The Voter

"... to promote informed citizen participation in government."

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December 2010 & January 2011

Conversation: Health Care

Conversations at the League resume in December. The Health Committee will be participants in this Conversation.

When: Tuesday, December 7, noon-2:00 pm

Where: Albany Public Library, Edith Stone Room 1247 Marin Avenue (at Masonic) Albany

We will be talking about the national health insurance reform bill (PPACA), how it will affect individuals, providers, and small business. Allen Cain, Executive Director and Events Manager of the Solano Avenue Association, will participate. We welcome all interested League members and their friends and we urge you to hand out the enclosed flyer to your favorite small business as an invitation to the Conversation.

P.S. You may bring lunch and water, but no other beverages.

Li-hsia Wang Healthcare Director

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Bay Area League Day 2011

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: Taking it to The Next Level is the focus of Bay Area League Day (BALD sponsored by the LWV Bay Area.

When: Saturday, January 29, 2011, 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Where: MetroCenter, 101 Eigth Street, Oakland

The Keynote address "Renewables for Success" will be given by **Dan Reicher**, Director of Energy and Climate Initiatives at Google.

Three panels will follow. The first panel at 10 a.m. is "What Government is Doing" and will include Arthur H. Rosenfeld, Professor Emeritus, UC Berkeley, cofounder, UC Environmental Energy Technologies Division and longtime California Energy Commissioner who will speak on California Energy use; Richard Sinkoff, Manager of Environmental Planning at the Port of Oakland who will address policy issues of the Port and sustainability, including deconstruction, cold ironing, and asphalt reuse; and John Stufflebean, Director of the Environmental Services Department, City of San Jose on the city's aggressive Zero Waste program.

The second panel at 11 a.m. is "What Science is Doing" and will feature Lori Steere of the Water Recycling Program for East Bay Municipal Utilities District (EBMUD) talking about recycled water in general in addition to EBMUD's program; Jaimie Levin, Director of Alternative Fuels Policy at AC Transit on hydrogen, biofuels and other alternative fuels; and a representative from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District who will address the Bay Area's regional electric vehicle infrastructure program.

After a box lunch, a third panel will convene on "What We Can Do" and will feature Irvington High School, Fremont, faculty and students addressing school community service requirements and their program that includes a natural gas bus and recycling center; and Karen Kho from StopWaste introducing their new program "Energy

Continued on page 2

BALD Continued from page 1

Upgrade California" and how to analyze home energy use. Cost is \$30 (\$20 without lunch); at the door \$35 (\$25 without lunch). To register in advance (preferred) please write a check payable to "LWVBA" and mail with your name and any guest names to 1611 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 300, Oakland, CA 94612. (For your convenience, registration form below.) Registration is also available online through January 24 via PayPal at http://lwvbayarea.org. For more details, call (510) 839-1608 or send an email to editor@ bayareamonitor.org.

Gail Schickele

Co-chair Environmental Concerns

Conversation: Environmental Concerns and Climate Change

Our conversation will focus on some ways to reach the public about the planet's tipping points from "Boundaries of a Healthy Planet" (Printed in Scientific American). Already there have been some red flag warnings of tipping points in the area of biodiversity and nitrogen. Also we'll look at "The World's Lungs," forests and how to save them (Printed in The Economist). Educating ourselves about water issues for our planet will also be included.

When: Tuesday, January 4, 2011, from 12 noon to 2 pm

Where: Albany Public Library, Edith Stone Room 1247 Marin Avenue (at Masonic) Albany

We will also discuss a reordering of the Climate Change priorities which were last updated several years ago. The discussion will focus on how to turn education into action. We'll also look at pushing climate change issues to the regional and state level.

You may bring your lunch but only water is permitted as beverage.

Regina Beatus, Chair of the Climate Change Team Gail Schickele and Carol Stone Co-Chairs of Environmental Concerns

Conversation: State and Local League Program Planning

What do you want to see on the agenda for our League and for Leagues across California for the next two years?

Do you have an idea you think calls for a new study, either locally or at the state level?

Do we need to update any of our old positions?

What about our advocacy and community education priorities?

