



The VOTER

LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS
of BERKELEY, ALBANY and EMERYVILLE

President: Sherry Smith

Dec. 2004 – Jan. 2005

Editor: Lea Barker

School Finance

Williams vs State of California

Charter Schools

Readiness to Learn

Transition to College

STATE EDUCATION UPDATE

DECEMBER 2004 & JANUARY 2005

See insert for details

At the May 2003 League of Women Voters of California State Convention in Oakland, the delegates overwhelmingly adopted an update to our present Education Position, last updated in 1983. They were inspired to do so by testimony from the then State Board Director for Legislation, our own *Anne Henderson*. *Anne* testified that LWVC has often been prevented from taking action in recent years by an Education Position which is outdated because the situations that the position addresses have changed so much and new issues have arisen.

A State Study Committee was formed, with *Doris Fine*, an LWBAE member on the Committee. *Doris* will be working with the LWVBAE local study committee to present the State Study Committee findings to you. Join us to determine how the League of Women Voters of California should address educational issues over the next several decades.

School reform is a hot topic in Sacramento: from the Governor to the Joint Legislative Committee to Develop a Master Plan for California Education; to the Legislative Analyst's Office; to the Public Policy Institute of California. At the unit meetings, the local study committee will present recommendations from these entities and you will have a chance to discuss them and decide which, if any, the League should support.

We may decide that the wording of our current Education Position is still appropriate and merely needs to be expanded to include the new concerns of the 21st century.

— *Pat Kuhi*, chair, LWBAE Study Committee, LWVC Education Update

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

League members, both new and experienced, have a chance—coming up quite quickly—to get acquainted on a kind of crash-course basis with the “League Consensus” procedure.

Elsewhere in this issue of the VOTER, you will find information on the LWV California State Study on “What is the Condition of Public Education in California Today?” The last such state study was in 1985 and of course much has changed since. So LWV California is updating that nearly-20-year-old study, and our local Leagues are the keystone in the process.

In December and January, our League will hold “Unit Meetings” of two hours each, held in both the daytime and evenings, to present information from the LWVBAE study committee. At those Unit meetings, members attending will be asked to reach a “consensus” of opinion that will be forwarded to our LWVBAE Board for its consideration and subsequent forwarding, by mid-January, to the LWV California Board.

The December Unit meetings will concentrate on financing of public pre-kindergarten to grade 12 education; the

January meetings will discuss governance and accountability and assessment.

I urge all members—especially newer members who have not had a chance to participate in a state or local study and experience the excitement of consensus-development—to select one meeting in December and one in January, and be a part of one of the main reasons for the existence of the League: education of our membership and the greater public on important civic issues, on the way to developing League positions that lead to League action.

We can make a difference, and here's how it begins. I look forward to seeing many of you at a Unit meeting this winter.

— *Sherry Smith*, President

P.S. As I typed in the title of the President's Column for this month's VOTER, it struck me that the heading is a bit mundane, although stunningly descriptive. If any of you have a more clever title to suggest, I would be happy to hear it. Email me at js1589@berkeley.edu and I may even award a prize.

NEW MEMBERS

A very warm welcome is extended to the following new members:

<i>Mary Augustine</i>	<i>Sharon Goldfarb</i>
<i>Paula Blasier</i>	<i>Marilyn Harris</i>
<i>Lisa Brinner</i>	<i>Lela Herbert</i>
<i>Rachel Brodie</i>	<i>Stanley Kahn</i>
<i>Lynne Cahoon</i>	<i>Alan McRae</i>
<i>Ulrich Dahman</i>	<i>Julie Sinai</i>
<i>Diane Davenport</i>	<i>Wanda Underhill</i>
<i>Jill Dunner</i>	<i>Sayre Van Young</i>
<i>Brigitte Fisher</i>	<i>Teresa Wong</i>

HONORARY 50-YEAR MEMBERS

Joyce Baldwin *Harriet Nathan*

And a special welcome to new Berkeley resident *MaryBelle “Peg” Campbell*, whose membership in the LWV in Ohio and North Carolina also spans 50 years.

