

Join Us for Our 2014 Community Luncheon



Thursday, September 4, 11:30-1:30p
Hs Lordships, 199 Seawall Drive, Berkeley Marina

Prof. Robert Reich, Chancellor's Professor of Public Policy at the Goldman School of Public Policy, UC Berkeley, will speak on "Inequality and the New Billionaire Political Bosses" at our September 4, 2014 Community Luncheon.

Another highlight of the luncheon will be the presentation of the annual "Spirit of the League" awards. This year they go to the Y-Scholars program at the YMCA, which assists first generation and at-risk high schoolers with an intensive program to help them prepare for acceptance into college; and to Adena Ishii, a recent Cal graduate active in civic affairs who led and expanded a program designed to help community college students transitioning to Cal.

Prof. Reich's notable career includes serving as President Clinton's Secretary of Labor, and on President Obama's economic transition team as he took office. Reich came to the Goldman School in 2006 after teaching at Brandeis University and the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. At Berkeley, he teaches a very popular undergraduate course, "Wealth and Poverty" that examines why the distribution of wealth in the U.S. has changed so radically.

Prof. Reich is a frequent television guest commentator, can be heard on public radio's "Marketplace", and has written thirteen books. His documentary film, "Inequality for All", was released in 2013.

Mark your calendars and invite your friends! Look for your invitations in the mid-July mail. Reserve online at <http://www.lwvbae.org/league-news/annual-community-luncheon/>.

LWVBAE Makes its Mark at LWVUS 2014 Convention

By Nancy Bickel

Climate Change Resolution, Living Wage Concurrence, Economic Inequality Study, Health Care national single payer campaign... our delegates to the LWVUS Convention in Dallas led caucuses, spoke often and eloquently on the floor during plenary sessions and strategized on effective action for five strenuous days. Delegates Janice Blumenkrantz, Diz Swift and Carol Stone collaborated with Delaware and other Leagues on getting a Climate Change resolution adopted (story p.3); Li-hsia Wang caucused and planned for future action on League's single payer position (story p.3) and Pat Kuhi and Nancy Bickel waged a strenuous fight to bring two proposals to the floor on Living Wage and Economic Inequality (story p.4).

Energy at the Convention was high, with a floor fight for the LWVUS presidency, a new position on human trafficking, a 3-part study and action plan to Power the Vote, a strong statement on climate change, and remarkable speakers.



LWVBAE Delegates. Clockwise from left, Li-hsia Wang, Carol Stone, Diz Swift, Janice Blumenkrantz, Pat Kuhi, Nancy Bickel

Fight for the Presidency: LWV Florida President Deirdre MacNab challenged Elisabeth McNamara for the job of LWV president. Such challenges from the floor are rare events; generally, the nominating committee does a very systematic search and the recommended slate is elected. MacNab criticized the League decline in membership and pointed to the dramatic growth in membership in Florida and their vigorous challenge to the state's voter suppression efforts.

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Join many from local government on Sept 4 to hear Dr. Robert Reich, and see the Spirit of the League awards.

LWVBAE Makes Mark 1

Our local League made a mark at many levels at LWVUS Convention.



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By Nancy Bickel



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A resolution to "Put a Price on Carbon" and formation of a Climate Change Network results at LWVUS Convention.

By Diz Swift and Janice Blumenkrantz

Economic Inequality 4

Our League raised living wage and economic inequality as topics for focus at the LWVUS Convention.

By Nancy Bickel



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ON THE WEB

For more League news and stories, go to our website at <http://www.lwvbae.org/league-news/>

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MacNab's fight against voter suppression earned national attention, including appearing on Jon Stewart's "Daily Show."

The nominating committee had proposed MacNamara for a third term as president and MacNab as a new member of the national board, a possible stepping stone to president. MacNab chose instead to run for president and resigned from the national board slate.

As MacNab's campaign heated up in late spring, her supporters, including former US Representative Pat Schroeder, now on the LWV-Florida board, and various state league presidents, sent frequent emails to delegates and invited them to on-line meetings to interact with their candidate.

