



League of Women Voters Eden Area

V O T E R

Vol. 56 No. 7 *Political Responsibility Through Informed and Active Participation* July 2013

WHEN “RETREAT” MEANS GOING FORWARD

At its Retreat on July 20, the newly elected board will review the “Directions” given from the membership to the board at the Annual Meeting. The board will also develop a calendar of educational forums, candidate events and collaborations with other community organizations and outreach measures for the 2013-2014 year.

The main “direction” was from Eleanor Parker and Alison Lewis who asked that the League focus on library services in 2013-14 “because of its importance to the community.”

At the Retreat, members will also review League policies such as the Non-Partisan guidelines, Who May Speak for the League, and the procedures for conducting League candidate and other forums in a civil, fair and open manner.

Members will also plan the events calendar—speakers, venue, format—using issues approved at the Annual Meeting such as: Dark Money in Politics, Education, Healthcare and the Water Wars.

Planning will also include strategies for membership recruitment, how to use social media to increase League visibility, and expanding our collaboration with CSUEB student groups and the voter registration program.

IT’S MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

Shortly, League members will be mailed a notice to renew their annual dues to support the League at all levels.



Despite having the lowest League dues, our League sends portions of the \$50 to National, State, and the Bay Area League. That’s quite a “bang for your buck” when you consider that the National and State Leagues monitor, educate and advocate on vital legislation on important issues that impact our communities.

The LWVUS is working hard throughout the country to stop states from inhibiting their constituents’ right to vote. The LWVC supported the recent ballot measures to aid education and monitored the budget hearings to ensure that the funds will be used as the voters intended.

Please make out your check right away so that it doesn’t get to the bottom of the “things to do” pile of good intentions.

Although we always hope that all members will be active League members, we understand that it is an impossible goal. However, member support of the League through payment of dues goes a long way to ensure that the League will meet its mission to educate members and voters on important issues.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Jennifer Ong

On June 15, 2013, the incoming officers for the LWVEA Board for the 2013-

2014 term were installed by the Hon. Gail Steele. We thank our outgoing officers, Jo Loss, Vice President, Programs, Jo Murdach, Vice President, Membership and Christine Wise, Treasurer for their service and continued engagement in our community.



At our meeting I expressed my reason for joining the League: I joined because I share its Mission. I believe that democracy should have been a verb. Our American lexicon has transformed a word in a matter of years, maybe even months, from a company name to a proper noun and subsequently into a verb because that word was utilized repeatedly by the public. I am speaking of course of the word google. It is ironic that many women and men fought hard to earn our democracy, but we have yet to see the word democracy transformed into a verb. Democracy is briefly defined as a government by the people. Democracy does not stop as a philosophy once a nation fights hard to earn democracy. Democracy is a sustained consistent action to work towards the ideal.

I thank the members of the League of Women Voters for encouraging our members to exercise democracy by engaging our communities to become active and informed participants in government. The League is helping to make democracy work. Through your membership and participation perhaps one day we can transform the word democracy into a verb--democracy as an intentional inevitable action word!

BOARD BRIEFS – June 19, 2013

- Introduced Newly Elected Board Members – Maryanne Tracy-Baker, V. P. Membership and Cossette Sun, Director who were elected at the Annual Meeting. Director Beverly Reliford who volunteered to serve on the board after the election was approved by the board.
- Annual Meeting June 15 – Consensus was that it was successful with 40 members in attendance during the League business meeting and an additional 50 people who came at noon to participate in the Town Hall with Congressman Eric Swalwell. The board also discussed the League policy for eliminating distribution of political material during League events.
- Membership – We now have 114 members which is excellent since we had less than 100 before convention. A Membership Committee will convene soon to discuss further ideas to recruit new members and retain present members.
- Retreat - A Retreat is planned for July 20 to plan for action and events for 2013-14. The agenda was reviewed.
- RCEC (Russell City Energy Center – power plant in Hayward) – Discussed action taken by LWVEA regarding mitigation projects to be completed by RCEC.
- Collaboration with CSUEB Student Group – A representative from CSUEB student group will be invited to the League's August meeting to discuss starting a CSUEB chapter and how we can help with voter registration and the election process.

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

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS FOR 2013-14

The following members were elected to serve on the 2013-2014 LWVEA Board at the Annual Meeting on June 15. Officers serve two-year terms and Directors are elected each year.

