



*League of Women Voters Berkeley Albany Emeryville*

# ***The Voter***

*“ . . . to promote informed citizen participation in government.”*

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July August 2011



## **LWVBAE Annual Community Luncheon**

### **Christina Romer, former Obama adviser will speak**

**When:** Thursday, August 18, 2011, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm

**Where:** .Hs Lordships, Berkeley

The League's Twelfth Annual Community Luncheon will be headlined by Christina Romer, Professor of Economics at UC Berkeley. Her topic will be **“The Challenges of Economic Policymaking: A View from the Inside”**.

Professor Romer was appointed by President Barack Obama as his first Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers, and she served nearly two years in that capacity (January 2009-September 2010) before returning to Cal to fill the Class of 1957 Garff B. Wilson Professor of Economics chair.

The talk will focus on some key economic policy decisions during the first two years of the Obama administration. It will detail the issues involved, the personalities, the policymaking process, and the motivation behind the ultimate decisions. She will then discuss the current challenges of lingering high unemployment and the very large long-run federal deficit.

Prof. Romer has served as Vice President of the American Economic Association, and was honored with the Berkeley Distinguished Teaching award, the Berkeley campus' most prestigious award for teaching. She is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

### **“Spirit of the League” Awards**

Another highlight of the August 18 Luncheon will be the “Spirit of the League” award honoring Fran Packard, former President of the League of Women Voters of California, LWV Bay Area, and also of LWVBAE. Fran has devoted herself to civic improvement ever since arriving in Berkeley in 1973 serving on several Boards, Commissions and state Task Forces, as well as presiding over the League.

The League is also awarding its annual organizational “Spirit of the League” to the Berkeley Community Fund, whose vision is to use contributions from the larger Berkeley community to “ensure a future when talented students graduating from our high schools

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will be able to fulfill their educational aspirations, develop their full potential, and share their positive, enriching lives with others”.

The Luncheon will be held on Thursday, August 18, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at Hs Lordships Restaurant at the Berkeley Marina. League members and those who have attended past Luncheons will receive invitations in the mail in mid-July, and are urged to bring friends to this gala event. The Luncheon is a wonderful way to show guests what the League accomplishes in our communities, and is the major way in which we raise funds to support the League’s many activities and programs.

Books, Inc. (1760 Fourth Street in Berkeley) has generously agreed to contribute a portion of the proceeds from their sales of topical books at our Luncheon.

Christina Romer joins the list of distinguished past Community Luncheon speakers that includes former Chancellor I. Michael Heyman, UC Linguistics Professor George Lakoff, KQED Radio “Forum” host Michael Krasny; Jane Wales, President and CEO of the World Affairs Council; UC Professor (and former Labor Secretary) Robert Reich; Member of Congress Jackie Speier; Christopher Edley, Jr., Dean of Boalt Hall School of Law; and State Treasurer and former Attorney General Bill Lockyer, among others.

The luncheon is always a wonderful summer enhancement, so watch for your invitation and do join us on August 18!

Suzanne Chun and Sherry Smith  
Luncheon Co-Chairs

## Annual Meeting in Brief

The Annual Membership Meeting was held May 26, 2011 at the Northbrae Community Church in Berkeley. Some 50 members attended, and the program was highlighted by a presentation by journalist Peter Schrag on “How We Made the Mess and How We Might Fix It”. Mr. Schrag was referring to our dysfunctional state government, and you will find a report on his interesting remarks on page 3.

A wonderful feature of the evening was the excellent homemade dinner prepared by Rainey Sykes and her crew, which included Suzanne Chun, Jane and Tom Coulter, Pat Day, and Angharad Jones.

Parliamentarian for the meeting was Fran Packard and Secretary was Angharad Jones. The 2010 Annual Meeting

Minutes were accepted. Nancy Bickel, Ginette Polak, and Jean Safir were appointed to a committee to review the Annual Meeting minutes for 2011.

On the recommendation of the Budget Committee, chaired by Tom Coulter, the League Budget for 2011-2012 (\$98,001) was unanimously approved.

On motion of Program Vice President Ginette Polak, the membership approved the Board recommendations that we retain all current positions; that we begin no new local study; and that the following be emphasized for education and action: climate change; health care; and open government.

The following members were awarded

### Certificates of Appreciation:

**Gil Bendix:** For his dedication to the environment, the community, and as a League member for over 25 years, lending his expertise and good advice to the Bay Area League Water Committee, keeping us informed on natural resources and emergency preparedness issues and paying close attention to EIRs.

**Pat Day:** For her willingness to take on the challenges of new member recruitment and development, bringing fresh ideas to our century-old organization, our deep appreciation for her commitment to our expansion and to improvement of the membership experience.

**Vi Feinauer:** For her long-time commitment to the League, as a member for over 25 years, as Board Secretary for several years, and assisting us in conducting mock, student, and other election services, and as the “Wednesday Volunteer” at the League office

**Rainey Sykes:** For her enthusiastic commitment to the League to share her expertise in the enjoyment of good food and good comradeship, enhancing meetings by making them attractive, tasty experiences through her cheerful dedication to that task. The League expresses to Rainey its deep appreciation for her attention to detail behind the scenes.