The chair of the LWVUS nominating committee and others responded with support for MacNamara, pointing out that Florida's member growth and legal challenges were heavily supported by national staff, board and programs. MacNamara has brought the League wider press attention as well, for example, with her regular column in the on-line Huffington Post.

A one hour debate at convention was followed by a secret ballot; MacNamara won with 2/3 of the votes. Amid enthusiastic applause, the two candidates embraced on the podium, but left us wondering whether MacNab's energy and eloquence will be harnessed in some way by the national League.

Concurrence with the Human Trafficking position of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey was recommended by the board and adopted by the delegates. It is: "We consider human trafficking to be a form of modern day slavery and believe that every measure should be taken and every effort should be made through legislation and changes in public policy to prevent human trafficking. Prosecution and penalization of traffickers and abusers should be established, and existing laws should be strictly enforced. Extensive essential services for victims should be applied where needed. Education and awareness programs on human trafficking should be established in our communities and in our schools".

Power the Vote: As part of the League's ongoing Power the Vote effort, delegates adopted a three-part program focusing on key structures of American democracy, including campaign finance reform, the constitutional amendment process, and redistricting reform for the U.S. Congress. This will be carried out by task forces drawn from the League membership. The study of the constitutional amendment process will fill a gap in League positions and information and will enable the League to respond to proposals around the country to move for a constitutional amendment to control money in politics by, for example, saying that corporations are not people or that money is not speech.

Climate Change Gains Big at Convention

By Diz Swift and Janice Blumenkrantz

Climate change was the topic of three caucuses, a round table discussion, and a workshop at the LWVUS Convention. Key outcomes were passage of a resolution to put a price on carbon with proposed action on how to do it (see box below), and the formation of a Climate Change Network across the U.S. (see box to right). Our League members Diz Swift, Janice Blumenkrantz and Carol Stone were active players in achieving both.

The Caucus “Stepping up our Game in Reducing Carbon Emissions” was to foster support for the resolution to put a price on carbon, sponsored by the Delaware LWV. Attendance was excellent and enthusiastic. Members of our League spoke on hazardous materials in the Bay Area (Blumenkrantz), California’s climate legislation (Swift) and what LWVBAE is doing (Stone). Petitions supporting the resolution were circulated at the plenary sessions with more than 120 signing, representing over 20% of delegates. The resolution passed overwhelmingly at the plenary session the next day.

The Caucus “Combating Climate Change: What Your League Can Do” was sponsored by Florida, which is urgently threatened by sea level rise, but faced with flat denial among state politicians. Swift was invited to introduce the

Put a Price on Carbon

The following **resolution** was passed by nearly unanimous vote: *“The LWVUS should support a price on carbon emissions that will increase in stages, as part of an overall program to improve energy efficiency and to replace fossil fuels with renewable energy, fast enough to avoid serious damage to the climate system.”*

Action on the resolution was described in Guidance to the Board: *“Legislation to put a price on carbon is not likely at this point. So the League must join with others to build an overwhelming voice across the U.S. to put a price on carbon.”* We are building our coalitions. Contact Diz Swift at votereditor@lwvbae.org to participate.

idea of forming a climate change network for local Leagues and to ask those interested to sign up.

The Caucus “Protecting Our Planet: New Resources for Climate Action,” sponsored by the LWVUS Climate Change Task Force (CCTF), reminded us of the tools they have made available. Lloyd Leonard, lead lobbyist for LWV, strongly encouraged support of the recent Environmental Protection Agency’s announcement of the Existing Source Rule to limit carbon emissions from existing power plants. He recommends we communicate with the President and all legislators to commend the EPA action, emphasizing improved health as a key benefit.

Workshop on Climate Change, sponsored by CCTF, reviewed key executive actions on climate change, including the President’s 2013 Climate Action Plan <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/image/president27sclimateactionplan.pdf>, the EPA Existing Source Rule, and the 2014 National Climate Assessment <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/>.

A guidance to the board from Carol Stone called for letters to Pres. Obama and Secretary of State Kerry to follow their bold action to control carbon emissions from existing power plants by not allowing the Keystone XL pipeline to go through the US.

