drive, Alameda, and help the League educate voters.



**Save the Date**

- 5/17/12 – Board Meeting – Alameda Hospital
- 5/19-20/12 LWVC Leadership Council – Sacramento
- 5/24/12 – State of the County – p.1
- 6/8-12/12 – LWVUS Convention – Washington D.C.
- 6/9/12 - Annual Meeting – p.5

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