**Ruthann Taylor:** For her active contributions to LWVBAE for 20 years, which have included serving as Vice President for Administration and overseeing volunteer training and coordination for many years, and for her taking charge of promoting and running our fundraising SCRIP program

The following **officers and directors** were elected, to take office July 1, 2011

#### Officers

President	Sherry Smith
Recording Secretary	Angharad Jones
Treasurer	Bill Chapman
VP Administration	Diane Akers
VP Membership	Jane Coulter

#### Directors

Jane Barrett	Jinky Gardner
Helene Lecar	Fran Packard
Ginette Polak	Gail Schickele
Carol Stone	Li-hsia Wang
Phoebe Watts	

## Peter Schrag's Comments at Annual Meeting

**Note: Peter Schrag, a lifelong journalist, served for 19 years as the Sacramento Bee editorial page editor until 1996 and then as a weekly columnist. Currently, he writes a weekly piece each Monday, for the California Progress Report blog. He is a visiting scholar with UC's Institute for Governmental Studies.**

Peter Schrag, in his keynote talk at the League's annual meeting this May, painted a painfully vivid picture of California's economic and governmental dilemmas—"the mess we're in and how we might fix it." Among the dilemmas, he emphasized the almost cult-like hyper-partisanship within Republican party, which contributes to the legislative gridlock in Sacramento. He pointed out that California has gone from being a model of modern government in roads, infrastructure and schools to being among the worst, thanks to shrinking state support. The condition of our roads, water systems, and parks compares unfavorably with those, for example, of France, he observed.

He reminded us that excessive democracy through legislation by initiative has rolled back the progressive legislation California passed after World War II. Although the initiative system was passed in 1911 to curb corruption and control of government by bosses and big businesses, Schrag recalled that for the past more than thirty years, since Proposition 13, the system has "run wild." Unfortunately, California's system, unlike others, has no sunset clause or provisions allowing the legislature to correct problems that emerge.

Schrag suggested that the reason that California has had no Tea Party movement is that for last 30 years we have already "teapartied" ourselves. One example is Proposition 187, passed in 1994, but later found unconstitutional, which denied health care, public education and other public services to illegal aliens. He observed that we were the Arizona of 1994.

**"If it wasn't for those illegal immigrants we wouldn't need all that money for public schools."** Schrag recalled getting mail from readers expressing views that showed the growing gap between the richer, older, English-speaking people, who are more likely to vote, and the poorer, younger, perhaps Spanish-speaking people, who are more likely to need government services. A related shift in public attitudes about taxes and services-- from a communitarian ethic to an individualistic ethic--contributes to California's problems, he observed. We used to be willing to tax ourselves highly in order to get good government services, but California now is only slightly above average in taxes per person and services and infrastructure has similarly declined.

Schrag surveyed many proposed solutions, but thought none would provide a quick fix, for example, a number of bills in the legislature seeking to reform the initiative process. Although California recently voted to eliminate a supermajority for budgets, it still requires a 2/3 vote for taxes. He did not think that the newly reformed redistricting process would make a big difference, since California geography and demography means that "liberals congregate in Berkeley, conservatives in Orange County."

Schrag held out some hope for longer-term improvements. Since younger citizens are more tolerant of people of different races and the Hispanic population is growing, younger and Spanish-speaking voters will join the electorate in future, who will perhaps become more willing to tax themselves to improve services and infrastructure.

Nancy Bickel

For those interested in exploring the issues raised by Peter Schrag's talk in more depth, you may read his latest work at

<http://www.californiaprogressreport.com/site/taxonomy/term/123>

You may also read the two books he referred to during his talk:

*California Crackup: How Reform Broke the Golden State and How We Can Fix It* by Joe Matthews and Mark Paul

*Ill Fares the Land* by Tony Judt



## Update on Juvenile Justice, Delinquency Prevention and Foster Youth

A new, highly energetic head of the Probation Department, David Muhammed, took over in February, picked up the ball and is running with it. Having worked with the Mentoring Center in Oakland, he went on to success in Washington, DC and New York before the Board of Supervisors chose him as Alameda County's Chief Probation Officer. Unlike many whose working background is in the department, Mr. Muhammed comes in with experience on the streets and a readiness to promote real changes.

Already he's changing the culture at Juvenile Hall, determined to make the best, positive use of the time that youth are detained. He can build on improvements made by the former Chief: in the taking into detention only those youth considered at high risk, testing at entry for mental health and education needs, and planning for transitioning youth back to school and community. But recidivism is still high, and youth on probation may not even see their probation officer once monthly.

Community Probation officers, who did real case management, helping youth and family to deal with school and needed services, have lost their grant funding. Muhammed hopes to find community based organizations that might house regular probation officers to help fill that role. There are challenges. Younger and younger children are showing up at Juvenile Hall, more and more girls are falling into the category of sexually exploited minors, and youth are becoming harder to handle. Gang members have to be kept separated; younger, smaller boys protected. Through fewer youth being taken into detention and the release of many detainees on electronic and GPS monitoring, numbers in the Hall are down from an average of 280 to 215 at present. However, staff has still been stretched by budget cuts, using only 8 of the 12 units in the new Hall, and thus mixing boys and girls in the mental health.