Climate Change Network



From an idea in casual discussions to reality, the Climate Change Network is now off and running. We have over 130 members from 31 states. The core organizing team includes Swift and Blumenkrantz from our own League, Kathy Berlin of Pasadena, Barbara Eriv of Palm Beach, FL, and Chad Tolman (DE) and Eleanor Revelle (IL) of the LWV Climate Change Task Force. Please visit our new website at <http://www.lwvbae.org/climate-change-network/> and join us!

Health Care Action Update

from LWVUS Convention June 2014, Dallas By Li-hsia Wang

The national health care caucus, Health Care Reform for the US (HCR4US), presented a caucus at Convention, “The ACA and Beyond: The Way to Universal Health Care”. Linda Mahan (LWV Colorado) and Li-hsia Wang compared the ACA with health care in the rest of the developed world and described efforts in many states to move to a single payer program. From the substantial audience, some members signed up to be on our monthly conference calls, where we share information and support.

Building Positions on Living Wage and Economic Inequality

By Nancy Bickel

The wealth and income of the U.S. middle class is slowly eroding. More and more people – even those working full-time – do not have enough to live on. Pat Kuhi, with help from Nancy Bickel, tackled these problems and took them to Convention. To advocate strongly we need a clear League position.

Living Wage: LWVUS has a strong Basic Human Needs position that says “one of the goals of social policy in the United States should be to *promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families* and that the most effective social programs are those designed to *prevent or reduce poverty*” [our italics]. But, LWVUS does not permit this position to be used to support raises in the minimum wage or a living wage. The reason—in a 1988 study, Leagues did not reach consensus on this issue. No consensus, no position.

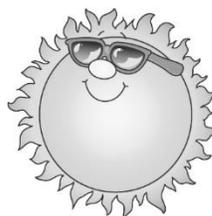


Nancy Bickel and Pat Kuhi

At a well-attended caucus and in plenary sessions, Kuhi and Bickel proposed that the LWVUS adopt immediately – by concurrence – a position from LWV-Kansas that supports a living wage. Delegate interest was intense, but the wording of the Kansas position also prompted objections and debate. Some delegates speaking against our proposal even agreed that the League should support increases in minimum wage. A majority of delegates did vote to adopt the living wage position, but the proposal did not get the required 2/3 vote.

In our final “Guidance to Board,” we asked the Board to reconsider the 1988 decision. Interest was so high that President Elisabeth MacNamara unexpectedly responded, suggesting that state leagues adopt the LWV-Kansas Living Wage position at their 2015 conventions and bring the proposal back to the LWVUS convention in 2016.

Economic Inequality Impact on Democracy. Pat Kuhi continued the campaign started at our program planning in January. Delegate interest was strong enough to bring our proposal to the floor for discussion and to attract 60 delegates to our caucus, so we did achieve our goal of raising awareness of the social and political impacts of the growing economic inequality on our democracy. Many delegates reported that their Leagues planned to study or to educate the public on this issue in the next two years. The campaign will continue.



“Conversations” and “Environmental Concerns” on Summer Vacation

The monthly “Conversations with the League”, usually held on the third Tuesday at the Albany Public Library from noon to 2:00, and the “Environmental Concerns”, usually held on the evening of the second Monday of the month, are on summer hiatus. See the Sep-Oct 2014 VOTER for the resumption of these two popular speaker series in the Autumn.

LWV Bay Area

Climate Change Regionally – What’s Up?

By Janice Blumenkrantz

Janice Blumenkrantz, co-founder of our local League’s Climate Change Team, was elected in May to the interleague organization of the Bay Area (LWV Bay Area) which includes 4,000 members in 21 local Leagues. Janice is the “clean air” member of the board.

Janice, Bob and Ruby MacDonald and Cynthia Lloyd are observing the Air District – the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) – as it monitors, regulates, and enforces rules for Greenhouse Gas and carbon emissions in the 9 counties of the Bay Area. The quartet is also working with 350.org and the Sierra Club for ideas, energy, and cross fertilization. Two possible joint efforts include powering up renewables and beginning a campaign to reduce natural gas in homes and businesses by increasing their use of electricity from renewables.

