



V O T E R

REMINDER

LUNCHEON FORUM ON FEDERAL ROLE IN EDUCATION – OCT. 21

The media has been filled with stories about state waivers and new requirements for No Child Left Behind, school district cutbacks and test results.

The Forum on Oct. 21 is timely and will give attendees a better idea of what the Federal Role in Education is and what it should be.

It will also assist members of the League Education Committee to come to consensus on a study developed by the National League as a basis for a new position.

We have three expert panelists: Jo Loss, Castro Valley School District Board members and former State PTA President; Dr. Dennis Byas, Superintendent, San Lorenzo School District and Fernando Yanez, the new principal of Hayward's Longwood Elementary School which made significant improvement in its recent test results.

It will be held at the San Lorenzo Village Homes Association Community Hall, 377 Paseo Grande.

The cost of the lunch is \$10 by the Oct. 18 deadline, or \$15 at the door. The forum is free for those who just want to attend the program without lunch.

To RSVP or for more information, contact Suzanne at 538-9678 or email suzbarba@comcast.net.

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE IN CALIFORNIA

LWVEA participated in a Celebration of Women's Right to Vote in California sponsored by the San Leandro Library and put together by Librarian Mary Lee Barr.

In true League fashion, there was a pro and con debate by famous local and national figures of that time acted by members of the San Leandro Players Theater Company. Sojourner Truth gave a taste of her "Ain't I a Woman" speech, and Susan B. Anthony was cheered when she uttered her famous quote about the women's rights campaign—"Failure is Impossible."

Attendees were inspired by the film, "One Woman, One Vote" which reminded everyone of how many and how mightily women sacrificed for the right to vote.

The women leaders and some men supporters of the time were amazing. They wrote and gave speeches throughout the country, they experienced hardships and gave up their personal lives to convince the general public that it was time that women had the same rights as men—the same rights guaranteed them by the Constitution.

They organized, they marched, they went to jail, and they went on hunger strikes in jail and were terribly mistreated. They gave their all, as true heroines, so that you and I can vote and understand what we are voting for. Remember them on election day and VOTE proudly.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hello Leaguers. October is here - the month usually noted for scary frights and Oktoberfest, but I hope you'll help me thank and honor two women this month for their contributions to the Eden Area communities. On Tuesday, October 4th the Eden Area League will be honoring, under the white tent at St. Rose Hospital, two wonderful women: Evelyn Cormier and Nancy Van Huffel. Evelyn is receiving the Volunteer of the Year award from the City of Hayward, and Nancy has been chosen to be our league "Pearl" of the year. Thank you ladies for all you have and will do. If you would like to attend, send a check for \$40 to: Mayor's Office 777 B St., Hayward, CA 94541. Make check out to Volunteer Dinner. Deadline is Friday, September 30th.

October is also the month where, throughout the State, we honor the many women who fought hard to guarantee a women's right to vote! The California Centennial 2011 website states: "In 1911 California became only the 6th state in the United States where women could vote -- nine years before passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution. 100 years ago, California women, and supportive men, created an innovative and strategic campaign to win the right to vote. Despite strong opposition, the struggle for women's political equality was waged, without violence, by supporters from all walks of life. When the final votes were counted, Women's Suffrage had narrowly passed. The margin of victory was only 3,587 votes -- an average of one vote in each voting precinct in the state!" If you'd like to participate in the State-wide celebration on Monday, October 20th in Sacramento, visit <http://ca2011centennial.com/> for more information about the events and programs.

Today, the Eden Area League wants to encourage future voters, youth ages 18 – 29 years of age who need the information and knowledge to be well-informed voters in the 21st century. Look for more information in upcoming VOTER editions about events. If you'd like to get involved please contact Nancy Van Huffel at lwvea@aol.com.

As the LWVC website says: The League is still active and relevant, from national health care reform to climate change -- from California

redistricting reform to the California budget and state and local finances -- from local voter's guides and forums on community "hot topics" to leadership development. The League is as active and relevant on today's issues as it was in 1920." I couldn't agree more!