In 2009 the state started returning juvenile non-violent offenders to the counties. In 2010 we received 30 youth, of whom half were over 18 years old. They had to be supervised by Probation and provided with community services. The Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) is considering closing all their facilities, which would mean returning violent offenders who are held up to age 25 for committing offenses as juveniles. If these facilities are closed, the county will need secure facilities for the them. It appears that as of July, Alameda County will either have to contract with the state to take all violent offenders at a cost per youth of \$200,000/year, or open up our own facilities. Juvenile Hall is intended for only short term stays for

youth awaiting court hearings--an average of 20 days. It has four unused secure units which could house these more violent youth. However, because youth as young as 14 may be tried as adults, there are already 25 youth at the Hall for a much longer period of a year or more awaiting the age of 18 when they will be sent to an adult facility. They need proper programs, as would some of the 50 now in a state facility. Since some have been sentenced to be held until they turn 25, they can't be mixed with younger youth. Muhammed is particularly concerned that this will mean that the county district attorney will remand more youth to adult court. Like many, he believes that youth can be better rehabilitated in a community setting. However, he fears state funding will not follow, although it costs about \$70,000 a year per youth in county--far less than the present \$225,000 in state facilities.

**Camp Sweeney's role** is to provide longer term care--usually for a school term at least. The present camp, though, is outdated, and doesn't meet seismic standards and is completely open. It would have to include a secure unit to house DJJ kids. Plans to build a new Camp Sweeney have been stalled, as the \$35 million promised by the state is dependent on a 25% match from the county. It now looks like they have found a way to move ahead. Until this new secure facility is ready, the youth will need to be housed at Juvenile Hall. Plans are for 120 beds, in 30-bed units, which could house the present population, and have a completely secure section to serve about 45 youth who might have been sent to DJJ; and a 30-bed unit for girls, who now have to be sent to Arizona.

Girls are a special problem with so many running from group homes to the streets and ending up back in the Hall—not for a crime, but for their own protection. They need longer term care to repair their lives and often to keep them from their pimps. Chief Muhammed has been looking at the highly successful Missouri model which provides a structured but very positive environment, however, that would be more costly.

The current presiding judge of Juvenile Court, Trina Stanley Thompson, is also a high energy person and trying to manage or influence not just the court but those that deal with the youth that come before her, at the Hall, the Camp, the group homes, schools and in the community. She is determined to get at the causes for truancy, a sure marker for youth admitted to the hall. Another judge holds Collaborative Court which hears low-level offenders with serious mental health needs, and supervises a 6-month case management program for them. Because this is expensive, only about 15 youth can be handled at a time. And the McCollum Youth Court, a model program where first-time offenders are judged by their peers, has wide support from both law enforcement and the judiciary. It, however, is struggling with funding.

Now that Gail Steele is no longer on the Board of Supervisors, we have lost a tireless and devoted fighter for the youth in our county. For years she has hosted monthly meetings to pull together representatives of law enforcement, probation, social services and child service agencies, to try to devise a system to prevent youth from falling through the cracks. While the Board seems to be committed to better youth services, it will be hard to replace Gail Steele.

As a member of the county's Juvenile Justice/Delinquency Prevention Commission, I've been taking part in our annual inspections of all holding facilities (police and BART police stations) as well as group homes, for both probation and foster youth. With the police, we have been particularly alert to the fair treatment of minorities and the availability and use of diversion programs in the community. With group homes the aim is to assure that youth feel really cared about, are provided with structure and stability, are attending school regularly, and are prepared for emancipation.

**Foster Children:** There has been a major turnaround in thinking about the welfare of foster children. Twenty-five years ago it was all about keeping them away from their problem families. About six years ago, it flipped. Family finding became the goal--families were looked upon as a rich and necessary resource. Social Services opted into a trial program under which it received an annual block grant based on the number of youth then in foster care--rather than the usual pay-per-youth system. By doing so, it was able to focus on finding kin and fictive kin who could care for the youth, resulting in reducing the number of foster youth from about 5,000 to the present 1,600. It has saved money by closing many group homes which cost about \$7000 per child per month. Some of this can go into support for the families. All is not yet perfect...some 20% of family placements fail and youth are returned to the system. More foster homes are being sought; but they receive only about \$600 per child, and this may be part of the problem.

Quite a few youth are therefore placed out of county in foster families as well as group homes for those who can't fit into a foster home. And those older youth with the highest level of behavioral needs may have to be sent out of state.

What happens to youth who age out of the system is getting increased attention. Too many leave without the education or skills to get a job and care for themselves. Far too few go on to college, and of those even fewer graduate. They can get grants for higher education, but they need mentors. They need housing. First Place for Youth, a local non-profit agency, is the leader in providing subsidized apartments, training and support for emancipated youth, but more such services are needed. Above all, young people need some-

one to whom they feel permanently connected.

The LWV California is continuing to back SB 9 (formerly SB399), sponsored by Senator Yee, which would let a prisoner sentenced to life without parole for a crime committed under the age of 18 petition for a rehearing. According to data from DJJ in 2008, of the 152 minors convicted in adult court, 59% of youth sentenced to LWOP were first-time offenders, with no criminal history and 45% didn't perform the murder for which they were convicted, but were only accessories. Many were sentenced to a worse penalty than the adult with whom they committed the crime. This injustice is due to Proposition 21 which set these extreme sentences.

