

# The VOTER

LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS  
of BERKELEY, ALBANY  
and EMERYVILLE



1414 University Avenue, Suite D, Berkeley, CA 94702-1509 Tel. 510/843-8824

President: Nancy Bickel

Summer, 2001

Editor: Jean Safir

## Our Necessary & Activist League

As I begin, I want to list the hardworking members of the 2000-2001 Board, Study Chairs, Committee Chairs and Conveners so that you can think of them and their committees as I enumerate the astounding amount of work we've done together this year.

### BOARD

*Lois Brubeck*  
*Ruth Ganong*  
*Virginia Laurence*  
*Helene Lecar*  
*Evelyn Light*  
*Marion Luten*  
*Karen Nelson*  
*Ginette Polak*  
*Sherry Smith*  
*Beth Springston*  
*Ruthann Taylor*  
*Mary Wainwright*

### Voter Service

*Phoebe Watts*

### Election Systems Study

*Joan Strasser*

### Community College Study

*Helene Lecar*

### Environmental Concerns

*Eva Bansner Gail Schickele Erika Kunkel*

### Speaker Series

*Jean Safir*

### VOTER

*Bob Hawley*

### LWV Berkeley Foundation

*Fran Packard*

### Nominating

*Eloise Bodine*

### Office Admin. Asst.

*Karen Carlson-Olson*

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• **Is the League of Women Voters an organization that is relevant to today and necessary for the country's future?**  
• **Is it doing vital and necessary work to keep our democracy healthy?**  
• **Does it provide opportunity for those of any age, ethnicity, race, gender, physical handicap, religious or political persuasion to weigh in and make democracy work locally, statewide, or nationally?**  
• **Does it have an envied track record on voter service and education as well as issue effectiveness?**  
• **Is it accorded respect and does its name provide entree to decision-makers, legislators, and organizations that make policy in areas of concern to the League?**

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## President's Column

### New President's Greetings To All

I'm delighted to have been chosen as your new president, returning to the center of League work after more than ten years as a fringe participant. I'm eager to collaborate again with our many experienced and knowledgeable Leaguers. It's a pleasure to see that our staunch members continue to work for the League's many important goals - from improving the schools, to increasing the supply of low- and moderate-income housing.

But I'm apprehensive too. Where are the younger Leaguers? The folks who can bring us new energy and new ideas and lead us in tackling new challenges. With a few wonderful exceptions, I and my fellow 60-year-olds are still the young ones within the League community. We do not reflect the demography of the full community - in age or in many other ways.

More than thirty years ago I joined the League as a mother of two elementary school children. I was attracted to the Education Committee and the work *Ann Crowe* and others were then doing to analyze and explain the workings of the Berkeley schools' budget and programs. I was one of a large group of young mothers who got our start in the League through our work in our children's schools. We were the young ones; we were delighted to meet and learn from the more experienced older members of the League. As our children grew up, our interests broadened. Many of us got involved in other issues and moved up the ladder of League jobs to serve on the Board.

Luckily for all of us, the current Education Committee, led by *Helene Lecar*, has been attracting new, younger members. The energetic and effective work of *Helene* and her colleagues has drawn some concerned parents into the League. *Helene* has been out there - in the schools and community - working on voter education and mock elections at the City of Franklin Elementary School and at Berkeley High School, advocating for the needs of lagging ninth graders and reforming the High School truancy policy. And it's out in the community that she meets the young, the active, the involved.

One of the new Education Committee members, a young mother and new League member, *Marissa Saunders*, was part of our delegation to the state

League Convention in Los Angeles. As so many of us have found in the past, she found the experience both exhilarating and frustrating. She was exhilarated to learn about Leagues that had worked within other communities and had drawn young and diverse members into the center of League work. She was frustrated to see how far the League still has to go in achieving real diversity in its membership. In the accompanying box, you will find her remarks, delivered to the new state board of directors at the close of the Convention.

Like *Marissa*, *Jo Ann Price*, our outgoing president, emphasized in her remarks at Annual Meeting, that the League must continue to strive for diversity. This message is an urgent one for our local League.

I hope you will join with the Board in the coming year to reach out to the many people and communities who share our goals. We must work side by side with other community groups, so that more people will recognize that the League can be a uniquely effective tool for achieving their dearest goals.

If we do not reach out to younger people - and to all the people who share our principles of equity and of citizen participation in government and society - there will be no League worth caring about in another thirty years. In the coming year, I hope we will all be part of the League's effort to join forces with the people who will lead the League, and our community, in the future.

-*Nancy Bickel*

I would like to encourage the incoming Board to remember that they are not only our leaders, but our examples. I would also like to ask that the Board continues to be open to new and innovative ways to improve diversity, inclusion of all communities and partnerships within those communities.