When: Tuesday, February 1, 2011, from 12 noon to 2 pm

Where: Albany Public Library, Edith Stone Room 1247 Marin Avenue (at Masonic) Albany

The State League will be sending us a Program Planning kit this month (November) to help us do this planning, so we won't be without resources to assist us.

In the meantime, you can go to:

http://ca.lwv.org/lwvonly/studies.html and take a look at the State studies of the last few years; to

http://ca.lwv.org/lwvc/issues/index.html to see our current State positions and issues for emphasis; and to

http://lwvbae.org/position.pdf for our own LWVBAE local positions.

Please come join us to help establish our local and state Program for the coming League year. These planning sessions are vital to setting our agenda for 2011-2012. and are an enjoyable way to find out more about League "process" and get acquainted with more members of our League.

You may bring your lunch but only water is permitted as beverage.

Sherry Smith, President

BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY REGISTRATION FORM

The price of this year's Bay Area League Day is \$30 (\$20 without lunch) in advance or \$35 (\$25 without lunch) at the door. A light breakfast will be served to all who attend. To register, please write check payable to "LWVBA" and mail with this form to 1611 Telegraph Ave., Suite 300, Oakland, CA 94612.

Name:	Local League:
Phone:	Email:

Registration is also available online through January 24 via PayPal at www.lwvbayarea.org. For more details, call (510) 839-1608 or send an e-mail to editor@bayareamonitor.org.

Election Services 2010—Outreach

The November 2010 ballot presented voters with some very thorny issues. The number of calls for help coming into the League office early and late taxed our resources to the limit. Even those who didn't get to our presentations snapped up our election materials from libraries and post offices so fast that we had to reorder more and keep restocking.

Voter Registration

Phoebe Watts organized our distribution of voter registration forms. Helping in the effort were Jane Coulter, Constance Fraser, Jean Safir, and Ruthann Taylor.

Phoebe also organized LWVBAE's participation in the Solano Stroll. Staffing the League table at the Stroll were: Jane Barrett, Aida Brennis, Jinky Gardner, Mim Hawley, Helene Lecar, Priscilla Myrick, Ginette Polak, Li-hsia Wang, and Phoebe Watts.

The Mock Election and Other School Activities

Bill Chapman oversaw the Mock Election running two days of voting at Berkeley High and another at Albany High. Bill recruited volunteers not only from the League but from Berkeley City College's Civic Engagement club to help steer students through their ballot, and negotiated with school personnel to be sure that classes could access computer facilities to register their votes. Our thanks to Pasqual Scuderi, Berkeley High's new principal, and Chris Young, the Student Services coordinator at Berkeley High who was particularly helpful.

As another means of engaging students and connecting them to the elections, Ms. Kessler, one of the Art Department teachers at Berkeley High, once again assigned her drawing class to create posters urging people to vote. These were on display at the Berkeley Public Library, along with more information about the issues, the week before the election.

Speakers Bureau

The only limit on our ability to serve was the thin pipeline of Leaguers able to speak publicly on the issues—perhaps the same problematic ballot questions scared potential speakers away! By Election Day we had made 12 Pros and Cons presentations to groups as diverse as the State Farm Insurance office in Emeryville, Berkeley City College, the Zonta club, a string of congregations, and groups serving seniors and the disabled. Kudos to all those who pitched in: Jinky Gardner, Fran Packard, Jean Safir and Sherry Smith.

Berkeley High also hosted a School Board candidates forum in the Community Theater, under the auspices of the school administration, the student government and the PTSA. Although this was designed to be a learning experience for the student leaders, League members were in on the planning and organizing.

Even after Election Day, leftover Voting materials continued to serve as resources at King Middle School, where teachers had assigned students to write persuasive essays choosing one or another of the propositions on the ballot.

Over on the University campus, Jane Coulter moderated at a student-sponsored Candidates' Forum for the District 7 City Council seat.

As you can see, the only limit on League action around election time is the availability of volunteers. If you can help us build a corps of members ready to pitch in at the next go-round, please let us know.

Pollwork

Did you serve as a pollworker on November 2? Were you an observer at the tally of absentee ballots at the Registrar of Voters? Please let us know. We'd like to document the hours our members put in helping our elections run smoothly. Please email your participation to helenelecar@ sbcglobal.net.