Lois Brubeck

## Education

In a year dominated by budget deficits and legislative gridlock, our local educational endeavors were confined to damage control. The state deficit is now down to \$10 billion, but unless new tax revenue emerges from somewhere, we'll all be staring at even deeper austerities in the year ahead.

People rightly point out that schools have taken a bigger hit than other sectors of the budget, but some 40% of the state's General Fund Revenues supports K-12 and higher education takes another 10-11%, so roughly half of any further cuts will have to be shared by schools. A recent paper from the California Budget Project (April 28, 2011) looks at the impact of an "all-cuts" budget on California's schools, district by district. Albany schools would lose an additional \$2.832 million from last year's budget, Berkeley would lose \$6.673 million, and even Emeryville would have to cut another \$586,000 from their already bare-bones budgets of 2010-11.

Federal aid to schools since 2009 has postponed or at least softened the impact of massive layoffs, but most of that money was a short-term stopgap, to save jobs, and is nearly gone. The biggest chunk, \$100 billion from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) enabled school districts across the country to bridge over insolvency temporarily. More limited competitive grants such as Race to the Top (RTTT) and School Improvement Grants (SIG) have been targeted to those states and/or Districts which submitted plans to improve the performance of their least successful schools. Further grants under these programs await Congressional action on the federal budget.

As the situation has become increasingly grave, with districts cutting days of classroom instruction, essential support personnel like librarians and college counselors, extra-curricular activities, summer school programs, and

small class sizes, the search for added state funding has ranged far and wide, from the serious like oil depletion taxes, increasing the very low tariff on alcoholic beverages, to the almost whimsical. AB 18 is proposing a one-penny tax on sodas sold in schools. The implementation may be a little obscure, but sponsors claim it will provide a net \$1.7 billion for schools.

To add to California's fiscal distress, the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is up for renewal. The existing version of the ESEA, known as No Child Left Behind, seems to have in it something for everyone to dislike, regardless of political viewpoint.

In general, excluding the ARRA contributions, federal funds provide about 10% of total Pre-K-12 budgets through programs such as Head Start, free or subsidized school lunches, and aid to homeless children. They are targeted mainly to schools serving disadvantaged children with greater needs than state budgets can meet.

Indeed, our own new **National League study of the appropriate role of the Federal Government in Education** will be focusing League discussion on exactly the same questions Congress is now debating: What should the new ESEA include? How far into educational policy-making should the federal government go? The national League website describes the study and provides links to background papers on five issues we will be asked to address in our consensus meetings this October:

Common Core Standards and Assessments

Early Childhood Education, Equity and Funding

Funding and Equity Issues

Legislation and Funding for the Education of Children Who Are Disadvantaged

Role of Federal Government in Public Education: Historical Perspectives

If you have trouble opening the documents, copy the following League web address and paste it into your browser:

[http://lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Public\\_Education&Template=TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=167&ContentID=16956](http://lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Public_Education&Template=TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=167&ContentID=16956)

As we go to press, we still haven't received either the consensus questions or the leader's guide for our study, so in a sense, we're still waiting to begin. Our summer meetings are slated for Wednesday, June 22, Wednesday, July 20, and Thursday August 25. All of these will take place at 10 AM in the League office, and we hope you can join us.

For more information, email or call Helene Lecar at [helene.lecar@sbcglobal.net](mailto:helene.lecar@sbcglobal.net) or 510-549-9719.

Helene Lecar, Education Director

## April – May Donations

### To the LWVBAE General Fund

*Jean Allen*

*Lisa Caronna*

*George and Ann Crowe*

*Almalee Henderson*

*Evelyn Light*

*Allie Norton*

*Novosel 4 City Council 2010*

*Karen Carlson-Olson*

*Juanita Peterson*

*Susan Pownall*

*George Trilling*

### To the LWVB Foundation

*Jean Allen*

*George and Ann Crowe*

*Mary Jacobson*

*Karen Carlson-Olson*

*Grace Smith*

Many thanks for remembering our League.  
Louetta Erlin, Donations Secretary

## Summer Office Hours

The League office will be open this summer ...do call first.

If you want to come to the office at a particular time please leave a message on our phone machine and someone will get back to you.

Monday and Wednesday mornings are usually staffed from mid-morning until noon....again, always call first.

Juanita Peterson and Vi Feinauer continue to come on a regular basis to staff the office. Board members also come regularly.

Thanks to all of you.

If you're interested in office volunteer work please give me a call at 510-845-8055.

Jane Barrett, [janebarrett@onebox.com](mailto:janebarrett@onebox.com)



## Year End Reports

### President's Report

After many years of working with Berkeley residents and city staff, we were happy to see the City Council unanimously adopt a new Open Government Ordinance, complete with a new Open Government Commission to oversee elected official and staff compliance with the Public Records Act and the Brown Act, to bring further "sunshine" to Berkeley city government.

Just a few weeks ago, our Health Care Committee held a public meeting on "Health Care Reform: Where are we now and what do we need?" It was a very successful session, in no small part due to extensive research on the subject and a well organized presentation by our experienced and energetic committee.

