

**The League of  
Women Voters of  
Alameda**

P. O. Box 1645  
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www.LWVAlameda.org

The VOTER is published by the  
LWVA Communications Committee.  
Current and past issues of the VOTER  
are posted on LWVAlameda.org.

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**The League of Women Voters** is a non-partisan organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We work to raise understanding of major policy issues and influence public policy through education. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. We advocate only on issues that members have studied and reached consensus on. In an era of proliferating powerful special interests, the League's advocacy in the public interest is increasingly recognized as an essential voice of democracy.



# VOTER

**Promoting Political Responsibility through Informed  
and Active Participation**

Volume 48, Number 2, February 2016

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**State Senator Loni Hancock:  
What Lies Ahead in 2016?  
Thursday, February 4 • 7 - 9 PM  
Mastick Social Hall • 1155 Santa Clara Avenue**



**Join us to hear about:  
Balancing the Budget | Criminal Justice Reform | Global  
Warming | Energy Efficiency | Death with Dignity |  
& other legislation**

**INFO: [www.LWVAlameda.org](http://www.LWVAlameda.org) or 510-289-1268**



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Alice Fried, Co-President

League of Women Voters of Alameda

Election Year 2016 is here! I believe that the communications infrastructure we've set in place in 2015 has put the LWVA in a good position to empower and engage citizens to participate wisely. Never before has promoting positive solutions to public policy—the League's mission—been more necessary to our government process. We must roll up our sleeves and do what the League does best: educate and advocate. This is who we are. This is what we do.

In order to make our information and advocacy accessible and relevant to our community, I kindly request our committee chairs to submit as soon as possible, the changes, revisions and current data for our website to our Communications Chair, Georgia Gates Derr. Nothing will hurt our effectiveness more than sending citizens to a website for information that is outdated. It is imperative that our website is a reflection of our role as voter education gatekeepers.

Voter Services is the reason there is a League of Women Voters. Established in 1920, the year that women were granted a constitutional right to vote, the League was instituted to make sure that the new voters were provided with information to help them make intelligent decisions. In keeping with those League tenets—voting rights and voter education—LWV will print and distribute copies of the Easy Voter Guide for the Primary election and transition from Smart Voter to the new Voters Edge California (VEC) website. Our Voter Services Chair, Dorothy Kerwin, needs members to step up and assist with voter registration at upcoming events; to study, compile and distribute information on ballot measures; and to organize candidate forums.

As co-presidents, Anne Spanier and I want LWVA to increase voter turnout by implementing LWV tools—education and advocacy—across our entire community. That is why the LWVA will expand its reach this year and educate youth on the power of the vote by instituting its first LWVA high school debate in collaboration with the College of Alameda and Girls Inc. on April 15, 2016. LWVA Youth Outreach, chaired by me, needs members to assist with prepping our debaters to make this debut scholarship program as well as the LWVA, a primary source of citizen empowerment to our future voters by providing not only critical thinking skills, but a lifelong connection to LWV. It's only fitting that the first LWVA debate topic is: Get Rid of the Electoral College: In a Democracy We Should Count Every Vote. Voter service is who we are. It is what we do.

The LWVA provides voters an opportunity to engage personally with elected officials at our annual Meet Your Public Officials (MYPO) social. This year's SPEED DATE YOUR LOCAL OFFICIALS event will be held on Thursday, March 31, 5:30-7:30 PM at the Community Center of Harbor Bay Isle. MYPO Chair, Deborah Wright and the Committee need volunteers, auction items (especially big-ticket items) and your commitment to attend and invite your neighbors and family to enjoy this opportunity to meet and socialize with elected officials. Engaging citizens in the political process is who we are. It's what we do.

Anne and I want to recognize your hard work and dedication to carrying out the League's mission and to request your continued commitment to making our democracy work through education and advocacy. It is who we are and what we do.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Visit [LWVAlameda.org/calendar.html](http://LWVAlameda.org/calendar.html) for more event information