OFFICERS

Jennifer Ong – President
Del Della-Dora – V.P. Program
Maryanne Tracy-Baker – V.P. Membership
Linda Slater – Secretary
Nancy Van Huffel – Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Suzanne Barba – VOTER Editor
Beverly Reliford ••
Rene' Besold
Evelyn Cormier
Gail Lundholm
Doris Marciel – Affidavit Service
Jewell Spalding
Cossette Sun



L/R: Maryanne Tracy-Baker, Suzanne Barba, Cossette Sun, Doris Marciel (Standing) Linda Slater, René Besold, Nancy Van Huffel, Del Della-Dora, Evelyn Cormier, Gail Lundholm, Jennifer Ong (missing) Spalding & Reliford

OFF-BOARD DIRECTOR

Victoria Del Rio – Smart Voter

NOMINATING COMMITTEE 2014****

Sonya Howes, Shelia Young
•• approved at board meeting 6-20-13
****third position to be filled by a Board member

MEET OUR NEWLY ELECTED LWVEA BOARD MEMBERS



Del Della-Dora

I was born and raised in Detroit, but came to Hayward in 1973. I have a BA in Chemistry from the Univ. of Michigan, an MA in Education

Administration, and a doctorate in Child Development/Curriculum Development from Wayne State University.

My community activities include St. Rose Hospital Foundation Board and St. Rose Board of Trustees. I was event co-sponsor for FESCO, board member of Hayward Rotary and the Hayward/Ghazni Sister City Committee.

I have always had an active interest and involvement in governmental issues and I've always admired the good work done by the League of Women Voters. The welcoming manner of the women in the LWVEA and their strong sense of self-direction and independence convinced me that I ought to feel free to join.

Areas of interest that I hope to work on are Homelessness and Hunger and the delivery of quality public education for all students.

Cossette Sun

Cossette retired from her position as Alameda County Law Library Director after more than 30 years of service. She holds an LL.B degree from the College of Law, National Taiwan University, an M.A. in International Law from the University of Houston, and an M.S. from Simmons College. Previously she served in many leadership positions with the library in South Hayward. She is a member of the Executive Board of the American Assoc. of Law Libraries, one of the most prestigious elected positions in American law librarianship.

Cossette served her community in Castro Valley from 1991-2000 as a member and later as chairwoman of the



Castro Valley Municipal Advisory Council. She was on the board of the Advisory Committee for the Castro Valley Library which was to build the new library. She co-chaired the Castro Valley Library Capital Campaign and raised more than \$60,000 from the Taiwanese Community; the lobby is named as the Taiwanese-American Federation of North America. She was President of the Taiwanese Women's Association-Northern California Chapter 2012-2013.

She believes in the League's mission to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. "I want to be an informed citizen and to participate in the study of selected government issues, and the take action for positive change based on these positions. Especially, I want to spread the word to members of the Taiwanese community who are voters in their own communities. I also want to be sure they register to vote!



Beverly Reliford

Beverly has been a Family Child Care Provider and Advocate for 36 years. She served as president of the Southern Alameda County Child Care Association for 2 terms and also served on the Alameda County Child Care Planning Council for 8 years. She is currently an active member of Child Care Providers United, a provider support group active in advocacy for equity, fairness, and recognition of the important work done by these service providers.

She has also served on Hayward Citizens Advisory Commission for 8 years and worked with a group to ensure that grandparents had information and support when they became sole caregivers for their grandchildren. Beverly also worked with foster children support groups and many other committees that provide needed services for her community. She graduated from the University of Phoenix, with a B.S. in Business Administration and Mgt.

"I have been a League of Women Voters member since 1998. I joined the LWV to fulfill my mother's dream of becoming a league member. She respected and wanted to join the League in Macon, Georgia. But sadly, in those days due to the rural color classification in Georgia, she could never join. I also feel the league helps me to strengthen my voice as an advocate for young children and those whose voice is not heard."

Maryanne Tracy-Baker

Maryanne was born in Pleasanton and now lives in San Leandro. She graduated from Chabot College in 2007 with a Liberal Arts Degree having majored in English, History and Psychology. Her friends think it is remarkable that though she has Cerebral Palsy she is able to put tremendous energy and passion into her community service and is a role model for "walking the walk."



Maryanne has worked for many non-profits such as CARD (Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disasters), March of Dimes and the Friendly Visitor Program. She and her husband Bill are the President and Vice President of their own non-profit—Senior Miracles. She has represented Seniors and the Disabled for 19 years, first for the Wheels program in Dublin. She was appointed in 1999 by Supervisor Scott Haggerty to the Alameda County Paratransit Advisory Committee.