Another busy committee is our Healthy Planet/Climate Change team which, along with the Environmental Concerns committee, planned two "Conversations with the League", centered on what the next steps would be after "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: Taking it to the Next Level." The issue of Product Life Cycle Assessment came up at these meetings, and the committee will be looking at that.

After focusing League efforts on the November 2010 elections -- both California and Berkeley ballot measures -- during Fall 2010, LWVBAE in December began its monthly Conversations to highlight ongoing public policy issues by our local League Action committees. Topics in addition to the environmental subjects I just mentioned included national health insurance reform proposals, and controversial Berkeley issues having to do with open government/sunshine laws and Berkeley Public Library plans. The other two Conversations concerned choosing future League studies, and recommended emphasis and action on both California and Berkeley League levels. Those attending the Conversations (a dozen to 25 members) enjoyed sharing their ideas and information as well as catching up on the League's news and renewing friendships.

In October, our League held a Pros and Cons forum about planning for the future development of downtown Berkeley, which was Measure R on the Berkeley municipal ballot last November. The issue was a contentious one, even within the League, and since we had taken a position in favor of the measure, we invited Marion Taylor, President of the Bay Area League, to moderate the panel. The measure passed by a nearly 2/3 majority.

Last November, Berkeley held its first election using Ranked Choice Voting, following many years of activities by the Berkeley-Albany-Emeryville League; first, to get the initiative on the ballot, then to get voter approval, and finally, after we at last had state-approved software to process the election, we worked with the Registrar of Voters

and other affected Leagues to publicize it and make sure voters knew how to use it. It went off with hardly a hitch. Only those who don't win under the system continue to have problems with the idea.

A highlight of the summer we can all look forward to is the Annual Community Luncheon. Last August, our speaker at our main fundraising event was UC Linguistics Professor George Lakoff, speaking on "Framing and Voting". This coming August 18, we will feature Christina Romer, UC Professor of Economics, who served for two years as Chair of President Obama's Council of Economic Advisers. Mark your calendars for August 18, as this is a presentation you'll not want to miss.

One final point: This year, the Berkeley League is celebrating its 100th birthday, and we're joining with the Berkeley Historical Society to tell the story of how we campaigned for and helped pass the women's suffrage amendment to the US Constitution in 1911. We're planning a big bash, and you'll be invited.

It's been another interesting year for our League---our 99<sup>th</sup> year of civic engagement and making a difference in our communities. We look forward to celebrating our Centennial, and continuing this rich tradition of making you proud to be a League member. We are as effective as you make us.

Sherry Smith, President

### LWV of Berkeley Foundation

The LWVBF Board is composed of Lois Brubeck, President, Jane Bergen, Nancy Bickel, Jean Safir and Tom Coulter. Sherry Smith, representing the Foundation's sole member—LWVBAE, attends their quarterly meetings.

Having received a very generous earmarked contribution, the Foundation had to review its by-laws. It became clear that while donations for educational purposes may be directly made to the Foundation, those purposes should be determined by LWVBAE, and in line with their priorities. The Foundation is to serve the educational purposes of the League of Women Voters of Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville. It would, however, welcome suggestions from League members of educational activities that it might underwrite. Please direct any ideas to Lois Brubeck.

The Foundation wants to thank all those who made generous contributions over the past year.

Lois Brubeck, President

## Year End Reports Continued

### Health Committee

Our work has focused on support of Senate Bill 810, Senator Mark Leno's single payer bill (formerly SB 840 from Senator Sheila Kuehl).

Although SB 810 is not a priority for LWVC, local Leagues are free to work for the bill ourselves. The bill passed the Senate Health Care Committee and is now in the suspense file. It may return to the Senate next January. The Berkeley City Council and our local state legislators support SB 810. Our local contact with the state health care committee is Pat Snyder from Contra Costa County.

LWVBAE membership committee sponsored a program on health care reform at the North Berkeley Senior center in an effort to attract new members, and several members brought non-members. The Powerpoint presentation from that meeting is now on our website and available to everyone.

The next meeting is June 20 at 1:30 at the League office, and will be every third Monday of the month after that, including through the summer. All interested members are encouraged to come--we have work to do!

Li-hsia Wang, Chair

### Civics Education Action Committee

Our committee had a busy fall. In conjunction with the Gubernatorial election in November, we helped put on mock elections at Berkeley and Albany High Schools.

Albany High's election was run by students in their Connect program, with League members serving as observers and advisors. Our committee member, Bill Chapman, consulted with the Connect Academy teachers in planning the election, and supervised the student vote counters. Thanks to the good work of all involved (including League members Barbara Alesandrini, Sheila Jordan, Jean Safir, Steve Schwartzberg, Sherry Smith, and Ruthann Taylor, who supervised student balloting), things ran very smoothly.