- Thu. Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>**  
7:00-9:00 PM  
**COMMUNITY FORUM with State Senator LONI HANCOCK**  
“What Lies Ahead in 2016?” (see flyer on page 1)  
Mastick Social Hall, 1155 Santa Clara Avenue.  
Join Loni for highlights of some of the accomplishments of the 2015 Legislative Session, and what lies ahead for 2016. Bring your friends!
- Fri. Feb. 5<sup>th</sup>**  
5:30 PM  
**FIRST FRIDAY NO-HOST SOCIAL DINNER**  
Pier 29, 1148 Ballena Bay Blvd., Alameda. Everyone welcome!  
Reserve by noon Friday, [connie.hanna@comcast.net](mailto:connie.hanna@comcast.net), 995-8672.
- Sat. Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>**  
9:30 AM-2:30 PM  
**BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY**  
“Reinventing Bay Area Transportation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”  
Maple Hall, 13837 San Pablo, City Hall Complex, SAN PABLO  
Keynote: Sen. Jim Beall, Chair, CA Senate Transportation Committee.  
Info: <http://lwvbayarea.org/2016LeagueDay.html> or (510) 839-1608.
- Mon. Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
3:00-4:30 PM  
**BOOK CLUB:** *Infidel* by Ayaan Hirsi Ali  
Applebee’s Restaurant, 2263 South Shore Center  
Contact Felice Zensius, [felicez@ymail.com](mailto:felicez@ymail.com), 865-4329
- Thu. Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>**  
7:00-9:00 PM  
**LWVA Board meeting:** all members are welcome to attend.  
Alameda Hospital, Conference Room C (first floor)
- Wed. March 16<sup>th</sup>**  
12:00 Noon  
**HUMAN TRAFFICKING: Community forum**  
Keynote speaker: Alameda County D.A. Nancy O’Malley  
Co-sponsored with AAUW and College of Alameda.  
College of Alameda, 555 Ralph Appezato Way, Bldg. F.
- Thu. March 31<sup>st</sup>**  
5:30-7:30 PM  
**MEET YOUR PUBLIC OFFICIALS (MYPO): Speed date your local representatives!** Annual Community Mixer and Fundraiser  
Harbor Bay Community Center, 3195 Mecartney Road  
Raffle, silent auction, food, drink, socializing. Tickets \$10 @ the door.
- Thu. April 7<sup>th</sup>**  
7:00-9:00 PM  
**BETTER BART: Community Transportation forum**  
Robert Raburn, District 4 representative to BART Board of Directors.  
Alameda Free Library, Santa Clara and Oak, enter from rear parking.
- Thu. May 12<sup>th</sup>**  
7:00-9:00 PM  
**ELECTIONS 2016: Community forum** (date tentative)  
LWVA presents June Primary local candidates and ballot propositions
- Sat. June 25<sup>th</sup>**  
11:30 AM- 2:30 PM  
**LWVA Annual Meeting and luncheon.**  
Place to be announced.

## Board and Committee News

**Your LWVA Board is working hard!** Minutes of the LWVA monthly Board meetings are available at [LWVAlameda.org/Documents.html](http://LWVAlameda.org/Documents.html) once they have been formally approved. The Documents pages of our website also contain the League's Nonpartisan and Diversity Policy and our local Bylaws, Communications Committee policy, and Treasurer's Reports. Check it out!

### Membership Committee

**Renewals:** The national day of reckoning of the League's national membership, January 31<sup>st</sup> at 12 midnight GMT(!), has come and gone. Of 137 active local members in December 2015, about 30 have still not renewed and are now officially "inactive." To check, contact Marian Breitbart at 769-1604 ([mbreitbart@mac.com](mailto:mbreitbart@mac.com)).

**It's not too late to renew online** ([LWVAlameda.org/join\\_form.html](http://LWVAlameda.org/join_form.html)) **or mail your check** (\$70 individual, \$97 family) to LWVA, PO Box 1645, Alameda CA 94501.

**New members:** A warm welcome to Joyce McConeghey ([Joyce.mccon@gmail.com](mailto:Joyce.mccon@gmail.com)) who joined in December!

**Transitions:** We sadly report the death of Arthur Lipow, who with his wife Gretchen has been a long-time member of LWVA and dedicated sponsor of the monthly Alameda Public Affairs Forum

**Nominations Committee** is seeking candidates for positions on the 2016-2017 Board and LWVA committees. Nominate yourself! Learn new skills! Contact Karen Scanlon at 523-6456 ([yakitt@aol.com](mailto:yakitt@aol.com))



### Thank you Jon!

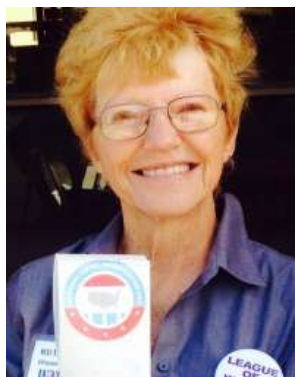
Our Publicity Manager, Jon Spangler has resigned from his communications position with the LWVA. We would like to thank Jon for his dedication, his insight, and his willingness to tackle any task to get the word out about the wonderful work of the LWVA. We express our sincere gratitude to Jon and extend our good wishes to him and to his wife Linda Hudson who has shared much of this work over the years.