The Air District has recently passed a commuter benefits program, as well as its 10-point work plan for the next year. BAAQMD is also beginning to plan to implement not only President Obama’s new EPA carbon regulation (the Air Quality Board is the local arm of the EPA), but also to formulate the next 5-year plan for 2015-2020. Best of all, the Air District just raised the fee it charges to the industries it monitors from 4 cents/ton of CO₂e (CO₂equivalent) emissions to 9 cents/ton of CO₂e emissions.



**Don't you like to be thanked when you give?
We all do.**

Do you have 3-4 hours a month to help out?
Volunteer to send a thank you to our donors!

Contact Nancy Bickel at president@lwvbae.org or 843-8824.

Working Toward the Nov 4, 2014 Election

By Phyllis M. Housel Gale

As we turn our efforts toward the November 4th election, LWVBAE members started with a Voter Registration Booth at Berkeley's Juneteenth Celebration on Adeline Ave. The best part of the lively event was that we registered 20 voters and many folks took forms and membership info.

The next 5 months will be very busy preparing for and working on the November 4th General Election. We will be electing a new assembly member, local officials in Emeryville, Albany and Berkeley, as well as state officials; and at last check at the State level there are 33 initiatives either in circulation or having their signatures verified. This promises to be a very busy season.

What will we do? We will build coalitions, research pros and cons, determine our positions, train speakers and provide a speaker bureau, interview candidates, host candidate events, register voters and make sure our website and all manner of social media is up to date. Many hands are needed to take on the challenges. You can volunteer for short one-time only activities or gain and use leadership skills by managing smaller projects.

Our next Voter/Election Services Team Meeting is set for Monday July 7th to set our activities, prioritize and schedule. Email Phyllis Gale at voterservices@lwvbae.org to volunteer or sign up for the Voter Services email list.



Be a Part!

As election season heats up, we will be forming many teams to:

- Write up pros and cons on local measures
- Speak on pros and cons of state and local measures
- Distribute election publications and registration forms
- Run candidates meetings and TV and video debates

Email voterservices@lwvbae.org and/or check the weekly email, calendar and website for updates.

OUR YEAR'S RESULTS

At the end of each League year – from July through June – we look back at results. These results are reported by each team. The Core and Support Teams (Action, Membership, Voter Services, Program, and Communications) are the responsibility of the corresponding Board Member and are central to our function. Issue teams (Climate Change and Education) are central to our actions and current areas of focus. For more information on team activities, visit <http://www.lwvbae.org/>.

Action Team

By Carol Stone

Climate action, action regarding the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board, and monitoring implementation of the Berkeley streets and watershed bond measure were key areas for LWVBAE action this year.

The Action Team is responsible for observing and lobbying on League positions and principles. Our teams continued their efforts already underway in issues covered by our Issue Teams. The Climate Change Team continued advocating for “putting a price on carbon”, began actively monitoring the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, and branched into evaluating Feed-in-Tariff (Net Metering). The Education Team continued to follow funding for public schools and is ready to participate in the state study on higher education.

► **Continued next column**

We approved a letter to the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board regarding the inefficiencies in the system, culminating an effort we began in 2012-13. Following work done the prior year, we continued to monitor implementation of Berkeley's Measure M – the streets and watershed bond measure passed in 2012.

We began work on economic inequality and minimum wage and took both to the LWVUS Convention to pave the way toward advocacy (story p. 4).

Membership Team

By Dean Metzger

Membership numbers are falling, but the Membership Team has good ideas to reverse the trend. The Membership Team – Karen Carlson-Olson, Allan Maris, Hawley Homes and Dean Metzger – are considering the following suggestions and actions:

► **Continued page 6**

► *Membership from page 5*

- Membership loss may be because younger people don't see a compelling reason to join the League.
- League functions are not publicized well enough to a larger audience, which requires event organizers to plan well ahead.
- Evaluate how to ease the burden for members for whom our \$75.00 dues may seem high.
- Better engage younger potential members by using social media, including many resources such as KQED's "do-now" program.