At Berkeley High, Student Activity Director Chris Young decided to go high tech for their mock election. He and Bill Chapman worked together to design an online voting system; then Chris scheduled social studies teachers to bring their classes to the school's two computer labs to vote over the two election days. We staffed each lab with two volunteer supervisors (League members and BCC Civic Engagement Club students) during voting hours. Our volunteers worked with students and teachers to answer tech questions, keep the computer balloting web site on the screens, and hand out highly desired "I Voted" stickers to students once they'd cast their ballots. Thanks to the efforts of League members Jane Barrett, Pat Day, Terry

Doran, Jinky Gardner, Almalee Henderson, Helene Lecar, Fran Packard, Liz Schaff, Sherry Smith, Janet Strothman, Li-hsia Wang, and Phoebe Watts; and to BCC students Adena Iishi, Ted Lu, and Selam Mulatu, nearly 1,700 students at Berkeley High were able to vote – a record turnout in the mock elections we've supervised over the past decade.

Bill Chapman regularly attends Tuesday meetings of the Berkeley City College's Civics Engagement Club. The College's political science instructor, Matt Freeman, advises the Civics Engagement Club, which he founded during the 2009-10 academic year. Club members focus on community service activities like helping us with the BHS mock election.

Thinking that students might find ways to encourage Berkeleyans to register and vote, Helene Lecar reserved the display cases at the Berkeley Public Library Main Branch for the two weeks prior to the election. She coordinated an effort with art classes at Berkeley High to design eye-catching "get out the vote" messages. Committee members helped Helene set up and then take down the displays. Helene also arranged with the Albany Library to host Connect Academy election-related projects during October.

Spring was quiet for our committee. We did some brainstorming, but came up with no specific action projects. We are taking a break over the summer, but plan to start up early in the fall with new enthusiasm, new ideas, and perhaps a new committee member or two. Our next meeting is August 11, 7:30 pm, at the League office.

A hearty thanks to all of you who participated in last fall's action.

Jinky Gardner, Chair

### Membership Recruitment Committee

During the past year, the LWVBAE Membership Committee has been exploring ways to recruit new members and more actively engage members when they join. We sought input from current members on how we can achieve these goals through a survey last fall and we received many thoughtful comments and suggestions. After many discussions, the committee decided to focus on ways to make the League more visible to our local communities, seeking new audiences and new venues. We worked with the health care committee and held a forum on the current health care bill, its current status and related issues. We tried new avenues of publicity along with personal contacts. This was a successful forum, mainly attended by League members, but we did attract some community members. The committee has decided that presenting more forums may be the most effective way to increase League visibility and



## Year End Reports Continued

enhance our recruitment efforts so we are planning to work with our program committees to schedule a series of three presentations in the coming year.

Another focus will be to increase our personal contacts to recruit new members. This appears to be one of the most effective ways to attract new members so we hope that all current members will continue to encourage their friends and neighbors to attend League functions and perhaps join. We hope to work with the Board on additional strategies.

We will continue to keep League members informed as we continue our work on strategies to attract new members to LWVBAE. If you have additional comments or suggestions, feel free to contact any of the committee members (Bill Chapman, Suzanne Chun, Jane Coulter, Pat Day, Jinky Gardner, or Rainey Sykes).

### Healthy Planet/Climate Change

This past year our committee began to focus on some of the boundaries for a healthy planet, or tipping points. Although climate change gets the most attention, biodiversity loss, nitrogen and phosphorus pollution exceed safe limits by greater degrees. We've been distributing the Scientific American article on "Boundaries for a Healthy Planet" by Jonathan Foley at any events we attend.

We held two "Conversations with the League", the first planned by the Environmental Concerns Committee, and the second by the Healthy Planet/Climate Change Team. The conversations centered on what the next steps would be after "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: Taking it to the Next Level." The issue of Product Life Cycle Assessment came up in both meetings. This is something we as a League could look at.

Members of our committee participated in a meeting of the LVW Bay Area Natural Resources Committee with guest Sara Diefendorf, formerly of the League of Women Voters US, to discuss how we can move forward with climate change in the League. We are looking at having our LWVBAE committee interact with the Regional and State Leagues in an effort to get an interstate League Network on Climate Change.

This April for Earth Day we had a League table at the City-sponsored event at Civic Center to spread the word about climate change and the boundaries for a healthy planet.

Linda Swift, the former co-chair of our Climate Change Team Committee, has been giving power point presentations to universities and other groups to show the science behind climate change. Linda is available for speaking engagements. We will work with Bill Chapman to get a link to her presentation on our LWVBAE website.

Regina Beatus, Chair

### Natural Resources/Environmental Concerns

In September, Anna Goldstein from 350.org spoke to us concerning the worldwide day of action, the Global Work Party held 10/10/10. 350.org was founded by Bill McKibbin based on data showing 350 parts per million is what many scientists, climate experts, and some national governments are now saying is the safe upper limit for CO<sub>2</sub> in our atmosphere. Accelerating arctic warming and other early climate impacts have led scientists to conclude that we are already above the safe zone at our current 392ppm, and that unless we are able to rapidly return to below 350ppm this century, we risk reaching tipping points and irreversible impacts such as the melting of the Greenland ice sheet and major methane releases from increased permafrost melt.

In October, just before the November election, Abby Young, Principal Environmental Planner for the Bay Area Air Quality Management District spoke to us about climate change and air quality, and why AB 32 is necessary. Relevant air district initiatives, such as the CEQA guidelines that are working to move AB32 forward are the aggressive first steps to a solution to curb greenhouse gas emissions in California to 1990 levels by 2020.