DONATIONS DURING OCTOBER

To the General Fund

<i>Regina Beatus</i>	<i>Merrillie Mitchell</i>
<i>William Craig</i>	<i>Sarah Miyazaki</i>
<i>Edith Gladstone</i>	<i>Penelope Nellis</i>
<i>Bruce Harris</i>	<i>Carol Weinmann</i>
<i>Constance Holton</i>	<i>Pat Welch</i>
<i>Ora & Kurt Huth</i>	<i>Anonymous</i>

To the LWVB Foundation

<i>Ora & Kurt Huth</i>	<i>Pat Welch</i>
<i>Adeline Kahn</i>	

To the Tribute Fund

<i>Glenda O'Donnell¹</i>	<i>J.L. Gast Wirth²</i>
<i>Ruth Weiss²</i>	<i>Anonymous³</i>

¹ *In appreciation of Eloise Bodine's Pros/Cons presentation.*

² *In honor of Nancy & Peter Bickel's 40th Wedding Anniversary.*

³ *In honor of her mother who, in the 1960s, introduced her to the LWV.*

ELECTION REPORTS

LEAGUE URGES VOTERS TO VOTE WITH THE LEAGUE

During the weeks leading up to the election, League members spent many hours handing out "Vote with the League" information to the public. These were our recommendations for voting on State, regional and local ballot measures, based on League "action positions."

Members who participated were deeply gratified by the thanks we got from people who accepted our handouts. Many took the time to stop and tell us how much they appreciated all the work the League does for the public. Some said they had "pretty much made up" their minds how they will vote, but were glad to get the League's thoughts, "which I'm sure I'll agree with." We distributed several thousand copies at sites that included supermarkets, BART stations, the UC campus and busy commercial areas.

Special thanks from the Board to the following members who helped in this effort: *Nancy Bickel, Lois Brubeck, Jody Bush, Ann Crowe, Penelope Hanan-Dahman, Angharad Jones, Jeanne Klems, Ginette Polak, Ursula Rolfe and Ruthann Taylor.* My personal thanks to *Jinky Gardner* for her help in preparing the flyers we distributed.

— *Jean Safir*, Action VP

ELECTION NIGHT AT THE COUNTY REGISTRAR OF VOTERS' OFFICE

Before the election, the Alameda County Assistant Registrar of Voters, *Elaine Ginnold*, recruited two League members and two Grand Jury members to serve on a "Logic and Accuracy Observer Board" for the November 2 election. *Sukey Wilder* of Oakland and *Jean Safir* of BAE were the two League members who shared the honor.

Our job included watching the voting records being brought in from all the local precincts in the county after 8 p.m. and then seeing what the Registrar's staff does with these records. The more important part—and the hardest part—was to understand how the process leads to a valid cumulative record of all the votes cast in the county. Brad Clark, the Registrar, and his staff—especially *Elaine*—were enormously helpful in answering all our questions as we kept trying to meet that challenge.

Counting the large number of absentee ballots—double the number ever received before—was begun the week before the election. The first step was checking the signatures on the outside of the envelopes against the signatures previously stored in computers.

Continued on page 4

League Speak

Action:	Steps taken to influence public policy consistent with League positions.
Consensus:	Agreement reached after a sustained study and group discussion at Unit meetings of a substantial number of members, who are considered representative of the whole. It is not just a simple majority, nor necessarily unanimity.
Position:	The League consensus on a public policy issue which provides the basis for action. Positions exist at each level of League. Individual members are not required to agree with all League positions or action.
Stand:	Decision made by a League board at the appropriate level to take action based on the appropriate League position.
Study:	Topics for research decided by delegates to national, state, and Bay Area conventions and by local Leagues at their Annual or a properly-noticed General meeting.
Unit Meeting:	(Units) It is at Unit meetings that consensus is formed for the purpose of updating positions or forming new positions. Units are led by a discussion leader and allow for member participation and feedback of opinions and ideas.
Update:	A study of limited scope, to re-evaluate an existing position in light of new information, changed circumstances, and/or conflict with another position, with a view to considering a position change.