Membership Team Commitments:

- Each team member will come up with up to five organizations we can contact that agree to distribute the League's announcements and programs to their members.
- Review the Texas Rising Star program and decide if there is enough interest to adapt it to our LWVBAE.

The Membership Team will continue to discuss what actions should be taken in the 2014 - 2015 year. In the meantime we ask that every member of LWVBAE look for and encourage potential members to join.

Voter Services Team

By Phyllis M. Housel Gale

The year 2013-2014 encompassed the June 2014 primary election and the Supreme Court decision that weakened the national Voter Registration and opened the door for states to adopt bad redistricting plans and more voter suppression laws. In California, introduction of online voter registration, local ranked choice voting and state-wide top-two primary system continue to transform the political landscape.

In the June 2014 Primary Election, LWVBAE distributed the LWV California *Easy Voter* printed and distributed State and County Pros and Cons for Propositions 41 (Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention Bond Act of 2014) and 42 (Public Records. Open Meetings. State Reimbursement to Local Agencies) and Alameda County measure AA (Health Care Safety Net Reauthorization Alameda County). The League supported all three measures; all passed.

Last September we staffed tables at three locations for National Voter Registration Day and offered forms at the Berkeley Technology Academy's Trade Unions' Faire. LWVBAE continues to develop coalitions with groups that represent under-registered populations in order to register and educate potential voters within their own communities.

Program Team

By Sherry Smith

Two League-wide meetings, the Community Luncheon, speakers and a study kept us busy and informed this year – all planned and overseen by the Program Coordinator.



We began the year's events in August at the Annual Community Luncheon, which featured Jeanne Woodford, former Warden at San Quentin, speaking on Criminal Justice in California.

The September Fall Meeting highlighted Health Reform in Alameda County, with distinguished speaker Alex Briscoe, Director of Alameda County Health Care Services talking about the Affordable Care Act and beyond.



The Annual Meeting featured Cal Professor Alison Gopnik sharing her expertise on what research tells us about children's minds and development – that real learning takes place in infancy and early childhood.

The January Program Planning proposed the priorities – Climate Change and Education – and the studies we recommended to LWVUS which were approved by members at the Annual Meeting.

Our **Conversations** with the League included:

- Health Care Team on how to publicize the ACA
- Climate Change Team on carbon tax and cap-and-trade
- Sex trafficking in Berkeley, and how to deal with it
- A panel on the potential impact of downtown development on the character of Berkeley's downtown, co-sponsored with the Berkeley Historical Society
- Pros and cons of ballot measures and election of judges
- Pres. of the BUSD School Board and the Exec. Director of the Berkeley Public Schools Fund talked of the Fund's role at the Berkeley schools and current trends in the schools.

Our League participated in the LWVUS Agriculture Update Study. At our Annual Meeting in May, members approved beginning an update study of the City of Berkeley Boards and Commissions Position. A study team is being formed.

Communications Team

By Diz Swift

The *VOTER*, our website, weekly emails, social media, press releases, event notifications to media, and more are the tasks of the Communications Team. The results are in your email, in print and online. Visit our website at www.lwvbae.org.

Environmental Concerns

By Gail Schickele

The LWVBAE Environmental Concerns speaker series featured climate change issues with Dr. Peter G. Joseph of *Citizens Climate Lobby*, *Physicians for Social Responsibility*, and *Climate Reality Project*; author Tom Athanasio gave a first-hand report of The Warsaw Climate Talks ; and LBNL physicist Michael Wehner discussed climate modeling and how extremes are expected to worsen as temperature rises. Al Weinrub of the Berkeley Climate Action Coalition supported Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) as a way to reduce carbon emissions. Dr. Frances Malamud-Roam, Sr.Env.Planner and Biologist at Caltrans, discussed *The West Without Water* warning that it's time to prepare for a future in which fresh water may be less reliable.

