



THE VOTER

Read online at <http://www.lwvbae.org>

2014 Election Year 3

Berkeley Rent Board 3

Fracking in California 4



By Diz Swift and Carol Stone

Photo by Diz Swift

The national League is updating its study on agriculture and you can be a part.

Our League has joined with the Leagues of Oakland and Piedmont to study the issue and form a consensus. The joint group plans to alternate daytime and evening meetings.

The national League has not yet announced the precise policy consensus questions that local leagues will be asked to decide. However, in general, the agricultural study will cover a wide range of issues, basically in two groups: technology and finance.

Current Technology issues in agriculture including genetically modified organisms (GMOs), herbicides, pesticides, agricultural water pollution, aquifer depletion, antibiotics in livestock, and accurate food labeling.

Current Agriculture Finance issues include consolidation in agriculture industries, crop subsidies, and the federal agricultural regulatory process.

Timeline for the Agricultural Study

January-February 2014: LWVUS announces consensus questions.

February 2014: Local Leagues study the issues, prepare presentations.

March 2014: Local Leagues present background information and consensus questions to their members for discussion and to reach consensus.

April 2014: Report consensus to LWVUS.

When we receive the consensus questions we will send them and background materials to all our members.

If you are interested in joining or would like to know more, please send a message to Sherry Smith, Program Coordinator for LWVBAE at program@lwvbae.org

See League News on our website <http://www.lwvbae.org> for more information, our agriculture position, and a related story on some of the work to date.

Our League Direction

Come to Program Planning Jan 14

By Sherry Smith

Every year each League decides what issues we want to emphasize; what we want to publicize, lobby about, spend our time and money on, or study. On January 14 we will meet to decide, not only for our League, but also to recommend what we feel are important issues for national and Bay Area.

Should we continue to focus on climate change, health care and education at the local level? Or is another issue more important?

Let's Hear Your Voice!

Don't miss the chance to tell us the direction YOU think the League should take!

January 14, noon to 2:00p, Albany Library

In national issues, should we continue to focus on protecting and engaging voters, reforming money in politics, defending the environment and gun safety? Or should the national League shift attention to something else?

Are there local or national issues that you think we should be able to take action on but can't because we never studied them or because our positions are out of date?

Come prepared: You'll need to come prepared to

► **Continued page 2**

IN THIS ISSUE



Agriculture Study 1

An important study by the LWVUS needs your input.

By Diz Swift and Carol Stone

Program Planning 1

Help plan the direction and emphasis our League takes. Come to the Program Planning meeting.

By Sherry Smith



2014 Voter Services 3

The election year is almost upon us. We need to get our Voter Services Team organized and moving!

By Phyllis Gale



Fracking in California 4

Environmental Concerns January 13 deals with possibilities and concerns of fracking in California.

By Carol Stone



Also in This Issue

- 3 **League's Effort Pays Off** – *Reaching a consensus on Measure M implementation*
- 3 **Bay Area League Day, February 1**
- 3 **Berkeley Rent Board** – *LWVBAE urges the Rent Board to concentrate on core tasks*
- 4 **Sex Trafficking in Berkeley** – *February Conversation*
- 4 **January 6 Action Meeting**
- 5 **Membership**
- 5 **Donations**
- 5 **We'll Miss Them**
- 6 **Calendar**

► Program Planning from page 1

strongly support your recommendation with known LWV policy positions. You can find positions at the following links:

LWVBAE: <http://www.lwvbae.org/about-the-league/local-policy-positions/>

LWV Alameda County:
http://www.alameda.ca.lwvnet.org/County_Postions.html

LWV Bay Area:
<http://www.lwvbayarea.org/advocacy.html#positions>

LWV California: <http://ca.lwv.org/issues/LWV-California-positions>

LWVUS: <http://www.lwv.org/content/public-policy-positions>

We do program planning every January. This is your chance, as a member, to bring your ideas to your League colleagues, to present and perhaps fight for them. If you really want your proposal to succeed, bring a brief written statement that mentions all the existing League positions that might apply to your issue, and states why we should focus on this issue – or study it.