Linda Slater, President

BOARD BRIEFS – Sept. 21, 2011

- **Brochure** – Approved using labels on LWVUS recruitment brochures until they run out and then developing our own with local information.
- **Education Forum/Study** – Checklist of tasks to be done reviewed and volunteers requested. Forum is Oct. 21, Consensus Meeting, Friday, Nov. 4. 1 to 4:30 p.m.
- **Boards & Commissions Position** – Committee established to review position and come up with a plan to implement its provisions. Nancy VanHuffel, chair; Eleanor Parker, Jewell Spalding, and Gail Steele.
- **Mental Health Position** – Committee needs more members to review position and make any changes necessary.
- **Gifts for Speakers** – Board will review suggestions for items to give to forum speakers. In the meantime, Linda Slater will purchase a book for each forum panelist.
- **Membership** – We still have approximately 20 people who have not renewed as of this date. The list was divided among board members and calls will be made.
- **Dues** – Board discussed ways to prorate dues for new members who join six or less months before renewal date.
- **Alameda County Council** – Our league approved a letter from ACC to Measure A administration to keep the League's two seats on the committee which it has had since 2005.

Board meetings are open to the public and are usually held on the third Wednesday of the month at 5:45 p.m. at the Eden Area Multi-Service Center in Hayward.

MEMBER SHIP

We hope you have boarded our 2011-2012 Member Ship and are ready to cruise into another year knowing your dues payment keeps the wind in our sails. Your dues help the League navigate the turbulent waters of educating the public on issues of importance—healthcare, education, climate change, transportation, voting rights, campaign finance reform, etc.

Because we welcome new members and value those who have renewed, we would like to highlight those who have shown their support of the League:

Welcome to new members:

**John Gray
Marie Martel
Sharon Morrison**

Thank you to those who have **renewed** to date. If your name is not on this list, and should be, please let us know. If your name is not on the list because you haven't sent in your renewal yet, please send it in today. Your friends on the list below miss you!

JoAnn Ainsworth, Leila Andresen, Patricia Ball, Suzanne Barba, Liz Bathgate, Ursula Batz, Linda Bennett, Rene Besold, Annamae Bookbinder, Evelyn Brownell, Dorothy Buckley, Barbara Byas, Dennis Byas, Helene Carr, Stephanie Cartwright, Malca Chall, Jack Conner, Evelyn Cormier, Delmo Della-Dora, Marianne Dimick, Isobel, Dvorsky, Gloria Edick, Janice Friesen, Evelyn Gertler, Hal Gin, Crystal Graff, Barbara Halliday, Marian Handa, Diana Hanna, Patricia Hoke, Howard Hornig, Minane Jameson, Kathleen Kennedy-Sanchez, Susan Kleebauer, Lillian Kline, Ruth Kuftin, Sara Lamnin, Laython Landis, Miriam Lens, Audrey LePell, Alison Lewis, Sherman Lewis,

Jo Loss, Gail Lundholm, Susan Mahaney, Doris Marciel, Susan Merrill, Mary Mikkelson, Al Murdach, Jo Murdach, Rosemary Obeid, Jennifer Ong, Maria Palmeri, Ron Palmeri, Eleanor Parker, Dorothy Partridge, Deslar Patten, Kenneth Pon, Michael Pretto, Nancy Pretto, Julie Quayle, William Quirk, Verena Rau, Kathleen Ready, Angelina Reyes, Doris Rodriquez, Connie Rusk, Linda Sandsmark, Tony Santos, Alice Sarafian, Nancy Schluntz, Marge Schwab, Douglas Siden, Linda Slater, Jewell Spalding, Cossette Sun, Bob Swanson, Sylvia Tedesco, Nancy VanHuffel, Dennis Waespi, Annette Walker, Joan Webber Jean West, Shelia Young and Francisco Zermeno.

The League would also like to thank those members who sent an additional contribution with their membership:

**Dr. Dennis and Barbara Byas
Stephanie Cartwright
Malca Chall
Crystal Graff
Marian Handa
Alison and Sherman Lewis
Maria and Ron Palmeri
Eleanor Parker
Tony Santos**

Corrections to Pat Baker Memorial

Our roving reporter Eleanor Parker is the first to admit that she (with poor hearing) is the least qualified to take notes at memorial services, hence she sends these corrections to last month's article on Pat Baker:

- Unitarian Church, not Unity
- David is first born, not Elaine
- Taught at Roosevelt Jr. High School
- Taught freshman English, not French
- Secretary/Office Manager for many years, not 25 years.

INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM STUDY

At the LWVC Convention in June, the delegates voted to update a study of the Initiative and Referendum Process in California. Members of the committee were recruited from around the state and are working on developing the scope of the study, timeline, budget, study materials and consensus questions. They will send this to local Leagues soon.

In the meantime, a local League found a column by noted journalist Peter Schrag on the topic. His article is reprinted below to “educate” Leaguers on the importance of this study.

A Century of Initiatives: Anybody Want to Celebrate?

19 September 2011

By Peter Schrag

There was a lot of hollering these past weeks about the way that SB202 was passed in the closing hours of the 2011 legislative session -- and for good reason. But the bill, which would restrict voting on initiatives and referenda to the state's biennial general elections, was long overdue.

SB202, by Sen. Loni Hancock of Berkeley, is one of a series of changes proposed this year to an opaque and fatally commercialized initiative process that badly needs reform. SB202 was passed by the legislature's Democratic majority in an 11th-hour “gut and amend” process without hearings or any other proper deliberation. The means, described by one frothing editorial writer as an “end-of session rush job,” were dubious, or worse.

SB202 is no big deal, and it's hardly a perfect reform. It could increase the leverage of referenda, measures designed to overturn laws passed by the legislature, since any that gets another

signatures to qualify for the ballot automatically suspends a law until the next election. If Amazon had qualified its referendum against the state's internet sales tax law – now suspended – it could have suspended collection of the tax at least until November 2012. And it could confront voters in general elections with still more issues.

But the end is still very much worthwhile. By eliminating initiatives from primary ballots, when turnouts are always low and partisan fringes tend to dominate, votes on voter-initiated ballot measures will reflect a wider spectrum of the electorate and be a little less prone to manipulation by moneyed interests. For the better part of 60 years, initiatives were always confined to general elections, as the constitution provides.

What generated particular heat over SB202 was the legislature's deferral until November 2014 of voter balloting on ACA 4, the complex proposed constitutional amendment writing yet more spending restrictions and formulas into law.

Promising to create yet another “rainy day fund,” it severely caps spending and exacerbates the fatal long-term downward ratcheting of funding for nearly all essential state programs. The charge was that in the dead of night, the legislature's Democrats, at the behest of their public employee union-friends were hoping to kill ACA 4 altogether. That may in part be correct, but it's good policy as well. If ACA 4, which was part of last year's budget agreement, is passed by voters it will strangle vital services even more and further restrict the legislature's ability to respond to the state's needs.

Again and again in our distrust, we reduce the legislature's ability to function.

.....continued next page

Again and again, we complain about gridlock and the legislature's inability to do the people's business, increasing the distrust and bringing yet another round of restrictions.

Californians wrote what's sometimes called I and R, the initiative, referendum and recall, into the state's constitution on October 10, 1911. Even then there were warnings that the high hopes of its Progressive sponsors were excessive, if not downright illusory. "The money changers —the legions of Mammon and of Satan," C.K. McClatchy, the editor of the Sacramento Bee, wrote at the time, "these have been lashed out of the temple of the people."

But as the New York Times predicted a few days after the 1911 vote, the same deep-pockets interest groups that would be "lashed out of the temple of the people" – in 1911, it was the Southern Pacific Railroad in particular – would soon learn to use the new system more effectively than "the people" who were supposed to be its chief beneficiaries.

There's no certainty whether Gov. Jerry Brown will sign the Hancock bill. He's already vetoed one small reform, a bill by Sen. Mark DeSaulnier that would have required paid initiative petition signature collectors to wear badges identifying themselves as such. Brown warned that it might be the beginning of a slippery slope to restrictions on all paid political operatives. It might also have been ruled unconstitutional by the courts.

At least one other promising change in the initiative process, SB 334, also by DeSaulnier, is also before the governor. It would require the Secretary of State to add a list of the five highest contributors of \$50,000 or more supporting each ballot measure to the ballot pamphlet as of 110 days before the election. A similar bill was vetoed by Gov. Arnold

Schwarzenegger last year. Like many other reforms in the state's convoluted and often dysfunctional governmental process, this one, too, could have some unintended consequences, causing backers of initiatives to defer funding reports until after the 110-day deadline.