> Helene Lecar **Education Director**

Training the Next Generation of **Voters**

On October 20-21 at Berkeley High School, and on October 22 at Albany High, our League helped put on mock elections as part of the statewide Student Mock Election program run by California's Superintendent of Public Instruction and Secretary of State. These elections give students an opportunity to study issues and candidates in the news and on general election ballots, and to learn how to cast votes for their choices, and then to compare mock results with the returns on election night.

At Berkeley High, League volunteers Jane Barrett, Pat Day, Jinky Gardner, Almalee Henderson, Helene Lecar, Fran Packard, Liz Schaaf, Sherry Smith, Janet Strothman, Phoebe Watts, Li-hsia Wang and Bill Chapman worked with Berkeley City College students Adena Ishii, Ted Lu and Selam Mulatu to supervise two computer lab polling places where nearly 1,700 students cast ballots.

At Albany High, Barbara Alesandrini, Sheila Jordan, Jean Safir, Steve Schwartzberg, Sherry Smith, Ruthann Taylor, and Bill Chapman worked with the Connect Academy's faculty and students to supervise nearly 300 student voters as they signed in, voted and cast their paper ballots.

I think I speak for all of our volunteers when I say that watching huge smiles appear on the faces of students after giving them "I Voted" stickers as they left the polling sites

was the sort of reward one is rarely privileged to experience.

To see the BHS and AHS results, and to compare them with the statewide mock election results and those from November 2 in Alameda County and statewide, please use the following links to visit our mock election web pages.

Albany High: http://lwvbae.org/mock2010-AHS.htm Berkeley High: http://lwvbae.org/mock2010-BHS.htm

Bill Chapman Civics Education Action Committee

From LWVUS President

Dear League Leaders:

Give yourselves a big hug and pat on the back for a job superbly done! The League has served our communities and the nation in incredible ways during this entire election season. I know we do this work year after year and we often think it's no big deal, but it is a big deal! So, let's sit back for a moment and recognize and appreciate our accomplishments. We made a difference!

But now (yes, the inevitable but), we have much work ahead of us. High on the list are two elements that were major players during this election season and go deeper than which party controls the House or the Senate: secret money and incivility. The former can be mitigated with proper legislation, while the latter cannot and requires constant supervision.

Voters were overwhelmed by millions of dollars in negative ads but didn't know who paid for many of them. They will be hard pressed to know if their elected officials are in Washington to serve the public interest or the special interests. Pay-to-play politics won't change until we know who the special interests are that are pouring money into our elections.

This election demonstrated the critical need to improve our governmental structures. Because of the failure of Congress to act, there are no disclosure requirements governing the huge amounts of money that the Supreme Court recently turned loose in American politics. We must continue the fight for passage of the DISCLOSE Act which would restore some transparency to U.S. elections by requiring disclosure of corporate and union spending in candidate elections. We also must continue to work for preservation and extension of ethics enforcement. The special interest money in this election is further indication that Congress must not fail in enforcing ethics standards in their ranks.

As for the element that cannot be legislated, the incivil-

ity and tone of the 2010 campaign exhibited a disturbingly new low in American politics. Not only was this evident in the expensive advertising, but we also saw it in candidate debates and forums and in the public discourse. We will continue to highlight the importance of civility in discourse and speak out against incivility when we observe it in action.

We believe that voters, not money, should be at the center of our democracy. Let's roll up our sleeves once more and continue to help our fellow citizens debate the issues in a civil and effective way and fight for transparency, accountability and disclosure in America's elections!

> Proudly in League, Elisabeth MacNamara

Environmental Concerns

On Monday, December 13, 2010 our presenter at the Environmental Concerns meeting will be Edwin Bernbaum, an author (*Sacred Mountains of the World*), lecturer, mountaineer and scholar who will show an illustrated presentation of *The Heights Of Inspiration, Culture and the Environment*

When: Monday, December 13, 7:00-9:00 pm*

Where: 1037 Mariposa Street north Berkeley off Los Angeles Street.

From the Himalaya to the Sierra Nevada, people around the world look up to mountains as sources of inspiration, renewal, wisdom, creativity, and vision. The remote Himalayan peak of Mount Kailas, rising aloof above the Tibetan Plateau, directs the minds of millions of Hindus and Buddhists toward the utmost attainments of spiritual liberation. Mount Sinai occupies a special place in the Bible as the imposing site where Moses received the Ten Commandments, the basis of law and ethics in Western civilization. For many in the modern world, Mount Everest symbolizes the highest goal they may strive to attain, whether their pursuit be material or spiritual.