The faces of the League are changing and I would like the Board to remember that in their responsibility of representing the local Leagues.

-*Marissa Saunders*, LWVBAE, Advice to the Board of Directors, LWVC Convention May 2001

## **Sobering Report on Juvenile Justice in Alameda County... Judge Brenda Harbin-Forte's Annual Meeting Message**

On any given day in America, 520,000 children are living in foster care, approximately 5,000 of them are in Alameda County. Arrest rates for girls have doubled in the last 20 years; and in 1997, one out of 16 women entering prison was pregnant. More than 92% of female juvenile delinquents have been physically or sexually abused (and most likely many male delinquents likewise). Black youths are 48 times more likely than whites to be sentenced to juvenile prison for drug offenses.

These were some of the statistics given us at our Annual Meeting by Brenda Harbin-Forte, Judge of the Alameda County Juvenile Court. She added that 80% of the youth in the juvenile justice system simply need help - they are not threats to society; and 20% of those charged with a crime have mental health problems. She is concerned both with the youths that enter the juvenile justice system and those in the dependency system (children from infancy on, who must be removed from their homes and become wards of the court). She feels children do better with their birth parents even in difficult homes rather than being moved from foster home to foster home, and would like to see more services to preserve families. She laments that now a child of under three may be permanently removed from a home if the parent does not undergo successful drug treatment within a year of the child's removal-a woefully short time for such treatment.

She made an urgent plea for preventive services for these, our children, while realistically seeing an also urgent need for a new replacement for our aging and inadequate Alameda County Juvenile Hall. And she called on the League for help. How? Work for affordable housing, without which many children cannot be returned to their families from foster homes. Citing the case of an 18-year-old who reads at first grade level, she called on us to support special education; advocate for more resources for children; make sure we have places for youth, keep our libraries open, and provide community centers. Above all, educate ourselves on the issues, and involve ourselves with children. She invited us to become CASA volunteers.

A CASA volunteer is a Court-Appointed Special Advocate for a child, most of whom are in the dependency system. Each volunteer receives 30 hours of training, and may simply spend a few hours every other weekend with the child. Some may write up recommendations for the Judge, which she welcomes. So many children in the dependency system, under the supervision of the Court, are moved from foster home to foster home, school to school, sometimes town to town. They have lost their homes, they now lose their friends, and even change social workers. The CASA volunteer can be the only stable person in the youth's life.

To find out about the CASA program, call the office in Oakland 434-2462. Or join our Alameda County Juvenile Justice committee and learn more.

*-Lois Brubeck, ACC Juvenile Justice  
Committee Chair*



### **2001-2002 LWVBAE Voter Staff**

Editor-in-Chief *Jean Safir*  
E-mail address: jeansafir@att.net

Production Editor *Bob Hawley*  
E-mail address: mrhawley@att.net

Copy Editors *Evelyn Light*  
*Marj Rubinow*

Mailing Coordinator *Karen Carlson-Olson* 843-8824

Mailing Crew

<i>Cecile Briar</i>	<i>Barbara Nelson</i>
<i>Ruth Greenblatt</i>	<i>Allie Norton</i>
<i>Virginia Laurence</i>	<i>Patricia Selmanoff</i>
<i>Ruth Maguire</i>	<i>Janet Strothman</i>

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<i>Virginia Laurence</i>	<i>Janet Strothman</i>
<i>Ruth Maguire</i>	

**Donors In April and May****General Fund**

*Marilyn Couch*                      *Sue Pownall*  
*Eleanor Cox*                        *Nancy Riddle*  
 Merle & Michael Fajans<sup>1</sup> *Carol Voisin*  
*Heidi Gillies*

**Tribute Fund**

*Eloise Bodine*<sup>2</sup>

**Foundation**

*Nanine Greene*  
*Elizabeth Lichtenberg*  
*Ursula Rolfe*

1 - In honor of *Jean Safir*

2 - In memory of *Beth Schickele*

**Welcome New Member**

*Jewel Okawachi*

**Personals**

*Ann Crowe* is a new fan of Elderhostel. She recently flew on a chartered, nonstop flight from the U.S. to the Central Asian republic of Uzbekistan, which became independent when the Soviet Union disbanded in 1991. Glamorous cities from the 13th century days of Genghis Khan and the Silk Road were on the itinerary: Samarkand, Bukhara, and Tashkent.

France held allure for at least five members. *Marian Bradley* had her annual month there. *Helene Lecar* sent a 5-page e-mail to League officers from the banks of the Seine. *Ruthann* and *Clyde Taylor* spent 2 weeks on a bicycle tour of Provence followed by a 2-week walking tour in Spain. *Winnie McLaughlin* had a 3-week adventure in Perigord Noir in the Dordogne region and, of course, Paris.