And by not listing major contributors to the campaigns against a measure – probably a logical impossibility given time constraints -- it could work to the disadvantage of initiative sponsors. SB 334 could also add yet more inducements for the creation of dummy committees and other devices to hide the real identity of contributors.

Nonetheless SB 334 would provide some additional information on who paid how much to put a measure on the ballot, especially for voters who don't have access to the Internet and the state's public electronic files of campaign contributors.

Half the states in the nation, among them some of best governed, function quite nicely without an initiatives process. And all those that have the initiative allow some sun-setting of statutory measures or legislative amendment after a specified number of years. Only California locks all voter-enacted measures into concrete. And the more we use the process, the more dysfunctional government seems to get. Anybody with the urge to celebrate next month's centennial of California's I and R might think about that as well.

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*Peter Schrag, whose exclusive weekly column appears every Monday in the California Progress Report, is the former editorial page editor and columnist of the Sacramento Bee. He is the author of Paradise Lost: California's Experience, America's Future and California: America's High Stakes Experiment.*



## CALIFORNIA CLEAN MONEY CAMPAIGN

AB 1148, authored by assemblymember Julia Brownley (Santa Monica) and sponsored by the

California Clean Money Campaign, will fight back against the unlimited, anonymous corporate and other special interest spending unleashed by the Supreme Court's terrible *Citizen's United* decision. AB 1148 will pierce the veil that hides who pays for political ads in California. That's why DISCLOSE stands for:

***Democracy Is Strengthened by Casting Light On Spending in Elections.***

The key feature of the *California DISCLOSE Act* is that it will require the top funder of television and radio ads (e.g. the CEO of an organization or a millionaire) to appear and say that they approve of the message. For instance, instead of saying in small print "*Paid for by Stop Hidden Taxes - No on 25/Yes on 26, a coalition of taxpayers and employers...*", Yes on 26 ads last November would have said:

***"I am John Watson, CEO of Chevron, located in California. Chevron helped pay for this message and approves it."***

By forcing top funders of political TV and radio advertising to stand by their ads like federal candidates have to, voters will know which special interests are behind multi-million dollar ad campaigns. Then **voters can decide for themselves** whether they trust the source.

## THE FATE OF ORGANIC WASTE IN ALAMEDA COUNTY

LWV Bay Area 9-21-11

**StopWaste.Org**, the agency responsible for waste management and recycling in Alameda County, will join local wastewater agencies to hold a workshop about the fate of the more than half a million tons a year of organic waste that the county produces. Possible solutions for future handling of this waste include converting it into vehicle fuel, using it to help grow food locally, land-filling it, or burning it.

In addition to opportunities for public input, the workshop will include a presentation from guest speaker **Dr. Lawrence Baker of the University of Minnesota**, a noted expert in the field of urban metabolism.

The workshop will be held on Thursday, October 6 from 4 to 8 p.m. in the San Leandro Public Library at 300 Estudillo Avenue. RSVP to (510) 891-6512.

## CELEBRATING REAL LIFE HEROES—TEACHERS

The Alameda County Office of Education will be honoring 18 school district teachers on **Thursday, October 6 from 6 to 9 p.m.** at the Arts Education Center at San Leandro High School, 2200 Bancroft Ave., San Leandro.

These teachers have won 2011 Teacher of the Year Awards and represent High School, Junior High Schools, Elementary Schools and the Regional Occupational Program.

For further information, contact Jan Passama at 670-4145 or email: [claudiam@acoe.org](mailto:claudiam@acoe.org)

## Privatization Study Discussion List Now Available

The Privatization Study list is now available for members to hold discussions on this topic. [Sign up for the list here.](#) Papers written by the Study Committee will be posted on the website in the coming weeks.

As a reminder, the scope of this study is “to identify those parameters and policy issues to be considered in connection with proposals to transfer federal, state or local government services, assets and/or functions to the private sector.

It will review the stated goals and the community impact of such transfers, and identify strategies to ensure transparency, accountability, and preservation of the common good.”

Consider what is happening in your local community or state with regard to transferring some government services to the private sector. Are you aware of the policy issues associated with such a transfer?

The study papers will offer some guidelines for best practices that should be considered in these efforts, whether they affect your public libraries, your public schools or your state’s highway system.