The presentation examines how the evocative meanings of mountains can be used to enrich people's experience of the natural world and motivate efforts to protect the environment. This very special presentation will start with a holiday appetizer and dessert Pot Luck.

*Note: Our 7:00 p.m. start time is one half hour earlier than usual

Carol Stone Co-chair Environmental Concerns

Air District Addresses Clean Air **Initiatives**

With California's climate change law hanging in the balance before the election, Environmental Concerns welcomed a presentation on "Why We Need AB32" and the new California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines at the October 18 meeting. Abby Young, Principal Environmental Planner for the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District), spoke of the need for aggressive targets to curb greenhouse gases (GHGs) and improve air quality as supported in AB32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act. As a public health and regulatory regional agency whose jurisdiction includes 101 cities in the nine Bay Area counties, the Air District looks at a broad range of toxics including ozone, methane and carbon monoxide, but has a large focus on impacted communities and localized toxic emissions, the No.1 source of which is particulate matter from diesel. The Air District, however, has no authority over mobile sources. "We can't regulate that but through incentive programs we can improve and change," offered Young. One example is the electrification of boats while in harbor at the Port of Oakland, she said.

Key policy areas in state, regional and local government include transportation, energy, high GWP (Global Warming Potential) measures, waste reduction and recycling, forests and agriculture, and water efficiency, Young said.

The Air District's Clean Air Plan (CAP) is a blueprint for the Bay Area that includes a comprehensive list of strategies and is a multi-pollutant plan to address regional smog as well as local air toxics and GHGs. The CAP protects public health by reducing exposure to fine particulate matter and air toxics, and through new Land Use and Local Impacts Measures (LUMs) to protect the most impacted communities. A key element of the plan is climate protection.

The new CEQA guidelines apply to new development and offer the first ever GHG "significance thresholds" beyond which there are significant impacts to the environment. Air Districts traditionally provide guidance to local lead agencies on evaluating and addressing air pollution impacts from projects subject to CEQA. To this end, the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) has prepared a White Paper reviewing policy choices, analytical tools, and mitigation strategies.

The Air District works closely with the California Air Resources Board (CARB), which is responsible for implementing the standards set by AB32 that require a reduction of GHG emissions in California to 1990 levels by 2020 by strengthening low-carbon fuel standards, conservation measures and renewable energy mandates. CARB's GHG reduction targets 2020 and 2035 were unveiled October 2010 for the state's 18 Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). The 9-county, Bay Area MPO is the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Planning Association who work closely with the regional Air District. CARB's GHG reduction proposal is in a 45day public comment period beginning November 1 and the board is expected to vote on the regulation in December. The regulation includes a controversial cap-and-trade program for large polluters. It would take effect in 2012 and eliminate 273 million metric tons of carbon dioxide from the air by 2020. In 2012 the estimated number of metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions for California will be capped at what is forecast to be emitted that year. Over the following three years the cap will shrink by two percent per year. From 2015 to 2020 the cap will drop by 3 percent per year.

The role of the Air District is as regulator, information source (data, inventories), funder (\$7 million in climate grants), and collaborator with One Bay Area and other regional agencies, and SB375, California's Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act, the nation's first legislation to link transportation and land use planning with global warming. Central to the implementation of SB 375 is the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), an integrated regional land-use and transportation plan that is required to accommodate a 25-year projection of the region's housing need while simultaneously reducing GHG emissions from automobiles and light trucks.

The Air District is governed by a 22-member Board of Directors with representatives from each county based on population. City of Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates is Vice Chair.

For more information contact ayoung@baaqmd.gov.

Gail Schickele

Co-chair Environmental Concerns

RCV: How It Played Out—Two Views

As the provisional ballots are being counted, here are two analyses of how well Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) worked in the Oakland Mayoral Race. The first is by FairVote; the second is from the Californiawatch blog by Lance Williams.'