If you want to study a new issue or update an old position, you need to give answers to some important questions, including:

- Is there someone to chair the study?
- Are there people to serve on the study committee?
- Why is this issue urgent?
- Are there other groups working on the issue?
- Is the League uniquely appropriate to make a difference on this issue?

We will devote our monthly "Conversation" on **Tuesday, January 14** to these discussions. Come join us at the **Albany Public Library's** Edith Stone Room, from **noon to 2:00p.**

Watch Your Mail

The new LWVBAE member handbook will be sent to you soon!

ON THE WEB

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

2014 Election Year



Getting Ready

By Phyllis Gale, Voter Services

Phyllis Gale and Nancy Bickel registering voters at a community event.

The Voter Services Team is Organizing!

The Voter Services Team is organizing for the 2014 Election Year and we need your help. The primaries are this Spring and then we gear up for the Fall when Berkeley, Albany, and Emeryville will be electing the council and school board members. There will also be City and County measures, State propositions and State and National elections.

In order for us to continue our successful program and maintain our reputation, we are looking for folks to work on voter registration, election services, "Pros and Cons" on local ballot issues, candidate meetings/forums, local candidate videos, speakers bureau, SmartVoter liaisons, and more. With many hands and good planning, the work will be manageable. Join us for our organizing meeting!

"Brown Bag" Lunch

Wednesday, January 15, 2013

From Noon to 1:30 p.m.

LWVBAE Office

2530 San Pablo, Berkeley

While an RSVP is not required, please let Voter Services Coordinator Phyllis Gale know if you are interested in participating at voterservices@lwvbae.org or 510-548-0591.



The League is its members

Share a few hours a month phoning members to invite them to events.

League's Effort Pays Off

By Diz Swift

Measure M, a \$30 million Berkeley bond measure, was passed in 2012 to improve streets and related watersheds in Berkeley. The discussion before it was put on the ballot was very polarized, so there were concerns about how to best implement the measure and if a consensus could be reached.

For nearly the entire past year, a public process was followed to determine how the money will be spent. It was led by the Berkeley Public Works Commission and co-sponsored by the LWVBAE, with participation of the Community Environmental Advisory, Transportation and Parks and Waterfront Commissions. The outcome of the community dialogue was a process and criteria used to arrive at the next years' paving plans. The process and plan were passed by the City Council Nov. 19.

Members of the City Council were very complimentary of the process and the consensus reached with two Councilmembers singling out the LWVBAE for praise.

Story at: <http://www.lwvbae.org/category/league-news/>

Come to Bay Area League Day

Saturday, February 1, 10:00a-2:00p

Metro Center, 101 8th Street, Oakland

What is the Value of Bay Area Open Space?

Register online www.lwvbayarea.org (cost \$35)

Questions to Alec MacDonald at (510) 839-1608

Within the more than a million acres protected permanently from development in the Bay Area, a new vision of the value of open space is emerging. Join us!

Berkeley Rent Board

LWVBAE Urges Board to Concentrate on Core Tasks

By Nancy Bickel

"Concentrate on core tasks" is the League's message in a letter we have just sent to the Berkeley Rent Stabilization Board. The League also recommended that the Board audit its administrative activities and review staffing levels, streamline processes, and improve efficiency in order to limit increases of the unit registration fee that supports its operations. We also recommended that the Executive Director's salary actions be reviewed by the Board based on annual performance reviews.

See full story and links to our position and the letter sent at: <http://www.lwvbae.org/league-news/league-urges-rent-board-improvements/>

Sex Trafficking in Berkeley

Join us for February 18 Conversation

By Sherry Smith

Although San Francisco and Oakland are considered by experts to be major sex trafficking hubs, it would be shortsighted to ignore the possibility of trafficking occurring in Berkeley. Many runaway and homeless teens are attracted to the area, providing a pool of vulnerable young people.

Last spring, the Berkeley City Council established a subcommittee, chaired by Vice Mayor Linda Maio, to address sex trafficking within Berkeley.

At our February 18 "Conversation", members of the subcommittee will tell us about the task with which they are charged, the goals they have adopted, and what progress has been made thus far.