## LWVC - What We Know and Don’t Know About the June 2012 Ballot Initiatives:

After the legislature finished its work, there was still uncertainty about which initiatives will appear on the ballot in June 2012. SB 202 requires that all initiatives be put before voters in November elections and moves legislative-approved ballot measures on spending restrictions from the June 2012 ballot to November 2014.

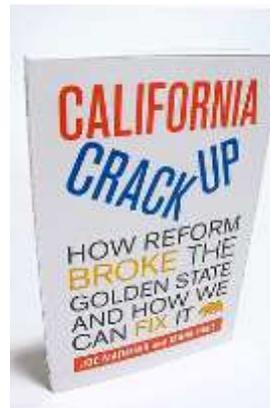
Therefore, LWVC Voter Service won’t know what might be on the June ballot

for our Pros and Cons until the governor takes action on SB 202 sometime between now and October 9.

## Redistricting and Decline to Sign

The LWVC is opposed to the referenda and lawsuits filed on redistricting—both on State Senate maps and the Congressional maps. To see documents related to this suit, and any others filed, see the California Supreme Court [Web page](#) on redistricting litigation.

In addition, LWVC opposes the “Amazon” referendum to overturn the new law requiring that sales tax be collected from online purchases. At the time of writing, it seems that all three referendum campaigns are fading, if not entirely dead. However, we encourage local Leagues to be aware of the LWVC [flier](#), [letter to the editor](#), and [e-mail template](#) in case the campaigns re-emerge.



## CALIFORNIA CRACKUP—Is California Beyond Repair?

The LWV Fremont-Union City-Newark group recently held an educational forum featuring Mark Paul co-author of

*California Crack Up* focusing on our state’s current political and economic problems and innovative solutions.

Leaguer’s who attended recommend the book to everyone who is interested in learning if there is a solution or “fix” to California’s incessant budget crises plus a government seemingly paralyzed by partisan gridlock.

The title is: *California Crackup: How Reform Broke the Golden State and How It Can Be Repaired.* by Mark Paul and Joe Mathews.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF LWVUS ACTIONS IN SEPTEMBER

The following are brief summaries of letters written by the LWVUS on a variety of important issues. Part of your local dues goes to LWVUS to support the important work they do on our behalf to make our country and communities healthier, safer and public policy more equitable. To read the letters and for more information go to

<http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Letters to Congress and The President&Template>

**League Urges Lobby Disclosure for Members of Deficit Reduction Committee (Sept. 22)** The League and coalition partners sent a letter to members of the Committee on Deficit Reduction urging them to immediately take steps to voluntarily disclose the efforts of outside interests to lobby them on matters related to the business of the committee.

**League Expresses Concern with Delay of Pollution Regulation (Sept. 20)** The League and coalition groups sent a letter to the White House expressing deep concern that the Environmental Protection Agency will not meet its commitment to propose long-overdue Clean Air Act standards limiting dangerous carbon pollution from new and existing power plants. The groups also asked the president to reaffirm the administration's commitment to issue strong standards that significantly reduce carbon emissions from both new and existing power plants, as the Clean Air act requires.

**League Opposes Cantor Agenda (Sept. 7)** - The League and coalition groups sent a letter to the House opposing the suite of bills contained in House Majority leader Eric Cantor's legislative agenda memo that would block the Clean Air Act's ability to clean-up life-threatening pollution.

## FEDERAL ROLE IN EDUCATION STUDY

The forum on October 21 is the kick off for our local League Study on *What the Federal Role in Pre-K to 12 Education Should Be*. This forum will be followed by a League meeting to come to consensus on 15 questions developed by the LWVUS. The responses of local Leagues throughout the country will assist them in developing a national League position on the issue.



**Our LWVEA consensus meeting will be held on Friday, November 4 from 1 to 4 p.m. at 5787 Highwood Road, Castro Valley.**

The following information was provided by the LWVUS to help local Leagues address the multiple issues addressed by the study. Additional information can be found at the LWVUS site -

<http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Public Education>

## No Child Left Behind (NCLB)

In 2001, President George W. Bush signed the reauthorization of Elementary and Secondary Education Act, "No Child Left Behind," which was intended to close achievement gaps, particularly for minority children. However, data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reveal that scores were higher in math and reading for minority students before NCLB.