Congratulations to *Bruce Harris* on his April marriage. He and his wife will divide their time between their Kalispell, Montana, and Berkeley homes, plus traveling elsewhere in the world.

Dedication of the George and *Doris Cuneo Maslach* Hall on the Clark Kerr Campus of UCB will be August 30 at 4 pm. A summary of the contributions made by the Maslachs to the campus and students' welfare appears on Page 3 of the September 2000 *Voter*.

*Jean Safir* resigned as of June 30 as a planner for Contra Costa County. *Jean Allen* retired on the same date after 20 years as director of the "cozy, friendly" Albany Senior Center. She expects to enjoy water skiing, golfing, and walking. *Mary Hampton* was recognized as an early officer in Friends of Albany Seniors, formed in 1981 to acquire "extras" for the Center.

*Janice Dost* is busy as assistant secretary of the University of California Section Club.

*Zasa Swanson*, president of Berkeley's Partners for Parks, was among the speakers addressing a comprehensive array of issues at the first People's State of the City event in late May. She updated attendees about the need for being proactive in maintaining parks.

Sightings: *Regina Minudri* has been spotted lunching at Solano Avenue restaurants. Bravo, *Regina*, for using chopsticks. At Berkeley Civic Center's open house to celebrate its reopening after a year of seismic retrofitting and remodeling were *Pat Kuhi*, *Evelyn Light*, and *Ginette Polak*.

To end on a culinary high note: *Cecile Briar* is noted for her delicious soup recipes!

-*Evelyn Light*

**Back Issues of the Voter Needed**

Here in the office, we have been toiling away trying to organize back issues of our *Voter*. Most have been bound by their year in the office drawer - "Voter Back-Numbers". The years are now easily identified - hallelujah!!

However, time has taken its toll. We are missing some issues from the years we have here - 1970 to present. If you, by any chance, have the missing copies at home, would you consider bringing yours in so we could copy it? Could we pick it up at your home, copy it, and upon pain of death, promise to return it to you?

Some we list may not have been published in the first place. For instance, Summer was substituted for the individual names of summer months during many years. But not always, so we are listing those months just on the off chance they were published.

1975 - March, June, and July

1976 - July

1977 - July

1978 - July

1984 - June, July and August

1987 - January

1990 - October

Many thanks for your attention - hope you can help us out!

-*Karen Carlson-Olson*,

Office Administrative Assistant, 843-8824

**LWVBAE ANNUAL REPORTS**  
**2000-2001**  
**ACTION TEAM**  
*Action Committee*

As in 1999-2000, the Action Committee met monthly on a Wednesday morning, most often at the home of *Phoebe Watts*. We covered the news of our three cities, with *Carrie Sprague* reporting on Berkeley's City Council; *Ruth Ganong*, followed by *Jean Safir* and *Karen Carlson-Olson* on Albany; and *Beth Springston* on Emeryville. *Eva Bansner* continued to follow the Berkeley General Plan (still being revised) and brought us Bay Area League news. *Doris Maslach* enriched us with her long background in housing issues. *Helene Lecar* kept us abreast of education developments, *Jo Ann Price* reported on action by the Alameda County Leagues, and *Virginia Laurence* followed health and welfare issues. *Lois Brubeck* took on juvenile justice, and was responsible for state and national action letters. *Phoebe Watts*, *Ann Crowe* and *Lenora Young* served as wise and critical committee members at large. We all joined in the discussions, welcomed Leaguers who came to participate on topics of their interest, and made decisions on action to be recommended to the Board.

We worked in the November elections locally in support of Berkeley school bond measures, funding for the libraries, emergency medical services, parks maintenance, and empowerment of public development of low-rental housing. We advocated support for a state measure to reduce the percentage of votes necessary to pass a local school bond and Alameda County's transportation tax. We opposed several state measures, such as school vouchers and an undoing of Prop. 208's campaign contribution limits.

*Eva Bansner* again wrote comments on Berkeley's General Plan for our discussion and adoption. We expressed support for the development of the East Campus playing fields, and *Helene Lecar* spoke for the League at School Board meetings. We devoted several meetings to discussing housing, and how best to help our communities find common ground on solutions to the crisis. State calls to action were late to arrive in 2001 but we responded to national on several issues, including campaign finance reform. We participated in interviews of our state senator and assembly person, held interviews of our local

representatives, and prepared ourselves for another year of finding ways to be active in support of League positions.