Key Facts about Oakland's First RCV Election: Analysis Shows Voters Effectively Used Ranked Choice Voting

For Oakland's extremely close mayoral election, the nonprofit educational organization FairVote analyzed the

Donations

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Vivian Scharlach

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Many thanks for remembering our League,

Louetta Erlin Donations Secretary

Welcome

Henry Olson, New Member Horst Bansner, Returning Member

LWVBAE Members' Survey

The LWVBAE Membership Committee is exploring ways to recruit new members and more actively engage members when they join. Our first activity was to conduct a survey of current members to get input on how we can achieve these goals. The survey was conducted in September/October. The link to the on line survey was sent to approximately 200 members; a hard copy was mailed to about 100 members who did not have e-mail addresses. We had 55 responses, an 18% return rate.

Here is a short summary of the responses received. The committee will be considering all the comments and suggestions as we develop recommendations on how we can attract and engage new members. Thanks to all current members who completed the survey.

The demographics of the respondents showed 60% were in the age group of 71+ and 40% have been League members for 20+ years.

The respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the feeling of civic responsibility was the main incentive for becoming a League member, with the desire to work on specific issues the second major incentive. The main obstacle to recruiting new members was identified as lack of time with lack of visibility/knowledge about the League and its activities next. Many respondents felt that the target population for recruitment is the 31-50 year group with the 18-30 year old group second.

We received many thoughtful suggestions on:

- how to make the League more visible (e.g. more media exposure, increased use of electronic technology, increased local/civic forums/ events)
- activities that would be attractive to new members (e.g. personal mentoring/"buddy system" with an experienced member, invitations to participate in specific activities, training on current League activities)
- organizations that we could partner with to achieve similar goals (e.g. AAUW, citizen study groups, higher education/K-12 groups, environmental groups, civic groups).

We will continue to keep League members informed as we continue our discussions on strategies to attract new members to LWVBAE. If you have additional comments or suggestions, feel free to contact any of the committee members (Jane Coulter, Rainey Sikes, Suzanne Chun, Bill Chapman, Jinky Gardner, or Pat Day) Email to office@lwvbae.org will always reach us.

RCV Continued from page 5

electronic ballot images made available November 7 by the Alameda County Registrar of Voters (the ballot images are anonymous digital records of every voter's ballot counted to that date).

FairVote's analysis shows that of Oakland voters indicating a preference in the mayoral race, 99.8% cast a valid ballot. Furthermore, the great majority of voters ranked more than one candidate:

- a) 72% of Oakland voters ranked three different candidates
- b) 13% of Oakland voters ranked two different candidates
- c) 15% of Oakland voters ranked one candidate

Rob Richie, executive director of FairVote, said, "Our analysis shows that

Oakland voters used ranked choice voting effectively. Nearly three-quarters of voters used all three of their rankings, a very high rate. That reflects a high level of engagement, understanding and effective use of ranked ballots. Aided by strong educational efforts from election officials and community groups, Oakland voters 'get' RCV."

In the Mayor's race, according to the ballots that have been processed so far, candidate Jean Quan has come from second place to take a lead of nearly 1,900 votes over candidate Don Perata. Quan vaulted into the lead by winning three times as many second- and third-rankings as Perata from the supporters of third-place candidate Rebecca Kaplan. An additional 12,000 or so votes remain to be counted in Oakland (at the date this was written).

By the time all of the ballots have been counted, approximately 106,000 Oakland residents will have voted in the mayoral election. This compares to only 83,891 voters in the June 2006 election won by outgoing mayor Ron Dellums. 27% more Oakland voters have participated in this year's mayoral election because RCV allowed Oakland to hold a single election in November.

Steven Hill, a consultant to FairVote California, commented, "Jean Quan built an effective coalition that, according to these preliminary results, has allowed her to emerge as the pick of Oakland's voters. While he had a sizable initial lead (of approximately 10 percent), Perata had more difficulty broadening his support base. To win under RCV, a candidate must have not only a strong core of support but also a broad base. If these results hold up, it means that more voters preferred Quan over Perata."

Judy Cox, former co-president of the Oakland League of Women Voters, was appointed as a Ranked Choice Voting Facilitator by the Registrar of Voters for the polls in Redwood Heights, a mixed race, middle class neighborhood. She said, "I offered all voters assistance with RCV. Almost everyone said they understood RCV. Hardly anyone even asked me a question about it. My experience is consistent with what I've heard from RCV Facilitators across the City."