Election Night, continued from page 3

The ballots were passed through optical scanners that did a cumulative count of the votes. Since this is heavily labor-intensive work, it was only partly completed before November 2.

The electronic voting machines used at the precincts recorded votes on both paper tapes and data cards, and the latter were used to enter the data into computers at the registrar's office. This gave the initial count, which was transmitted to Sacramento continuously throughout the evening and was completed in the early morning hours.

Beginning on Wednesday, work resumed to finish processing absentee ballots that arrived before the election, as well as those that were dropped off at local precincts. The provisional ballots that were returned from local precincts were also processed during the rest of November. Since the total number of absentee and provisional ballots made up about 25 percent of the ballots cast in our county, the final counts weren't available for several weeks.

The bottom line is that both *Sukey* and I were greatly impressed with the professional way the Registrar's staff does it's work, and still they made time to answer questions from observers such as us two. Although I don't understand what goes on inside "the black box," I can attest to the care and dedication of those handling the flow of paper and electronic data.

If anyone would like to know more, feel free to call me at 524-9088 or send an email to jeansafir@comcast.net, and I'll try to get the answers.

—*Jean Safir*, Action V.P.

EDUCATION UPDATE UNIT MEETINGS

School Finance/Charter Schools/Readiness to Learn:

Wed. Dec. 8 7-9pm 1033 Colusa (*Bicke*)

Thur. Dec. 9 10-noon Albany Library,
Edith Stone Room, 1247 Marin

Governance/Accountability and Assessment/ Equity:

Wed. Jan. 5 10-noon 2 Eucalyptus Rd. (*Fine*)

Thur. Jan. 6 7-9pm Berkeley Adult School,
1701 San Pablo between Virginia and
Francisco (secure parking in lot)

RECORD NUMBER OF VOTER REGISTRATION FORMS DISTRIBUTED

LWVBAE distributed voter registration forms to 118 different sites in Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville so far this year. This contribution to voter service was accomplished by the consistent hard work of many league volunteers, including *Jean Safir, Wilma Jordan, Allie Norton, Hillary Reinis, Ruth Maguire, Jill Martinucci, Jinky Gardner, Ruthann Taylor, Sherry Keith, Helene Lecar, Marsha Skinner, Jeanne Klems, Carol Talbeck, Karen Carlson-Olson, Stephani Antalocy* and *Jody Bush*

In addition to the usual sites such as government offices, libraries, senior centers and fairs and parades in Berkeley and Albany, members distributed forms to many sites not previously serviced by the League such as restaurants, coffee shops, theaters, banks, the major markets, senior residential homes, record stores, book stores and other sites on Telegraph Avenue and Shattuck Avenue. Distribution of voter registration forms brought to the attention of local businesses an important function of League voter service activity.

Not counted in the number of sites was the League office itself, where office volunteers distributed registration forms to individuals and organizations who obtained them from us because they knew of our activity in this area. At least 1,000 registration forms in Spanish and in Chinese were picked up from the office as well.

Voter registration is an ongoing activity and forms mailed in now will register voters for the March 2005 election.

— *Lenora Young*, Voter Registration Forms
Coordinator

VOTER SERVICES

Voter Services was very busy this past election season.

First, we delivered registration forms to a record number of places in our three towns. *Lenora Young* headed up the effort. See her article above for more details, and thanks! *Lenora* for leading this important effort.

We also covered four events where we were able to register voters. Last spring, *Phoebe Watts, Doris Nassiry, Sherry Keith, Suzanne Chun*, and *Jinky*

Gardner attended a health fair on the Berkeley High campus and registered many seniors who were or would be 18 by Nov. 2.

This fall we registered some people and passed out forms to more who stopped by our table at the Solano Stroll. Thanks to Nancy Bickel, Phoebe Watts, Jane Barrett, Suzanne Chun, Jane & Tom Coulter, Jo Ann Price, Jinky Gardner, Jean Safir, Lea Barker, Mary Wainwright, and Diane Akers who took shifts and kept us open all day. Also, Helene Lecar, and Jinky Gardner went to a festival that the adult literacy program Berkeley Reads put on and registered some newly literate voters. Lastly, Renata Tubman represented the League at a resources fair put on at the Mabel Howard Apartments and got residents there registered. Thank you all!