-*Lois Brubeck*, Action VP

*Education Committee*

In all areas - national, state, and local - education has been a primary issue. So too at this committee under the active leadership of *Helene Lecar*. Information gathering for the League meant attending or closely following the proceedings at meetings of Berkeley's 2x2 Committee, the Superintendent Selection Committee, the Budget Committee, and those committees or groups dealing with high school safety, truancy, and illiteracy. This spring, committee members attended the annual EdSource meeting. These varied activities brought new and vigorous members to the committee, among whom are *Marissa Saunders*, with two young children, but whose interests range from elementary school through high school; high school activist, *Iris Starr*; and *Andrea Venezia*, a Stanford consultant whose project concerns how to make bridges between educational levels. This only begins to suggest the ferment of this year's committee meetings.

*Helene*, *Karen Carlson-Olson*, and *RuthAnn Taylor* continued some past projects such as encouraging Mock Elections at Franklin Elementary School, Emery Middle School, Albany and Berkeley high schools, and Berkeley's East Campus. Volunteering at schools engaged a number of members: Literary Circles in the fifth grade class of Carole Goyen at Berkeley Arts Magnet this term were led by *Jan Blundell*, *Barbara Coleman*, *Dorothy Lindheim*, *Winnie McLaughlin*, and *Anne Wallach*, with appreciated substitute help by *Marilyn Vaage* and parent *Laura Menard*. *Lois Brubeck* volunteered at Cragmont, and many of us joined the community in the special day of reading to a classroom.

Being with the children is a wonderful satisfaction and helps balance the concerns and struggles that we all feel in trying to deal with the perpetual problems: how to meet the needs of all the students and satisfy often competing demands with funds that never seem adequate to the task.

-*Anne Wallach* for *Helene Lecar*, Education Director

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## ***Berkeley's Vintage Master Plan Yet To Be Replaced***

It may be a tribute to Jack Kent - Father of the General Plan - that the City as yet is unable to replace the 1977 Plan. Perhaps when the pedestrian freeway overcrossing of I-80 (a priority of that Plan) is finally built, the City will have adopted a new General Plan.

Attempts by the Planning Commission a dozen years ago to update the Master/General Plan led to a flurry of public workshops and background studies by consultants in 1993 through 1995. An award was applied for and granted for the "Discussion Framework". For years thereafter it was said that there was a draft plan waiting for City Manager approval or waiting for technical appendices. Finally, staff was imported from Oakland 2+ years ago to prepare a draft General Plan and, subsequent to public review, to revise it and get it to Council. As the high-rise Floor Area Ratios proposed for downtown in the "staff draft" bore no relation to the existing Downtown Plan and previous public input, there was an outcry. Then the Planning Commission said they would undertake drafting the plan, after holding a series of public roundtables. This was a heavy load for the volunteer commissioners in addition to their other responsibilities. It relied heavily on Chair Rob Wren and intrepid Zoning Ordinance reviewer *Gene Poschman*.

LWVBAE submitted comments on the Planning Commission's drafts and the EIR. We wanted a systematic analysis of where there was development potential, of recent development trends, and of public facility needs. We wanted maps that could help interpret where the policies applied and where opportunities existed to take care of needs. Many of our comments have been included in a list of revisions - to be made later.

Recent effort by staff and Commissioners has gone into adjusting wording to make it acceptable to a majority of the Commission. Policy has been crafted that would allow some to think needed housing is to be provided by building, while others interpret the same policy as meaning existing housing would be bought and converted to lower income housing.

To see the Planning Commission draft General Plan and current revisions list on line, go to the city web site ([www.ci.berkeley.ca.us](http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us)), click city services, then planning, then General Plan.

Andrew Thomas, the General Plan project manager for the last 2+ years, expects the Planning Commission to finish its recommendations on the

General Plan and the Final EIR on July 11. The City Council is scheduled to consider this recommended General Plan and Final EIR in September or October. However, Council must deal with redistricting in a timely manner which may delay taking up the General Plan.

Contact Action V.P. *Lois Brubeck* if you want to be involved in League review of the new General Plan draft this summer.

-*Eva Bansner*, Environmental Concerns

## **COMMUNITY SERVICES TEAM**

Activities coordinated by the Community Services team were dominated by elections of all sorts in 2000-2001. For the November 2000 General Election and local elections in Berkeley and Albany, we:

- published "Pros and Cons";
- ran a Speakers Bureau to provide unbiased presentations on the issues;
- registered voters as an ongoing activity and at special events;
- conducted several Candidates Nights for those running for office in Berkeley and Albany (several of which were cablecast with repeat presentations on B-TV, channel 25);
- provided overseers on election night for the Registrar of Voters.

We also provided "content" on local candidates for the statewide "SmartVoter" website, and assisted candidates in getting their information updates onto the site. Mock elections were coordinated at schools in Berkeley, Albany, and Emeryville including all the high schools and a few selected grade schools. The League was involved with the full spectrum of planning, preparation, and the running of these elections, which are a tool to teach students about the process of voting, of community involvement, and of democracy at work.