Added Richie, "With ranked choice voting, voters benefited from a vigorous campaign with a lot of viable choices. Candidates were out there hunting for votes and support, and voters were engaged and ranking their top candidates. Under the old, two round runoff system there would have been five months of mostly negative mudslinging and a much bigger impact from big campaign spending. But with RCV, Oakland was able to finish in a single, high turnout November election, thereby saving a lot of tax dollars and allowing voters and candidates to participate in a robust electoral process. However the final mayoral results turn out, this has been a win-win for democracy in Oakland."

Confusion about Oakland's voting system may have affected election (from the Californiawatch blog by Lance Williams)

One out of every 10 Oakland voters showed signs of confusion about how to vote for mayor using the city's new ranked-choice voting procedure, according to a computer analysis of returns obtained by California Watch.

The confusion was so great that it may have flipped the final results of the extraordinarily tight mayor's race between former state Senate leader Don Perata and city council member Jean Quan, the analysis shows.

The analysis of voter registrar data was performed by an elections expert who is not from Alameda County and not affiliated with any of the candidates or campaigns.

The analyst asked not to be identified by name lest he be caught up in controversy over the election's outcome.

He said that more than 9,700 of the 97,940 Oaklanders who voted in last week's election made mistakes that reflected a fundamental misunderstanding about the new system.

"There were a lot more people confused and potentially messing up their ballots than there were votes in the spread" between Perata and Quan, the expert said.

As of Monday (November 8), Quan was leading Perata by 1,876 votes, records show. Alameda County Registrar of Voters Dave Macdonald said he's unsure when the vote count will be complete.

The expert's workup shows that 90 percent of the 97,940 participating Oakland voters seemingly understood how ranked-choice voting works.

Of the total, 70 percent listed three candidates in order of preference, as instructed. Another 11 percent listed only their first and second choices, and about 9 percent only marked a first choice

After that, confusion seemed to set in.

More than 5 percent of voters marked the same candidate for their first, second and third choices, the analysis shows. But a voter can only vote for a candidate once, so for these 4.900 voters those second and third choices went uncounted.

In another sign of confusion almost 1 percent of voters – 924 – cast their third-choice vote for their first-choice candidate, meaning that their third choice went uncounted.

Another 472 voters listed two or more candidates as either their first, second or third preference, canceling out those votes as well.

What do you think?

Did voters understand the new RCV system? Did you? Call or email LWVBAE and let us know.

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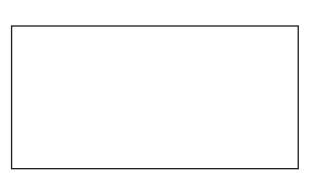
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The Voter is published 9 times a year by the League of Women Voters of Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville 1414 University Avenue, Suite D Berkeley, CA 94702-1509

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Technical Consultant: Bill Chapman Current and past issues of the *Voter* are posted on our website http://lwvbae.org.

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.

Calendar — Berkeley addresses unless otherwise noted

November							
17	Wed	3:00-5:00 pm	Board Meeting, LWVBAE Office	S. Smith	548-1769		
December							
7	Tues	noon-2:00 pm	Conversation: Health Care Albany Library 1247 Marin Avenue, Albany	G. Polak	841-4546		
13	Mon	7:00-9:00 pm	Environmental Concerns 1037 Mariposa St.	C. Stone	549-0959		
15	Wed	3:00-5:00 pm	Board Meeting, LWVBAE Office	S. Smith	548-1769		
January							
4	Tues	noon-2:00 pm	Conversation: Climate Change Albany Library 1247 Marin Avenue, Albany	G. Polak	841-4546		
7	Fri	5:00 pm	Deadline for February Voter	F. Packard	845-3037		
26	Wed	3:00-5:00 pm	Board Meeting, LWVBAE Office	S. Smith	548-1769		
29	Sat	9:00am-2:00pm	Bay Area League Day MetroCenter, 101 Eigth St, Oakland	M. Hawley	527-7727		
February							
1	Tues	noon-2 pm	Conversation: Program Planning Albany Library	G. Polak	841-4546		

1247 Marin Avenue, Albany