One provision of NCLB permitted parents to remove a student from a low-performing school and transfer to another, better performing school. They would receive a voucher which would pay some of the cost of attending another school – public or private. Additionally, courts and education agencies stepped in to "remediate."

The sanctions imposed by NCLB had the effect of punishing or threatening punishment to low-performing schools and teachers, sending them the message that they were incompetent and that they should not have the right to make decisions about how to educate students. Studies (Reeve, 2009) showed that threatening public schools and teachers with punishment had harmful effects on students who remained in the public schools.

Supporters of NCLB appreciate the increase in accountability for schools and teachers as well as the focus on low scoring sub-groups. Critics of NCLB decry the lack of federal funding for many of the Act's mandates, the emphasis on penalties, the reliance on standardized tests, and the lack of attention to gifted students as well as to subjects such as science, social studies and the arts. One goal of NCLB has been to offer choice to parents whose children attend poorly performing schools.

However, large-scale studies of voucher school students have revealed little difference in their performance compared to public school students with similar backgrounds, and having vouchers has not raised the performance of the most needy students (Rouse & Barrows, 2009). Furthermore, many (Holland, 2011) argue that the NCLB goal of 95 percent of students meeting state standards in reading and math by 2014 is unrealistic.

## **Race to the Top (RttT)**

Race to the Top was signed into law by President Barack Obama in 2009. This program shifted the basis of awarding funds to emphasize competition. Competitive grants reward reform planned in the winning states. Funding is

flexible as long as states demonstrate grant dollars are aligned with the agenda outlined in their winning applications. Only twelve states received funding through RttT.

Two of the requirements met by states that received RttT funding were (1) improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance and (2) lifting the cap on the number of charter schools that could be created.



While both these funding requirements can be effective, neither is foolproof, and each addresses only one part of the problems schools face. For instance, research studies show that promising increased pay based on teacher effectiveness is not an effective incentive. Furthermore, research showed there is a problem when teacher performance evaluation is based only on student scores in standardized tests (Springer et. al. 2010).

Although there is no question that some charter schools are effective, they have not been the panacea many expected. They were originally proposed as an opportunity for educators to test research-supported methods for reaching hard-to-educate children, and some have done quite well. However, a large-scale research study funded by pro-charter advocates revealed that only 17 percent of the 2403 charter schools had significantly more growth in test scores compared to traditional public schools, and, in fact, 37 percent showed significantly less growth (Center for Research on Education Outcomes, 2009). Furthermore, many charter schools do not admit and/or retain students who need increased support, e.g., students from impoverished communities and students with special needs.

League of Women Voters of Eden Area  
 P. O. Box 2234 – Castro Valley, CA 94546 • 510/538-9678  
 Representing cities of Hayward and San Leandro  
 and unincorporated areas of Ashland, Castro Valley,  
 Cherryland, Fairview, Hillcrest Knolls and San Lorenzo

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**Dues:** Regular \$50, 2<sup>nd</sup> member same Household \$25,  
 Student \$20

*The League of Women Voters, a  
 nonpartisan political organization,  
 encourages the informed and active  
 participation of the public in  
 government and influences public  
 policy through education and advocacy.*

**CALENDAR**

| <b>DATE &amp; TIME</b>  | <b>EVENT</b>                                      | <b>PLACE</b>                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Oct. 4<br>6 p.m.        | Hayward Volunteer Award<br>Dinner                 | St. Rose White Tent<br>Hayward         |
| Oct. 4<br>4 to 6 p.m.   | StopWaste Workshop<br>Recycling                   | San Leandro Library                    |
| Oct. 6<br>6 to 9 p.m.   | Teacher of the Year Awards<br>ACOE Sponsor        | San Leandro High School                |
| Oct. 19<br>5:45 p.m.    | LWVEA Board Meeting                               | Eden Area Multi-Svc<br>Center, Hayward |
| Oct. 21<br>11:30-2 p.m. | Luncheon Forum on Federal Role<br>Education       | San Lorenzo Village<br>Homes Assoc.    |
| Nov. 4<br>1 to 4 p.m.   | Consensus Meeting on Federal<br>Role in Education | Barba Home<br>5787 Highwood Rd, CV     |

**Please visit our website for information—  
[www.lwvea.org](http://www.lwvea.org)**