The League also coordinated the recruitment and deployment of election workers for the annual Associated Students of the University of California (ASUC) student body election, and the Vista College elections for student officers and selection of the student representative on the Peralta Colleges Board of Trustees. For the first time, we also

-(Continued on next page)

performed election services for the Cooperative Credit Union's election of their Board of Directors. These "private" election services netted the League some \$10,000, which is a considerable portion of our annual budget.

To provide all of these services to the communities we serve, a core of some 100 LWVBAE members volunteered for one or more of these tasks, making our work enjoyable as well as invaluable. A big round of applause, please, for each and every one of these folks who said "yes", and "yes" again.

(You'll be hearing from us soon....).

-*Sherry Smith*, Community Services VP

## **DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

**The purpose of the Development Team is to foster growth in local membership, develop new strategies to disseminate information about the League, and enhance its fund raising to support League activities.** This year's Development Team members were *GINETTE POLAK*, Membership Chair; *MINA JENNER* and *NINA OLSON*, Membership Records; *EVA BRECHER*, Scrip; *KAREN NELSON*, Special Events; *ELSA TRANTER*, Public Relations; and *THERESE PIPE*, Oral History. They and their committees worked together to make this year a success in every area covered by Development, and I want to thank each of them for their hard work and diligence.

### ***Membership***

The experienced membership team devoted their energies to keeping up with ever-changing membership records. We are sad to report a loss of 40 members, mostly those who moved or passed away. However, we added 51 new members this year, making the League's total membership 439. *WINNIE McLaughlin*, *CAROL VOISIN*, *EVELYN LIGHT*, and Chair *GINETTE POLAK* provided the rich leadership and support to increase the Leagues' membership, as they recruited new members and encouraged their participation in League activities. Two special gatherings were hosted for new and prospective members. *LOIS BRUBECK*, *HELENE LECAR*, *JO ANN PRICE*, and *SHERRY SMITH* assisted with these activities.

*MINA JENNER* meticulously sent notices to members to renew their dues, and alerted the Board to changes in the membership list each month. *NINA OLSON* updated the membership data base, coordinated our records with those at LWVUS, and produced monthly corrected mailing labels and periodic revised membership lists. *KAREN CARLSON-OLSON*, Office Administrative Assistant, provided very helpful support.

It is encouraging that we have a dedicated group of individuals committed to improving the diversity and growth of our organization. However, we must recognize that increasing our membership is a responsibility that each of us must assume, by inviting others to our meetings and letting everyone know the good work we do within the community we serve.

### ***2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Community Luncheon***

In an attempt to introduce new and innovative fund raising strategies, the League sponsored the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Community Luncheon fund raiser on August 26, 2000 to bring together local decision-makers, business and University leaders, and League members. Special Events Chair *KAREN NELSON* co-chaired with *RUTH GANONG*. They and their committee of *SARAH MIYAZAKI*, *JO ANN PRICE*, *BETH SPRINGSTON*, and *MARY WAINWRIGHT* planned a successful fund raising effort that was enjoyed by 116 enthusiastic guests. Another well-wishing group donated to the event. The purpose of the luncheon is to feature a speaker who has a message of interest to the community. *BRUCE CAIN*, Professor of Political Science, Director of the Institute of Governmental Studies at the University of California at Berkeley, stimulated the participants about the "Perspectives on Election 2000". This event made \$4,000 for the League's General Fund. Many League volunteers helped in a variety of ways to ensure the success of this delightful event.

### ***Dessert Party***

On February 11, 2001, *DOROTHY WALKER* welcomed 50 League volunteers to her home for a dessert party. The purpose was to acknowledge the vital contributions of our members to LWVBAE and celebrate the League's 81<sup>st</sup> Birthday. Co-chairs *KAREN NELSON* and *RUTH GANONG*, "the pastry chef", planned this pleasurable event, marked by stimulating conversation. It was an afternoon to remember!

### ***T-Shirts and Tote Bags***

LWVBAE introduced its T-shirts and tote bags last year. A catchy slogan "Not for Women Only" is printed on the T-shirts and bags. T-shirt and tote bag sales totaled \$480 for the year.

-(Continued on next page)

## May Board Briefs

### *Scrip Program*

Chair *Eva Brecher* reports that the League's scrip program met expectations for the past fiscal year, realizing \$4,863 from both regular scrip and E-scrip. Regular scrip was available for *Andronico's* and *Macy's*. During the 11 months, starting July 1, 2000 we distributed \$65,000 worth of *Andronico's* scrip. Between the two outlets we made a profit of \$3,630. A total of 59 League members and 3 non-members participated in the program. Eight dedicated volunteers assisted with the scrip distribution and telephoning.