Maryanne has worked on many "issue" campaigns for unions and is involved in many problems concerning the working women and men today. Presently, she is Director of First Impressions and an Office Assistant for Better Homes and Gardens/ Mason McDuffie Real Estate in Fremont. She is a new League member and agreed to take on the duties of the Membership Vice Presidency because she is so excited about being a member herself.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Long-time League member **Betty Moose** was honored by the Hayward Area Historical Society for her outstanding contribution to the preservation of local history and historic character. Betty served on the San Lorenzo School Board for many years and in leadership positions on countless board, commissions, committees and task forces.

JoAnn Smith Ainsworth just published her fifth historic romance novel and is busy on her next. She was a League member with the Alameda League in the mid-1980's and switched to the Eden Area League when she moved to San Leandro. Despite her busy writing career she has volunteered with the League when called upon.

League Board member **Doris Marciel** has published a new book called, *The Legendary Locals of Castro Valley, Hayward and San Lorenzo* in conjunction with the Hayward Area Historical Society. The book contains pictures and stories of individuals and groups, past and present, who have made memorable impacts upon the communities. "Included are League of Women Voters of Eden Area members Suzanne Barba, Gail Steele, Nancy Van Huffel and Doris Marciel." The book will be available in July and book signings will be held at the Book Shop in Hayward on Saturday, July 13 from 5-7 p.m., and the San Lorenzo Library on Monday, July 29 from 5-7 p.m. and at the Castro Valley Library on Saturday, August 3 at 2 p.m.

Russell City Energy Center Power Plant on Hayward Shoreline Still Presenting Problems

The application to build the RCEC Power Plant on the Hayward Shoreline was begun in 2001. It was approved by the Hayward City Council which, at that time, accepted the promise of \$10 million dollars to be dedicated to a new library. Other Hayward Area Recreation District (HARD) landscaping and plant start-up

testing mitigations were also included. The siting of the power plant was opposed by many local groups including Chabot College and the California Pilot's Assoc. The opponents claimed that RCEC would be the fifth dirtiest stationary source of pollution in the 9 Bay Area Counties, including the refineries (the second dirtiest to power plants).

Despite local opposition, the RCEC's owner got a go ahead from the California Energy Commission (CEC) to start up. The landscape plans for the visual mitigations for public benefit, known as "VIS-10," which were supposed to be installed prior to start-up were not done on time as promised. About nine months ago, however, RCEC/Calpine applied to amend its permit. It got rid of the HARD trailside amenities to benefit the public (VIS-9), and tried to get rid of (VIS 10) too. Unfortunately, the CEC staff has done nothing about the offsite landscape mitigations; resulting in no offsite landscaping at all while RCEC/Calpine moves forward to start up.

In June, LWVEA wrote a letter to the project manager asking him about RCEC's failure to complete noted mitigations before power plant start up. In addition, the letter asked why the most recent letter from the California Pilots Assoc. wasn't "docketed." Their letter forwarded the most current research from the Federal Airport Administration (FAA), indicating RCEC's tower plumes are a hazard to aircraft (including for Oakland International). But, the CEC has not responded or docketed this information or the landscaping complaint for two months despite LWVEA's request. To find out more about the status of RCEC, check out RCEC's siting page on the CEC website at http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/russellcity_amendment/amendment_four/index.html Or call the project compliance manager, Bruce Boyer at 916-653-7181.

This article was written by Jewell Spalding and revised for space limitations.

WE CAN'T DO IT ALL, BUT THE LWVBA CAN

There are so many issues on which Leaguers would like to take some kind of action. But, we would end up being spread so thin, that our actions would not have the impact we would like. Luckily, we have the LWV Bay Area (LWVBA) to do the heavy lifting for us. LWVBA is composed of the 20 Leagues in the nine Bay Area Counties. Its purpose is to address regional issues. In addition, they publish the excellent *Bay Area Monitor* which we have printed excerpts from in this VOTER. They also put on a Bay Area League Day in February on critical issues.

The Bay Area League Network is divided into North and South and meet from September to April. The League's advocacy work is carried out by board members and by three committees. They advocate in the following areas:

- NATURAL RESOURCES/WATER/AIR COMMITTEE - Addresses regional issues concerning the environment with a focus on Water and Air Quality standards and their effective enforcement to support solutions to environmental pollution and the effects of Climate Change. For more information contact Chair Meg Giberson, amgibr-lwv@yahoo.com
- TRANSPORTATION - The LWVBA Transportation Committee focuses on inter-County Bay Area transportation planning and decision-making. Contact Chair Alex Starr, apstarr@ix.netcom.com
- HOUSING - The Housing Committee is educating itself on such issues as below-market-rate rental housing after the Palmer decision, monitoring the awarding of One Bay Area grants, rallying support for the California Homes and Jobs Act (bill to be announced mid-February). Chair is to be appointed. If interested contact Marion Taylor, LWVAPresident, mtaylor@sbcglobal.net.