Another important piece of work began on August 8 when the ballot closed and the LWVBAE jumped on the phone to the city clerks to get all the information on the various ballot measures. The League wishes to extend our thanks to Sherry Kelly, Jackie Bucholz and Karen Hemphill, the City Clerks of Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville respectively, and their staff for all their help and support in getting complete information to us very quickly. Armed with the data our writers, Jean Safir, Helene Lecar, Fran Packard, Phoebe Watts, Ginette Polak, Suzanne Chun, Pat Kuhi, Eloise Bodine, Ruthann Taylor, Ruth Ganong, and Jinky Gardner, dove in and started writing the local Pros & Cons. Fran deserves special notice because she wrote up four measures herself and provided the chart which compared all the money measures on the Berkeley ballot. Anne Henderson also contributed the helpful paragraphs explaining why the cities are having the budget crunches that they are having.

After writing and critiquing the text for the Pros & Cons, they were passed to our editors Luanne Rogers and Jody Bush who caught a bunch of errors and set us straight. Next on to our wonderful formatter, Marylyn Coons, to get the material production-ready, and one last editing run past Irene Hegarty. At last the Pros & Cons went off to the printer, and an electronic version went to Bill Chapman who got them on our website pronto. Thank you, all!

While we were waiting for our local Pros & Cons to come back from the printers, the State Pros & Cons arrived, all 5,000 of them with an incorrect title printed for Prop 67. No breathing time! Over the next several days many of you came to the office to help.

Barbara Alesandrini formatted the correct title on address labels which were quick to apply to the offending page. Thanks to Renata Tubman, Barbara Stern, Sherry Smith, Jane Barrett, Ruthann Taylor, Jean Safir, Nancy Bickel, Angharad Jones, Janet Strothman, and Lois Brubeck for coming at the last minute and getting in the correction!

By this time the candidate forums had already begun. Phoebe Watts took charge of organizing and coordinating these. We started off taping each district for the Berkeley City Council. This was followed by the Rent Board and School Board. Neil Goldstein was the producer. Jill Martinucci coordinated the camera work. These tapes were shown on B-TV and C-TV throughout October. There were many live forums, especially for the school board, and we moderated the Albany City Council and the Albany School Board races as well. Many thanks! to our reliable cadre of moderators, timers, question editors, and camera women, Jane Barrett, Lois Brubeck, Karen Carlson-Olson, Suzanne Chun, Jane Coulter, Minnie Favre, Jinky Gardner, Angharad Jones, Katherine Kocel, Pat Kuhi, Hillary Reinis, Marsha Skinner, and Sherry Smith.

Our last effort to serve the voters—and it was really big this year—was training and sending out our Pros & Cons speakers. We had a bureau of fifteen, many experienced members who had done it before, and many new speakers who got their feet wet this time around. Helene Lecar, Angharad Jones, Sherry Smith, Jo Ann Price, Lois Brubeck, Fran Packard, Eloise Bodine, Nancy Bickel, Jeanne Klems, Luanne Rogers, Betty Hicks, Linda Carothers, Christine Green, Wilma Jordan, and Jinky Gardner. Thank you all from the League and thank you all from the many groups who asked us to come. I won't list all 29 here, but I want to say I am excited to report that we received requests from many new groups this year including three UC Berkeley student organizations.

It is beyond understatement to say that I couldn't have done it without all of you. We, the League of Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville, did a fabulous job together. Thanks to and from us all!!

And remember there will be other elections!
— Jinky Gardner, Election Services VP



BAY AND BEYOND
BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY
Saturday, January 29, 2005

Mark your calendars! January's Bay Area League Day will focus on the status of Regional Planning in the Bay Area. Details of speakers and the location will be announced in the December LWV Bay Area VOTER.

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CA LEAGUE'S FIRST EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jill Kaiser Newcom became the League of Women Voters of California's first executive director on October 1.