32 League members took part in the E-scrip program. Earnings totaled \$1,233 with a majority of the E-scrip purchases coming from *Safeway*. This total represents 9 months of E-scrip purchases, with 3 months remaining to be paid to us.

### *Oral History Project*

*Therese Pipe*, Coordinator, reports the *Gilda Helpern Feller* oral history was completed in spring, 2001 (by *Eloise Bodine* and *Therese Pipe*), and delivered to the narrator. A copy is in the League Office.

Other LWVBAE Oral Histories are in progress: *Felicia Bock's* is in the final editing stages to be published in summer or fall, 2001; *Beth Schickele's* oral history (originally a video by *Jane Bergen* and *Carol Stone*) has been transcribed to be published in summer or fall, 2001; *Margaret Dumas'* oral history is in the editing stages to be published in summer or fall, 2001; *Bea Fraenkel-Conrat's* oral history is in the early editing stages; *Ruth Ganong's* oral history will be completed this summer, 2001.

The assistance I have received over this year has been remarkable. What I have witnessed and experienced is a group of dedicated persons working together to do something they truly believe in. Without that sense of individual commitment, purpose, and dedication, none of our accomplishments would have been possible. It is this spirit that attracted me to the League and that continues to inspire my dedication and growth.

-*Mary L. Wainwright*, Development VP

Highlights of the May, 2001 meeting:

Financial - The ASUC election earned significantly more than expected. The League is likely to show a profit for this fiscal year.

Development - The Committee continues to seek a speaker for the Annual Community Luncheon.

Action - Summer meeting will be held in the evening. *Jo Ann Price* is working with the Alameda County Council regarding re-districting. Berkeley's City Clerk is preparing reports on the Sunshine Ordinance and Instant Run-off Voting for July.

Community Services - The ASUC election, a mainstay of our annual budget, produced more revenue than usual this year. However, they will be shifting to on-line voting in the future and our role will probably be reduced.

Program - The local program planning meeting resulted in the following recommendations: retention of all current positions, continuation of the Community College study through Fall 2001, and an emphasis on education, Berkeley General Plan completion and housing in all 3 cities. Our League will propose a State Study on the Governance and Funding of Community Colleges at the May State Convention.

The Board approved our League's participation with the other Alameda County Leagues as one of seven co-sponsors of the State Convention 2003.

The Nominating Committee reported that they are continuing to recruit for the following positions: Secretary, Treasurer, VP Program, and VP Elections/Voter Services.

-*Beth Springston*, Secretary

## **Peralta Community College District Study: 2000-2001**

When the Peralta Community College District Study was adopted in the spring of 1999, the committee anticipated two years of work: 1) a look at Vista College, to see how well it had been supported by the District; and 2) an examination of Peralta as a whole, to see how well the institution served all of its six constituent communities.

In the first year of the study, Vista's needs were our primary concern. The League position on Vista College, adopted in September, 2000, identified a permanent campus for Vista, and a fair share of Peralta's resources for the college.

The scope for the second year was to see how well Peralta did in serving its students as a District. Peralta's students, like those in community colleges across the state, are eligible to take courses at any campus in the system, and Peralta's students cross-register freely to meet their own needs and interests. Normally such a League study would be done district wide (encompassing the Alameda, Oakland, and Piedmont Leagues as well as our own), but none of our sister Leagues was able to join us directly. Instead, we consulted with them from the outset, and they have been following our work with interest and participating in the interviews of the District Trustees who represent them. The option is for them to adopt our League's Peralta Community College District position by concurrence at the end of the LWVBAE study.

- Summer 2000: Measure E: When this bond measure and its explanatory language were finally made public in mid-August, a campus for Vista was included in the list of proposed expenditures. The Peralta Board's resistance to including community input in its decision-making, however, led many BAE Leaguers to regard the \$153 million proposal as a mixed blessing. Measure E passed overwhelmingly.

- Election 2000: the Vanishing Incumbent: Although the election resolved the bond question, it raised a new puzzle. There are 7 seats on the Peralta Board, and 4 of them were up for election. Three of the incumbents chose to run again, but none had any declared opponents. They did not appear on the

ballot! We discovered that the California Education Code explicitly permits unopposed incumbents on boards of education, including community college boards, to stay off the ballot. Such members are considered appointed and are sworn in at the same time as newly elected members when the new board term begins.

- Peralta Fails a State Financial Audit: The California State Department of Finances audited Peralta's expenditures for 1998-99 and announced the District had failed to meet the 50% rule, which requires spending at least 50% of the monies received from the state "for classroom purposes", a narrowly defined set of outlays for faculty salaries, and certain other items.