LEAGUE BASICS 101

One of the primary things that new League members ask about is the League's Non-Partisanship Policy. It is one of the key policies that is instrumental in ensuring the League's stellar reputation as being a "trusted source of information." The following is an excerpt from that policy:

*"NON-PARTISANSHIP POLICY - The League of Women Voters **does not** support or oppose political parties or individual candidates for elective office. The League **does** take action to support or to oppose public policy issues based upon those positions and principles of government established through member studies and agreement."*

Our League also has a policy that is for Candidate Forums, which states: *"An area outside of the meeting room will be available for campaign literature which may be picked up after the forum. Candidates are requested not to display or distribute campaign materials in any other manner, including not having their supporters put on a demonstration of any kind. Prohibited campaign materials may include: T-shirts, caps, jackets, bumper stickers or banners bearing the candidate's name and exhibited by supporters in the audience."* Candidates have thanked us for applying this policy to ensure a fair and equitable forum for all candidates.

We recently received a complaint that the League did not follow its policy at an event at the Castro Valley Library. In this case, the event was sponsored by the library and the League distributed blank cards for questions to be asked of the speaker, picked up the cards, sorted them and gave them to the speaker to answer. The event was not a candidate forum. The League was not aware that an "open letter" to the speaker was going to be distributed. The letter which did have questions for the speaker was not submitted to be answered.

When this matter was discussed by the Board after receiving several complaints, it was decided that (1) we would not participate in a Town Hall meeting in the future (and we have not done so in the past); (2) we will announce our non-partisanship policy and guidelines for non-distribution of campaign material at League-sponsored candidate events; and (3) we will have our policy on campaign materials posted on a large sign for attendees to see before entering the meeting place.

SUPREME COURT RULES ON VOTER RIGHTS ACT

The following is excerpted from newsletter article by Scott Lay

The Supreme Court on June 25 [ruled that Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act is unconstitutional](#). Section 4 is the provision that sets forth the formula that determines whether jurisdictions are subject to the preclearance which requires covered jurisdictions to obtain approval from either the Department of Justice or a 3-judge panel from the DC district court whenever they change election procedures.

Nine states [are covered in their entirety](#), but only three counties in California are covered-- Kings, Monterey, and Yuba. The California counties that require pre-clearance were all added to the list because of the existence of military bases that led to large numbers of non-registered residents. (Fort Ord in Monterey, Beale in Yuba, and NAS Lemoore in Kings County.)

The recent SC decision was made on the principal of federalism and on the reservation of powers not identified in the Constitution as reserved for the states and their citizens. The court's majority writes "In 1966, we found these departures from the basic features of our system of government justified. The 'blight of racial discrimination in voting' had 'infected the electoral process in parts of our country for nearly a century.'"



The court's opinion goes on to report that Mississippi's voter registration favored white voters by 63.2% in 1966, and that data available when the law was renewed in 2006, black voters outnumbered white voters by 3.8%. The court credits the Voting Rights Act for improvements.

Four of the five justices in the majority only ruled on the constitutionality on Section 4, and declined to rule whether Section 5's preclearance requirements are unconstitutional. In short, the court is telling Congress to update its criteria for covered jurisdictions.

Justices Ginsburg, Breyer, Sotomayor and Kagan dissented, arguing that the contemporary renewal of the Voting Rights Act in 2006 is evidence that the body (with large majorities) found sufficient evidence that the section 4 formula was still justified.

With the court's action, pre-clearance is dead for now, although Section 2 still prohibits voting discrimination and plaintiffs can still sue if they believe a jurisdiction is discriminating. The court has put this in Congress' lap. Congress needs to act to update modern jurisdictions that have pervasive discrimination in voting.

CONDOLENCES to the family and friends of **Helen Brundage Crowell** who recently passed away. Helen was born in New York on August 12, 1931. She was married to Jack Crowell, lived in Washington D. C. and later in Denver before moving to Hayward. Helen was an active member of the Hayward League which later became the Eden Area League when it merged with San Leandro. LWVEA member Eleanor Parker remembers Helen as a board member who pitched in and was successful at whatever tasks she was given. Services were held in May in San Francisco.

ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

More than 40 members--representing Castro Valley, Hayward, San Leandro and San Lorenzo--attended the LWVEA Annual Meeting on June 15 which was one of the best attended meetings we have had in the past few years.



Ken Pon, Suzanne Barba and Malca Chall



Hayward Council member Al Mendall and Tony Santos, former San Leandro Mayor

The State League issues for education and advocacy which were approved at Convention in May, were reviewed and adopted by the local leagues as issues that members would also like to see as educational programs put on by LWVEA for the 2013-14 year. The Board will review these at its upcoming Retreat on July 20.

The issues were: Money in Politics, Healthcare, Education, and Water (which will probably be coming up as a bond issue on our ballot soon).

At Convention, the State League also approved the request to do a two or three-year study on Higher Education— UC, CSU and Community College, especially in the area of fair and affordable school costs. Twelve of our members signed up to participate in the study which will probably be some time in 2014. More notices will be sent to members who missed the opportunity to sign up at the Annual Meeting and would like to participate.



Former Supervisor Gail Steele read the inspiring charge to the newly elected officers and directors for the coming year as noted on page 3 in this VOTER.

Districts to get \$1.25 billion this Fall to implement Common Core

By John Fensterwald, EdSource
(excerpt)

With uncommon speed, school districts and charter schools this fall will receive substantial money they didn't foresee coming their way a few months ago to prepare for the Common Core standards. The catch: They first have to tell the public how they plan to use it.

The state budget that Gov. Jerry Brown just signed includes \$1.25 billion – about \$200 per student, based on 2012-13 enrollment – for schools to transition to a new set of English language arts and math standards that students will be tested on in spring 2015. Pressed by districts needing all the help they can get, Brown added \$1 billion in his revised budget in May for the new standards, and legislative leaders negotiated an additional 25 percent – \$250 million.

The trailer bill, spelling out details in the budget, gives districts latitude to spend the \$1.25 billion on teacher training, textbooks and materials and technology. The latter is needed for districts to offer the online, standardized Common Core tests and to begin the shift to digital learning.

Districts will be able obtain the money in two installments, in September and then November. But first they must create a plan for it and hold two hearings: the first to present the proposal to the public, the second to vote on it. This will be sort of a trial run for the accountability plan that districts will have to write, starting in 2014, under the new Local Control Funding Formula, giving districts more flexibility to spend state education money.

Districts will have two years to spend the money, but will receive it all this fall. The Department will report back to the Legislature next year on what districts did with the money.

CLOSE CALL FOR CALIFORNIA PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

The League of Women Voters Eden Area was gratified that the Bay Area News Group, Common Cause and the State League took a strong stand to protect the California Public Records Act (CPRA). The CPRA was almost “defunded” by the state in the current budget. The state reimburses local governmental agencies for monies spent in providing public records requested by the public. The funding of the CPRA will probably be on the next ballot as a constitutional amendment asking voters to decide if the cost should be shifted to the agencies themselves and not paid by the state. Exact language is fluid at this time.

We recognize that through the efforts of an investigative media, supported by its ability to obtain public records through the CPRA, the public has been made aware of information it needs to ensure “good government” practices.

We are pleased that the efforts of the media and other “good government” groups were successful in protecting the CPRA for now. Since 1972, the League of Women Voters United States (LWVUS) has worked for the public's right to know and supported open meeting laws. During the following years, the LWVUS engaged in a number of campaigns to ensure openness in government and the public's right to know.

In 2005, the LWVUS launched “Openness in Government: Looking for the Sunshine” which state and local leagues support and participate in with local programs.

The following is the LWVUS position, which can be used by every level of League:

“The LWVUS believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation at all levels of government. The League further believes that governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.”



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, and San Lorenzo

Just cut out and mail this coupon with your check to:
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Treasurer, P.O. Box 2234, Castro Valley, CA 94546

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Dues: Regular \$50,
2nd member same Household \$25,
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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.

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CALENDAR

July 4 Freedom of Information Act Anniversary

HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY

July 20 LWVEA Board Retreat,
5787 Highwood Rd, Castro Valley
9 to 1 p.m. Questions, call 538-9678

Aug. 21 LWVEA Board Meeting
5:45 – 7:30 Eden Area Multi-Service Center, 24100 Amador Street, 3rd floor, Hayward

Aug. 26 Women’s Equality Day – Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment.



CHECK OUT OUR LWVEA WEBSITE & LET US KNOW HOW WE CAN IMPROVE IT –

For up to date info check out LWVEA.org