### Introducing your Board members (a few at a time)



#### Deborah Wright, Fundraising Chair

I am a third generation Alamedan, of which I'm very proud! Alamedans feel like if you haven't lived here for at least 25 years you're still considered a visitor..... I began my career in the financial services industry over five years ago... I graduated from St. Mary's College in Moraga and have been a business owner for over 35 years. I'm also active here in the Community of Alameda and have spearheaded and chaired events over the years including Pirates in Paradise, City of Alameda's Americas Cup Committee and most recently, The League of Women Voters annual fund raiser; Meet Your Public Officials.



#### Ruth Dixon-Mueller, Membership Chair

I joined the Alameda League five years ago after living in Costa Rica for 18 years. In Costa Rica I was consulting for several international organizations on global population issues and women's sexual and reproductive health. A friend and I also produced coffee for the local market and organic pineapples for export. This mid-life adventure followed an 18-year career teaching sociology at UC Davis and, before that, undergraduate and graduate school at UC Berkeley during the chaotic sixties. No longer chaotic or even mid-life, I now live in a floating home on the estuary and am learning to do things "the League way." Working with LWVA's committees is a great way to acquire new skills, network with fellow activists, have fun, and honor our heroine suffragettes!

**LWVA in ACTION**  
**MONEY IN POLITICS:**  
**RESULTS OF THE CONSENSUS DISCUSSION!**

Alameda league members met on January 19 to make policy recommendations for the national study of Money in Politics. Seven members of the Alameda league joined 15 members from the Berkeley-Albany-Emeryville League and came up with nearly identical policy decisions at the joint meeting. Most Oakland League members participated in the January 9 meeting in downtown Oakland. The three leagues had joined forces to carry out the study, with Katherine Gavzy, immediate past president of the Oakland League, providing outstanding leadership.

Alameda league decisions were approved by the Alameda Board on January 21<sup>st</sup> and were communicated to the LWVUS. Responses sent to the national Board will be used to expand the current LWVUS position on campaign finance. Thereafter, LWVUS will be able to use the new positions to lobby.

The Consensus Study had 36 questions, many with separate parts. To read the details, go to [LWVUS Money in Politics Study Consensus Questions-Answers-w Summary](#)

**To question 1, Part I, What should be the goals and purposes of campaign finance regulation,** the group agreed that the following should be included: seek political equality for all citizens, protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns, enable candidates to compete equitably for public office, ensure that [all] economic and corporate interests are part of election dialogue, provide voters with sufficient information...to make informed choices, ensure the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections and combat corruption and undue influence in government.

The only item that participants did not agree on was "Ensure that candidates have sufficient funds to communicate their messages to the public"—mainly because they found "ensure" would indicate that all candidates—however lacking in seriousness or support from potential voters—would be funded.

**In question 2, Part I, participants identified specific activities as examples—or not—of political corruption.** The main difficulty in making decisions was that the framework for answers was the realistic facts of the current political system. Many of the questions involved evaluating whether the intent of a candidate was to get money for his or her decisions or actions.

**Part II asked questions to identify which kinds of contributors** should be able to express their free speech views through campaign contributions or spending and which should have some spending limits—so rich individuals and many different kinds of organizations were identified as requiring some spending limits.

**Part II identified appropriate methods for regulating campaign finance to protect the democratic process.** The last questions asked how campaign finance regulations should be administered and enforced—the resounding answer —not the current system of even-numbered commission with equal representation of the two major parties. The alternatives were both approved—an odd numbered commission and structural changes to the Federal Election Commission.

## **AUCTION & RAFFLE DONATIONS NEEDED NOW!**

### **Meet Your Public Officials (MYPO 2016)**

**Thursday, March 31, 2016, 5:30 – 7:30 pm, Community Center of Harbor Bay  
3195 Mecartney, Alameda**



**Calling all LWVA members!** There are just ten weeks left to our annual community mixer and fundraiser. **LAST DAY TO DONATE** is Wednesday March 16<sup>th</sup>.