- The Chancellor Ignores Hiring Rules: With staff hiring frozen, the District began the September 2000 term short 42 permanent faculty at its 4 colleges while the Chancellor hired a dozen new senior administrative personnel on an interim basis, sidestepping standard hiring procedures and throwing the District's budget for 2000-2001 further out of compliance with state regulations.

- Audit Request of 2000-2001 Budget: Large Chancellor and Board expenses for extensive travel abroad for a major effort to solicit foreign students whose fees would not be subject to the 50% rule came to light in April. This precipitated another request for an audit of the 2000-2001 budget.

- Proposal to the State League for a Study: At this point, the study committee's original agenda for year 2 seemed to need a new focus. The LWVBAE board voted to bring to state League convention in May, a study proposal to add the governance and financing of Grades 13-14 (public community colleges) to the state League's existing position on Public Education K-12.

- Proposal to Extend the Local Study through Fall 2001: LWVBAE members at the Annual Meeting voted to extend the study through Fall to complete an appropriate local position.

-*Helene Lecar*, Chair, Peralta  
Community College District Study

## **President's Annual Meeting Address** (contd. from Page 1)

**The answer is a resounding YES!** to all these questions. If you silently answered NO or I DON'T KNOW to any of them, please contact me and we'll talk about it over coffee.

Can the League of Women Voters improve its image, increase its membership, work smarter to get out its message, have better internal relationships between the national level and the state and local levels, and involve more of its membership with League activities so that our committed efforts get even better results to make democracy work better? **YOU BETCHA!**

The League is not going away anytime soon. But we need to increase as well as rejuvenate and diversify our ranks. We also need a candid review at the national level of how to fulfill the wide-open potential of our organization. We need an accurate vision of where we want to be in 2025 combined with a bold plan to maximize the League's efforts in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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Now let's turn to the League's state and local levels here in California. The **biennial State League Convention** was held in L. A. the weekend of May 18. The theme was "**New Voices New Challenges**". LWVBAE was able to send 9 delegates of the 10 we qualified for. Did you know **we are the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest League in California**? Right behind L.A. and San Diego - and we want to grow even larger. We began a campaign after the 1999 state convention to clean up our membership roles and actively seek new members. At that time we went from approximately 415 members on paper to 380 in reality. Then we climbed back up to 400 in January 2000 and are now hovering around 435 members, **and we'd like to go well above 450** by December 2001. We need your help to do this.

As a result of our state program planning UNIT meeting in March and our current Peralta Community College Study, LWVBAE proposed a non-recommended study of the **Governance and Finance of the California Community College System** at the convention. It wasn't recommended by the state Board mainly due to the cost of a study in the face of their deficit budget situation. Nevertheless, we went prepared to move this study and to find funding for it. We contacted all 72 California League presidents ahead of time by e-mail and snail mail with an informational flyer on the need for the study. At the convention we held caucuses and circulated additional flyers, alerting every delegate about the timeliness and importance of this study. When the time came to vote on Sunday morning, we had more than the 3/5 vote necessary to pass a non-recommended study! Now our League is involved both with organizing the study and "strategizing" to raise \$10,000 to pay for it. Anyone interested in any aspects of this study should contact me.

Another important occurrence for Alameda County Leagues at convention was the invitation we were asked to extend to California Leagues to meet in **Alameda County for the 2003 state convention**. LWVBAE will be participating in the planning and execution of Convention 2003 and we need you to volunteer to help. If you'd like to be involved in any small or large way, please call the office. If we don't hear from you, you'll probably be hearing from us!

At convention, each League was asked to describe itself in 5 statements of 4 words each. We came up with:

- **430 Strong and Growing**
- **1<sup>st</sup> League in California - 1911**
- **Activist League for Activist Community**
- **Never Saw a Study We Didn't Like**
- **Regional Smart Growth Outlook**

Have you ever thought how you'd describe our League in a short statement? Get out your pen and see if you can come up with one or more 4-word statements by the end of this article. Here's a brief run-down of the 2000-2001 LWVBAE activities that should help you come up with a description.

**Our League has been involved with a whirlwind of activity since last July.**

-(Continued on next page)

At the **LWV Alameda County Council** level, involving the 7 Leagues in the county, we worked solidly on

matters concerning November ballot issues, Juvenile Justice, and redistricting of the Board of Supervisors and the Board of Education. Right now we're in the midst of this important work, including monitoring the County Board of Supervisors Redistricting Committee and recommending to the County Board of Education that it reduce its number from 7 to 5 and redistrict to reflect the 5 supervisorial districts. You may have seen some newspaper columns on this.

In August we held our very successful **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Community Lunch** at Emeryville's Holiday Inn with Prof. Bruce Cain as a most provocative speaker on the then upcoming presidential election. Although San Diego was experiencing exorbitant electric bills at that time, we were as yet unaware of the major dysfunction de-regulation of the energy industry was to bring to the state.