Two talks highlighted the controversial debate over hydraulic fracturing or "fracking". Members of the East Bay Sierra Club criticized water and air contamination and slack regulation. Oil and gas geologists Dr. Paul Henshaw and Dr. Linda Swift presented background on how fracking is done, its limitations, and how it is regulated in California.

Johanna Hoffman, a UC Berkeley grad student, talked about the need to redefine relationships between water and the built environment because of the risk of sea level rise. Our annual appetizer and dessert pot luck offered Environmental Art with Bay area artist and teacher Andrée Singer Thompson.

Education Team

By Pat Kuhi

Education funding, early childhood education, common core curriculum, restorative justice, and civics education are the key activities of the Education Team.

With the passage of Proposition 30 in 2012, more funding is available for education. Members attended BUSD workshops where participants provided input for the 2014-15 Local Control of Funding (LCAF) budget.

Members of the Team lobbied our legislators on behalf of the Early Childhood Education (ECE) parts of the 2014-15 budget proposal. The Team interviewed new BUSD Superintendent Dr. Donald Evans, discussing restorative justice, civics education and ECE. The Team also interviewed Beatriz Leyva-Cutler, BUSD School Board Director and founder of an excellent Berkeley pre-school for Latino children, about ECE.

Civics Education continues its many-year run as a key issue for the Team. Bill Chapman sent a letter to the California K-12 Civic Learning Task Force, reporting the results of the LWVBAE Civics Education Study. Team members met with staff of the Berkeley Y Teen Center to discuss helping the teen scholars add more civics education to their activities.

Climate Change Team

By Regina Beatius

Our Climate Change Team continues to advocate to "Put a Price on Carbon." In the Fall we gave a presentation at the "Conversations with the League" on California's Cap and Trade program and carbon taxes. In January we presented the same talk at the First Congregational Church of Berkeley, and a talk on Fracking in California.

The Climate Change Team members are networking with other agencies and groups by attending their meetings. The groups include the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, the California Public Utilities Commission, 350.org, and the Sierra Club. We continue our participation in the Berkeley Climate Action Coalition. Our two main priorities for the year have been researching Feed-in-tariffs/Net Metering and the issue of crude oil rail shipments within the Bay Area.

Our team members continue to actively participate on climate change issues at the national level (see story, p.3).



Love to speak in public?

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Train with us to explain up to 30 ballot measures fairly, clearly, briefly.

Contact Phyllis Gale at voterservices@lwvbae.org

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May-June 2014

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in memory of Harold Lecar in

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Li-hsia Wang and

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Many thanks to our donors and to Louetta Erlin, as she retires from her long and exemplary service as Donations Secretary.

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2013-2014



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Env. Concerns	Gail Schickele and Carol Stone
Health Care	Li-hsia Wang



Calendar – Locations are the LWVBAE office, 2530 San Pablo Ave, Suite F, Berkeley, and area code is (510) unless otherwise noted.

www.lwvbae.org/calendar

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

July

Various		
7	Mon	10:30a-12:30p
15	Tues	
21	Mon	1:30-2:30p

Voter Services Activities

Check weekly emails , website and calendar for info
Voter Services Team P.Gale 508-4389
Deadline for Filing Berkeley Ballot Measures
Health Care Team L. Wang 848-5765

August

Various		
6	Fri	6:00p
18	Mon	1:30-2:30p
22	Fri	1:30-3:00p

Voter Services Activities

Check weekly emails , website and calendar for info
Sep-Oct VOTER Deadline D. Swift 548-4808
Health Care Team L. Wang 848-5765
Climate Change Team R. Beatus 524-6904

September

Various		
4	Thurs	11:30a-1:30p
12	Fri	1:30-3:30p
14	Sun	10:00a-6:00p
15	Mon	1:30-2:30p

Voter Services Activities

Check weekly emails , website and calendar for info
Annual Community Luncheon P. Day 843-8824
Hs Lordships, 199 Seawall Dr, Berkeley Marina
Education Action Team C. Lynch 527-2173
Solano Stroll P. Gale 508-4389
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