In November, we joined the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory's "Science at the Theater" program to hear a presentation on "Get Smart About Carbon" featuring a number of scientists reporting on their cutting edge research.

In December, our annual pot luck appetizer and dessert event hosted Edwin Bernbaum, author (*Sacred Mountains of the World*), lecturer, mountaineer and scholar who showed a beautifully illustrated presentation of *The Heights Of Inspiration, Culture and the Environment . From the Himalaya to the Sierra Nevada*, people around the world look up to mountains as sources of inspiration, renewal, wisdom, creativity, and vision.

In January, we held two environmental events: hosting a "Conversation with the League" at Albany Public Library as well as Gail Schickele's participation in Bay Area League Day entitled Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: Taking it to the Next Level, an all day conference.

In February, we had as a speaker Elanor Starmer, the Western Region Director of Food & Water Watch. In her Round Up of Current Food Policy she gave us a sense of where we are with a new Congress and a Farm Bill coming up in 2012 as well as some background on the Food Safety Modification Act which had just been signed by President Obama.

Continued on page 10

## Environmental Concerns Continued from page 5

In March, we were pleased to have Claire Kremen, a conservation biologist and MacArthur Fellow as a speaker on "Bees and Other Pollinators and our Food Supply."

In April, Professor Eric B. Norman, UC Berkeley Department of Nuclear Engineering, gave a Powerpoint presentation one month after the Fukushima Nuclear plant radiation leak following the major earthquake and tsunami in Japan and its implication for California.

In May, Dean of the College of Natural Resources J. Keith Gillespie spoke on "Forests, the Lungs of the Earth" and what to expect with ongoing climate change emphasizing Northern California.

Carol Stone and Gail Schickele

## LWVC Convention Wrap-up

### You Should Have Been at the LWVC Convention!

(then you wouldn't need to read this summary)

The 64th convention of the League of Women Voters of California (LWVC), with the theme Grow the Future, was host to 168 voting delegates representing 56 local Leagues, 3 inter-League organizations (ILOs), and the LWVC board. The event was held over three days (May 13-15) in Ventura, and the delegates from LWVBAE were Jan Blumenkrantz, Helene Lecar, and Sherry Smith.

President Janis R. Hirohama completed a four-year term, and Jennifer A. Waggoner of San Francisco was elected President, starting July 1. Guest speakers welcomed by President Hirohama during the convention included Elisabeth MacNamara, President, LWVUS; Honorable Katcho Achadjian, Assembly Member, 33rd District; and Honorable Fiona Ma, Assembly Member, 12th District, and Assembly Speaker pro Tem.

During the business portions of the convention, delegates voted to reaffirm current positions, as follows:

1. Government, including campaign financing, constitution, election systems, initiative and referendum process, intergovernmental relationships, public libraries, redistricting, state and local finances, and voting rights.
2. Natural Resources, including agriculture, air quality, energy, hazardous materials, land use, solid waste, transportation, and water.
3. Social Policy, including children and family issues, child care, community college system, education: pre-kindergarten through 12, housing, juvenile justice/dependency, legal aid, and mental health care.

Delegates adopted the following recommended Issues for Education and Advocacy for 2011-2013:

- Redistricting Implementation
- State and Local Finances including education about California's financing of education
- Initiative and Referendum: Community Education

Delegates adopted the following recommended **update study: Initiative and Referendum Process Position Update**

Delegates adopted the following not-recommended program items by the required three-fifths vote:

1. Amendment to the current LWVC position on Juvenile Justice/Dependency to add to part 4c the following: **"Emphasis should be placed on diversion and rehabilitation consistent with public safety. Recognition should be given to the need to treat juveniles differently from adults because juvenile cognitive, developmental and behavioral maturity is in the formative stage."**
2. An update to the current LWVC position on Elections Systems to read: "Support election systems for executive **and other single-seat offices**, both at the state and local levels, that require the winner to receive a majority of the votes as long as the majority is achieved using a voting method such as Instant Runoff Voting, rather than a second, separate runoff election (the update language is seen in boldface)."

The delegates adopted the LWVC budget for 2011-2012 totaling \$367,000. The per member payment (PMP) will not increase. Delegates approved two of the three proposed amendments to the LWVC bylaws. Both of the approved amendments clarify text within the bylaws. The third proposed amendment, to establish staggered terms for LWVC officers and directors, failed.

In between plenary sessions where the League business was done, there were workshops and caucuses held early in the morning through late at night. Your delegates divided up the territory and attended as many of these as we could. Topics included use of Smart Voter; innovative ideas for developing League leadership; campaign finance reform after the "Citizens United" case; a strategic conversation about League voter service; growing local League membership; improving the content and look of Websites; planned giving fundraising; sustainable communities strategies; revitalizing local League Observer Corps; and innovative voter service partnerships, among several others.

Further information about the convention may be found on the LWVC Members Only Web site convention materials page.

State League conventions are held every two years, alternating between Northern and Southern California sites. In the alternate years, the US League conventions are held, and the 2012 US convention will be in May in Washington, D.C.