In September, we held our **Fall General Meeting** with Ione Elioff, acting President of Vista Community College, as the speaker; adopted 2 new positions on Housing and Vista Community College following the completion of those studies; registered voters and planned for extensive Voter Service for the Nov. election; researched and wrote our extensive local Pros & Cons publication; and trained members to speak on state and local issues for our Speakers Bureau.

In **October**, we covered our 3 cities with Voter Service activities, including candidates forums on local cable TV and other venues. We input the data for local candidates and issues into Smart Voter, the state League's helpful and effective online voter service, tailored to cover every California county and city, as well as statewide and national issues and races. Smart Voter performed beautifully during the run up to the election and on Election Day it took up the slack when the Alameda County Registrar of Voters site was down for several hours.

Following the fiasco in Florida, it became painfully obvious that election reform throughout the U.S., including Alameda County, was long overdue. At that time we were embarked on our state's **Election Systems Study** which, although addressing some aspects of how to get voters interested in coming out to vote at election time in an other than winner-take-all system, didn't directly pertain to the badly needed reforms regarding machinery, counting methods, and poll worker training. However, we do already possess national and state positions to act on these election reforms, as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, our **Action Committees** on Education and Government were meeting regularly and interacting with the City Councils and Boards of Education of our 3 cities, as well as interviewing our state and national representatives. Our Program Committee on **Environmental Concerns** and our topical **Speaker Series** were providing excellent speakers and information on important subjects of the day.

We had to work without both a Program VP and an Administrative VP - and often without a permanent Secretary to the Board. There were moments when it all seemed overwhelming, but with good will and camaraderie prevailing, Board members pitched in.

As an overlay to traditional League activities, we conducted several **community elections** in addition to that of the ASUC. We monitored and counted elections for Vista College, the Federal Cooperative Credit Union, and the UC Administration. As a backdrop for all we do, we run an office that provides a clearinghouse for all League activity and citizen inquiries. From the office we publish and send out a monthly *Voter* to aid communication with LWVBAE members and in the office is our computer with our web site that is constantly updated to provide voter information to the public, as well as links to government and issues sites. The office is truly a beehive of activity and we always need and welcome new office volunteers.

**Together, we - the Board, the committees, off-Board consultants, and all League volunteers accomplished a great deal on your behalf this year. We thank you for your cooperation and support and we're proud of our efforts and our achievements!**

**A great big thanks to everyone !**

*-Jo Ann B. Price, President, LWVBAE 2000-2001*

- Berkeley addresses unless otherwise indicated -

## July

19 Thur. 7-10 pm Action Committee (Brubeck)  
T.B.A. Board Retreat/Planning Meeting (Bickel)

## August

1 Wed. 4-6:30 pm Board Meeting Location T.B.A. (Bickel)  
3 Fri. — Deadline for September VOTER — (Safir)  
13 Mon. 10 am — LWVBAE Office Reopens — (Taylor)  
16 Thu. 7-10 pm Action Committee Call To Confirm (Brubeck)  
24 Fri.. 11:30 am-1:30 pm **Third Annual Community Luncheon Fund-Raiser**  
H's Lordship's on the Berkeley Marina (Jackson)  
29 Wed. T.B.A. Executive Committee (Bickel)

## September

3 Mon. Labor Day — LWVBAE Office Closed — (Taylor)  
5 Wed. 4-6:30 pm Board Meeting Location T.B.A. (Bickel)  
7 Fri. — Deadline for October VOTER — (Safir)  
10 Mon. 7:30 pm Environmental Concerns (Schickele)  
Speaker/Topic: T.B.A.  
13 Thu. Noon-2 pm Speaker Series Location T.B.A. (Laurence)  
20 Thu. 7-10 pm Action Committee (Brubeck)  
22 Sat. 10 am-1:30 pm **FALL MEMBERSHIP MEETING** (Bickel)

### SPECIAL LWVBAE AWARDS FOR 2000-2001

Each year, special *Awards of Merit* are made at Annual Meeting to LWVBAE members who have excelled in their job or who have been committed to a variety of League support endeavors over many years. Although Board members are expected to fulfill their job description and then some without special recognition, every now and then one or more go above and beyond on a sustained basis. This year the Board honored two members with heavy-duty jobs, who also have gone the extra mile over the years. As this year's awardees in the Member category, the Board is pleased to honor - **EVA BRECHER and PHOEBE WATTS.**

In the unusual category of Board member awardee, LWVBAE is pleased to honor -**SHERRY SMITH.** In the unusual category of Outstanding Board member awardee, LWVBAE is pleased to honor - **BETH SPRINGSTON.**

-Jo Ann B. Price, President 2000-2001