When: Tuesday, February 18, noon to 2:00

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

The subcommittee is working with the Mills College Graduate Program in Public Policy to analyze the problem; a Mills graduate student is writing her master's policy report on the subject. Several policy options are being explored, including police training and protocol, anti-trafficking school curriculum adoption, data collection and victim identification, and creating a network with other cities and service providers in Alameda County.

Come join us at February's "Conversation" to hear subcommittee members discuss what they have discovered thus far, and to ask your questions about their research and possible recommendations they may make.

How Does LWVC Take Action?

At our monthly Action Meeting, in addition to regular business, we will be hearing from **Helen Hutchison, Action chair of LWV California**, who will give us a brief overview of how the state League takes action and does advocacy.

There will plenty of time for questions. Join us!

Monday, January 6, 1:00-3:30p

Fracking in California

January 13 Environmental Concerns

By Carol Stone

Join us Monday, January 13, 2014, 7:30-9:00p for Environmental Concerns with Aria Cahir of the Sierra Club speaking: "Is Hydraulic Fracturing of the Monterey Shale Formation Creating the New California Gold Rush?"

California sits atop a 1,700-square-mile oil shale deposit that might be accessed by hydraulic fracturing, also called fracking. Fracking is a largely unregulated process that forces large amounts of water, sand, and an undisclosed mixture of chemicals into the ground, in order to extract petroleum.

On the national level, fracking for oil and gas is still largely exempt from some environmental laws like the Clean Air and Clean Water acts, with protection of air and water quality only possible at the state and local levels. In California, by the industry's own estimate, more than 600 oil wells have been fracked in the last decade, with little oversight or monitoring.

The Monterey Shale formation stretches from northern San Joaquin into Los Angeles County. Nearly all oil already produced in California has come from the Monterey. It is not clear that fracking the Monterey is practical, but if so, fracked production from it could be very large indeed.

Our League Positions: The LWV at both US and California levels has a strong position for transparency, full disclosure and protection of public lands; management of public land needs to be done as a finite resource, not as a commodity, as part of that protection.

We support disclosure to the public of chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing, strengthening regulations related to well-bore integrity as well as disposal of waste water.

In October, 2013, the LWVC joined with more than 100 other groups to urge the Bureau of Land Management to cancel all oil and natural gas leasing on federal lands in California until a broad analysis of the environmental impacts of drilling and fracking is completed.

Come join our discussion of this important issue.

Membership Report

Mina Jenner, Dues Coordinator

In November-December we welcomed 4 new members and lost 4 long-time members.

New Members

Lesley Emmington-Jones
Carol Thomas
Igor Tregub
Karen Weinstein

Deaths

Ann Crowe
Jack Duisman
Charlotte Lichterman
Barbara Oliver

We'll Miss Them

Nancy Bickel and Sherry Smith

Three long-lived and valued members died in recent months.

Ann Crowe, President 1980-82: The able researcher and editor who directed our studies of the school district in the 70's and 80's, Ann died in November after a long decline. Raised in Scotland, trained as a French teacher, Ann met and married George, an architect from New Zealand; they settled in Berkeley. While working as a teacher and translator, Ann, along with the other knowledgeable Education Committee members, wrote deeply researched analytic reports about the BUSD budget and operations. Ann set and enforced very high standards for factual accuracy, clear thinking and succinct writing. In learning to meet those standards, many of us learned from her how to be effective League members.

Nancy Bickel

Charlotte Lichterman: For years, she was our "women's issues" expert and an impassioned defender of abortion rights. An early adopter of email, she tracked and kept us up-to-date on these issues. She was proud to have become a 50-year League member. A couple of years ago, although she was not able to attend the Annual Luncheon, she nonetheless entered the raffle for the replica Susan B. Anthony purse; she won. When I took the purse to her at her apartment in Oakland we had a wonderful extended conversation. As always, she was sharp and witty and very much "up" with what was going on in the world and the League.