Newcom comes to the League with more than seven years of experience in nonprofit management and a Masters of Science in Public Administration & Public Policy.

LWVC president, *Jacky Jacobberger* said in a press release that "Our state League, although almost 50 years old, has never had an executive director. We've hired *Newcom* in that capacity because we think she'll help us bring the League's impressive array of voter education and citizen engagement activities to more Californians."

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DID YOU KNOW?

LWV Education Foundation Senior Elections Manager *Jeanette Senecal* was honored as one of Youth Vote Coalition's "30 Outstanding Young People Under 30" who have succeeded in engaging young people in the electoral process.

Youth Vote Coalition is the largest national nonpartisan coalition working to increase the political involvement of 50 million Americans between the ages of 18-30 years old.



LWVUS: <http://www.lwv.org>
 LWVC: <http://www.ca.lwv.org>
 LWVBA: <http://www.lwvba-ca.org>
 LWVBAE: <http://lwvbae.org>

VISTA'S 30TH BIRTHDAY BASH
FOUNDATIONS OF OUR FUTURE

THURSDAY, DEC. 2, 2004, 7:30-11 PM
AT ASHKENAZ, 1317 SAN PABLO AVE.,
BERKELEY

TICKETS \$10 STUDENTS, \$20 PUBLIC,
BUY AT THE DOOR OR ONLINE AT
VISTABASH.TIX.COM, INFO AT 981-2800

IF YOU CAN'T COME, BUT WOULD LIKE TO
MAKE A DONATION,
SEND A CHECK, PAYABLE TO
FRIENDS OF VISTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE,
2020 MILVIA ST., BERKELEY, CA 94704

SUPPORT THE LEAGUE WITH SCRIP
AND MAKE YOUR HOLIDAY
SHOPPING EASY!

One of the major sources of income for the Berkeley, Albany, Emeryville League of Women Voters is the purchase of Andronico's Scrip. For every \$100 purchased by a League member, \$6 comes back to the League. It is also possible to order Scrip Advantage for Longs Drug, Whole Foods, Eddie Bauer, Barnes and Noble, Home Depot, Men's Wearhouse, Old Navy, Tower Records and Williams Sonoma. For most of these businesses \$8 comes back to the League for every \$100 purchased. Travel cards are available from Marriott to be used for reservations, gift shops, spas or green fees, worldwide. For each \$50 card purchased, \$5 comes back to the League.

If you are interested in supporting the League through any of these businesses, please contact *Ruthann Taylor* at 527-0673 or by email at cetaylor7@comcast.net

MOCK ELECTION AT ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL TWO PERSPECTIVES

Albany High School has a responsive and responsible student body, as demonstrated during the 2004 Mock Election on October 28. Even with all the wonderful distractions of Homecoming Week, students took the time to register, resulting in 735 students eligible to vote or 64 percent of 1153 total enrollment. On Election Day they voted before school, during breaks and class (if their teacher excused them or brought them as an entire class), and after school, since the poll was open 7a.m. – 4 p.m. A very respectable number of 550 students voted, 48 percent of enrollment or 75 percent of those registered. Albany's Alternative High School, MacGregor High School, also participated with 20 students.

Selected classes were able to attend an Albany School Board Forum, during 5th period on October 20, to ask questions of the candidates.

Printed Voter Guides and state and local ballot measure Pros & Cons were provided free to all students by LWVBAE, which also organized the School Board Candidates' Forum. The Albany High School PTA funded all copying costs of registration forms, signs, sample and official ballots.

More than 30 parents, community, League members, and student volunteers helped with registration and on voting day. Support from Cougar, Leadership, Math, site administration, Social Studies and Special Ed staff helped make the event successful. The Albany High School Mock Election was featured in the West County Times on Sunday, October 31. (See next column.)

I'd like to thank League members *Jinky Gardner* (who ordered printed material), *Phoebe Watts* (who arranged the candidates' forum and sorted questions), *Sherry Smith* (who moderated at the forum), and *Karen Larson, Virginia McKone, and Sheryl Black* (who helped with the election itself).