Our League budgets an amount to help defray the expenses of delegates who attend these conventions as our representatives. Please stay tuned for convention announcements in the coming months, if you think you would be interested in attending as a LWVBAE delegate. We are often allotted more delegate “slots” than we fill, so your interest is welcome.

I want to express my deep thanks to our other LWVBAE delegates, Jan and Helene. They represented our League with tireless enthusiasm, contributed lots to the discussions, and learned much to bring back. Thank you, good colleagues.

Sherry Smith, President

## Near Tragedy, then Triumph in 1911: Berkeley's Suffrage Campaign History

**October 10: WOMEN CONFIDENT OF VICTORY TODAY**

**October 11: SUFFRAGE DEFEATED---INITIATIVE AND THE RECALL CARRY**

**October 12: INDICATIONS POINT TO VICTORY FOR EQUAL SUFFRAGE**

**October 13: SUFFRAGE MAJORITY MAY REACH 4000**

These headlines from *The Berkeley Gazette* surrounding the November 10, 1911 election sketch the emotional rollercoaster suffrage supporters experienced as they waited for all the votes to be counted.

The constant activity of an army of suffrage campaigners is vivid in *The Gazette's* extensive coverage of the pro- and anti- suffrage campaigns. The pro-suffrage campaign brought in dramatic and expert speakers from the East Coast and the five western states where women already had the vote to talk to groups in Berkeley homes and in big meeting halls. Rallies and street speeches in the four quadrants of the City—then called North, South, East and West End—sought the attention of commuters, shoppers and workers leaving their factories and shops. A suffragist play was performed. Leading artist William Keith, an ardent suffragist like his wife Mary McHenry Keith, painted a picture in honor of the event. A suffrage

bas-relief depicted a Berkeley mother with her child.

*The Gazette* supported the campaign editorially and devoted a special pre-election Saturday edition to the issue, and invited local suffrage leaders to edit a Thursday edition. Debates on the initiative and referendum and other issues of that remarkable 1911 reform election also featured in *Gazette* election coverage. (To read more of *the Berkeley Gazette* for October 1911 go to <http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=PPAp3RzCAaIC&dat=19111002&printsec=frontpage&hl=en>.)

Fascinating glimpses like these continue to emerge as research continues for the Berkeley History Center exhibit scheduled for next September to March. Among the researchers is Joe Ryshpan, who is working on the League archives at the Bancroft Library. Leaguers Jane Coulter and Nancy Bickel spent a few days at the UC Library scanning articles from the *Berkeley Gazette* to capture details of the campaign.

Nancy Bickel

### WANTED: FUN-LOVING, MUSIC-MAKING, PARTY-ORGANIZING LEAGUE MEMBERS

We need your help to plan a celebration of our League's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday that we and our fellow Berkeleyans will remember for years to come.

Our celebrations will include the official opening of the exhibit at the Berkeley History Center that will tell the story of how Berkeley campaigned for and helped pass the women's suffrage amendment in 1911. The founding of the Berkeley League—as the California Civic League—will also be featured.

Celebrations could include: singing suffragist songs, marching with banners and bands to replicate the local campaign and victory parades, family picnics and sing-a-longs or any other celebratory activities your active imaginations can conjure into existence.

Contact Sherry Smith or Nancy Bickel at [nkbickel@lmi.net](mailto:nkbickel@lmi.net)



## League Leaders 2011-2012

### Board of Directors

President	Sherry Smith
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VP Membership	Jane Coulter
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Education Director	Helene Lecar
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	Gail Schickele
Healthcare Director	Li-hsia Wang
Volunteer Coordinator	Jane Barrett
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LWV Bay Area Liaison	Jean Safir
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<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

### June

20	Mon	1:30-3:30 pm	Health Care Com, LWVBAE Office	L. Wang	848-5765
22	Wed	10:00 - noon	Education Com, LWVBAE Office	H. Lecar	549-9719
22	Wed	3:00-5:00 pm	Board Meeting, LWVBAE Office	S. Smith	548-1769

### July

5	Tue	10:00-noon	Annual Luncheon Com LWVBAE Office	S. Chun	528-4335
18	Mon	1:30-3:30 pm	Health Care Com, LWVBAE Office	L. Wang	848-5765
20	Wed	10:00-noon	Education Com, LWVBAE Office	H. Lecar	549-9719
27	Wed	3:00-5:00 pm	Board Meeting, LWVBAE Office	S. Smith	548-1769

### August

2	Tue	10:30-noon	Annual Luncheon Com LWVBAE Office	S. Chun	528-4335
11	Thur	7:30 pm	Civics Edu Com, LWVBAE Office	J. Gardner	548-5292
15	Mon	1:30-3:30 pm	Health Care Com, LWVBAE Office	L. Wang	848-5765
16	Tue	10:30-noon	Annual Luncheon Com LWVBAE Office	S. Chun	528-4335
18	Thur	11:30-1:30 pm	Annual Community Luncheon Hs Lordships, Berkeley	S. Chun	528-4335
24	Wed	3:00-5:00 pm	Board Meeting, LWVBAE Office	S. Smith	548-1769
25	Thur	10-noon	Education Com, LWVBAE Office	H. Lecar	549-9719