Sherry Smith

► **Continued next column**

Donations to Our League

November-December 2013

Louetta Erlin, Donations Secretary

To the LWVBAE General Fund

Regina Beatus	Kurt and Ora Huth
Martha Chase	Karen Carlson-Olson and Henry Olson
Zipporah Collins	Therese Pipe
Louetta Erlin	Weldon and Jeanie Rucker
<i>in memory of Ann Crowe</i>	Sherry Smith
Samuela Evans	Andrea Washburn
Edith Gladstone	Evelyn Wozniak
Mim Hawley	
<i>in memory of Ann Crowe</i>	

To the LWVB Foundation

Ellen Barth	Jay and Sarah Miyazaki
Shireen Burns	Julie and Fred Nachtwey
Anne Good	Luella Noles
Maryan Gong	Barbara Renton
Kurt and Ora Huth	Vivian Scharlach
The Light Trust	Sherry Smith

Many thanks for remembering our League.

► From previous column

Todd Smith: Todd served for many years as an election officer. Some years ago, she was the experienced polling place inspector and I the novice clerk at a big busy Berkeley polling place. The machinery and rules of the election had been changed once again; new electronic voting equipment had to be set up and explained to voters. Throughout that long, tiring day, Todd was unfailingly calm and competent. When we closed all the machines and added up the totals of ballots cast by different methods, we couldn't get them to balance. After repeated tries, even Todd agreed we would just have to report the discrepancy. We removed and packed the specified counting devices, reports and ballots into the official bags and drove them to the drop off station together. Todd seemed as energetic as ever; I, 20 years younger, felt exhausted.

Nancy Bickel

Board

President	Nancy Bickel
Secretary	Pat Day
Treasurer	Sarah Miyazaki
Action	Carol Stone
Program	Sherry Smith
Membership	Dean Metzger
Voter Service	Phyllis Gale

Off-board

VOTER/Web Editor	Diz Swift
Climate Change	Regina Beatus
Education Action	Cathy Lynch and Dianne McNenny
Env. Concerns	Gail Schickle, Carol Stone, and Vi Feinauer
Health Care	Li-hsia Wang

2013-2014



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Current and past issues of the *VOTER* are posted on our website www.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 – Locations are the LWVBAE office, 2530 San Pablo Ave, Suite F, Berkeley, and area code is (510) unless otherwise noted.

www.lwvbae.org/calendar

January

6	Mon	1:30-3:00p	Action Team Meeting	C. Stone	549-0959
7	Tues	10:00-12:00p	LWVBAE Board Meeting	N. Bickel	526-4055
10	Fri	1:30-3:00p	Education Action Team	C. Lynch	527-2173
13	Mon	7:30-9:00p	Environmental Concerns	C. Stone	549-0959
Fracking in California , 1174 Euclid Ave, Berkeley					
14	Tues	12:00-2:00p	Conversation with League	S. Smith	548-1769
Program Planning , Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave					
14	Tues	5:30-6:30p	Money in Politics Team	N. Bickel	526-4055
15	Weds	12:00-1:30p	Voter Services Team	P. Gale	548-0591
20	Mon	1:30-2:30p	Health Care Team	L. Wang	848-5765
22	Weds	1:30-3:00p	Climate Change Team	R. Beatus	524-6904

February

1	Sat	10:00-2:00p	Bay Area League Day	N. Bickel	526-4055
<i>See notice page 3</i>					
4	Tues	10:00-12:00p	LWVBAE Board Meeting	N. Bickel	526-4055
7	Fri	6:00p	Mar-Apr VOTER Deadline	D. Swift	548-4808
10	Mon	7:00-9:00p	Environmental Concerns	C. Stone	549-0959
Warsaw Climate Talks Report , 1174 Euclid Ave, Berkeley					
11	Tues	5:30-6:30p	Money in Politics Team	N. Bickel	526-4055
14	Fri	1:30-3:00p	Education Action Team	C. Lynch	527-2173
17	Mon	1:30-2:30p	Health Care Team	L. Wang	848-5765
18	Tues	12:00-2:00p	Conversation with League	S. Smith	548-1769
Sex Trafficking in Berkeley , Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave					
26	Weds	1:30-3:00p	Climate Change Team	R. Beatus	524-6904