— *Karen Carlson-Olson*, AHS Mock Election Organizer

THE STUDENTS ARE JUST PRACTICING FOR THE REAL THING, WHICH SOME SAY IS THE ONLY WAY TO CHANGE THE LAW

Mock vote no joke for Albany High

Shirley Dang, *West County Times*

October 31, 2004

ALBANY - The elections are over as far as Albany High School is concerned. John Kerry clinched the presidency, winning 87 percent of the vote. Stem cell research is a go. More casinos in California? A-OK. Senior Wendy Gu, 17, cast her ballot last week after school. "It's the only way we can really change the law," Gu said. She's just practicing, of course. Nearly half of Albany High voted Thursday as part of National Mock Election Day, which drew in 2.8 million students across the country. President Bush beat Kerry 50 percent to 43 percent in national student elections.

Across the state, 90,500 students participated, according to the California Secretary of State's Office. The goal is to get students comfortable with ballots before their real turn comes at age 18, said *Karen Carlson-Olson*, an Albany parent and a mock election organizer from the League of Women Voters. "There are so many young people who look at ballots and say, 'Oh, my God, I can't read all this,'" *Carlson-Olson* said. "It's to demystify voting and imprint upon them the importance of voting."

Freshman Amanda Stevens, 14, turned in her ballot and promptly slapped an "I voted" sticker on her right cheek. League volunteers handed her a yellow pledge card she can use to make a voting-age friend or relative promise to vote. Amanda didn't register in advance. But when league volunteers asked her to cast a ballot, she obliged. "It seemed like fun," Stevens said. "And it only happens once every four years."

— extract courtesy of Contra Costa Newspapers



LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS
of Berkeley, Albany and Emeryville
1414 University Ave., Suite D
Berkeley, CA 94702-1509

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CALENDAR

Berkeley addresses unless otherwise indicated

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Just fill in the blanks below, clip this coupon and mail it with your check for \$58 Annual Dues made out to:

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BERKELEY, CA 94702-1509**

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Address: _____

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FAX: _____ E-mail: _____

Joining at the local level makes you a member at all levels:
LWVBAE, Bay Area, State and National.
Dues and contributions
to the League are not tax deductible.
Contributions to the LWVB Foundation
are deductible, to extent allowed by law.

Printed on recycled paper

DECEMBER

- 1 Wed. 7-9pm Board Meeting LWVBAE Office *S. Smith*, 548-1769
- 2 Thurs. 10am & 7pm Oakland LWV's Consensus Unit Meetings
(State Education Study) LWVBAE is welcome *LWVO*, 834-7640
- 8 Wed. 7-9pm LWVBAE Consensus Unit Meeting* *Kuhi*, 526-6589
- 9 Thurs. 10am-noon LWVBAE Consensus Unit Meeting* *Kuhi*, 526-6589.
- 13 Mon. 7:30pm Environmental Concerns: Organic Wine Tasting
1340 Arch St. (*Bansner*) *Stone*, 549-0959
- 20-31 December **LEAGUE OFFICE CLOSED FOR HOLIDAY SEASON**
* See page 4

JANUARY

- 3 Mon. **LEAGUE OFFICE RE-OPENS**
- 4 Tues. 7:30pm Civics Education Study
2339 Edwards St. *Gardner*, 548-5292
- 5 Wed. 10am-noon LWVBAE Consensus Unit Meeting* *Kuhi*, 526-6589
- 5 Wed. 7-9pm Board Meeting LWVBAE Office *S. Smith*, 548-1769
- 6 Thurs. 7-9pm LWVBAE Consensus Unit Meeting* *Kuhi*, 526-6589
- 7 Friday noon Deadline for February *VOTER* *Barker*, 532-5773
- 10 Mon. 7:30pm Environmental Concerns
1340 Arch St. (*Bansner*) *Stone*, 549-0959.
- 18 Tues. 7:30pm Civics Education Study
2339 Edwards St. *Gardner*, 548-5292
- 29 Sat. TBA Bay Area League Day See www.lwvba-ca.org