**We need high value items** such as:

- Vacation time-shares, weekend getaway packages
- Individual or season tickets to professional sporting events, theater, concerts
- Bay cruises, San Francisco tours, Alameda wine- and beer-tasting events, health club memberships
- Dinners for four in elegant restaurants, catered dinners in your home

**We can also use:**

- Tickets to the theater, movies, Alameda Pinball Museum, other fun places
- Gift certificates to stores, restaurants, bakeries
- Homemade items such as scarves, hats, and baby items
- Plants and gardening items; recipe books and kitchen items
- Premium wines and liquors; cocktail glasses, special foods and supplies
- Professional services such as home care, photography, massages, makeovers and manicures
- Themed baskets such as Easter chocolates, coffee and/or tea, movie night

**Questions, pickup and delivery of items? Contact Doris Gee**, MYPO Silent Auction Chair, [dorisgee48@gmail.com](mailto:dorisgee48@gmail.com) or phone (510) 521-2117. We look forward to hearing from you!

**Willing to volunteer at the event? Contact your MYPO 2016 committee:**

Deborah Wright, Chair, [wrightwaydesigns@hotmail.com](mailto:wrightwaydesigns@hotmail.com) (invitations and speed-dating)

Alice Fried, [alicefried89@gmail.com](mailto:alicefried89@gmail.com) (program)

Marian Breitbart, [mbreitbart@mac.com](mailto:mbreitbart@mac.com) (ticket sales, volunteers)

Doris Gee, [dorisgee48@gmail.com](mailto:dorisgee48@gmail.com) (auction and raffle items)

Ruth Dixon-Mueller, [dixonmueller@yahoo.com](mailto:dixonmueller@yahoo.com) (food & wine donations)

Georgia Gates Derr, [t.derr@comcast.net](mailto:t.derr@comcast.net) (publicity)

## **LWVA DRAFT REVISIONS of Local Position Statements**

**Approved by LWVA Board Jan. 21, 2016**

**These changes will be voted on by the general membership at LWVA's annual meeting, Saturday June 25<sup>th</sup>.**

**Summary of changes** (from ten Local Positions presented at June 2015 Annual Meeting). For previous wording see your 2015 Annual Meeting kit or visit [lwvalameda.org/Position-programs.html](http://lwvalameda.org/Position-programs.html) and click on "City Positions." These changes will be voted on at June 2016 Annual Meeting.

**Four positions have been deleted** (Redevelopment as voted June 2015, plus City Boards and Commissions, Port of Oakland, and Transportation, which is now in Housing & Transportation). **The remaining six positions** have all been edited for clarity and consistency and in some cases shortened considerably.

### **CITY CHARTER (1978, 2016)**

The League of Women Voters of Alameda (LWVA) supports measures providing simplicity and transparency in the City Charter through clarification of meaning and elimination of obsolete or inapplicable provisions.

### **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS (1997, 2016)**

The League of Women Voters of Alameda (LWVA) supports measures that protect the resilience of Alameda's residents and businesses through disaster mitigation, training, response and recovery.

The City's disaster preparedness plan should clearly define the roles and responsibilities of public officials, employees, public and private agencies, organizations, utilities, and other entities related to public health and safety and social services.

### **ELECTIONS (1985, 1998, 2016)**

The League of Women Voters of Alameda (LWVA) supports the adoption of a Fair Campaign Practices Code by the City Council for the local election of Public Officials with the goal of ensuring greater transparency of donations and spending.

Local special elections should be held by mail ballot with return postage provided. Adequate time should be allowed for voters to become informed about the election and to return the mail ballot. Procedures should be instituted to ensure widespread publicity and effective distribution of the ballots.

### **LAND USE (1974, 2016)**

The League of Women Voters of Alameda (LWVA) supports land use policies and revisions of the General Plan that are designed to:

- I. Advance the general welfare of the residents of Alameda in such areas as housing, public and social services, noise and odor control, beautification, and commercial and industrial development.
- II. Improve existing traffic patterns, including public transportation and access to BART. Alternatives to increased auto usage, such as bike paths and walkways, should be actively pursued.
- III. Promote light industrial and commercial development using all available means engendered in state law. Existing commercial areas should be upgraded and rehabilitated.
- IV. Implement existing conservation and open space elements of the General Plan. The City has the responsibility to ensure that the existing shoreline is developed and maintained for public use.
- V. Ensure that periodic reviews of the General Plan and its related elements incorporate comprehensive community input, including public hearings and posting of proposed changes in public media at the pre-draft, draft and adoption stages.
- VII. Express land use policies clearly, with concrete goals and objectives that adequately reflect cost considerations, environmental factors and citizen input.

## HOUSING and TRANSPORTATION (1989, 2005, 2016)

The League of Women Voters of Alameda (LWVA) supports City housing and transportation policies that:

- I. Fulfill Alameda's needs for housing at all economic and mobility levels. New developments should have a variety of densities and amenities that will support continuation of the quality of life now enjoyed in Alameda.
- II. Provide maximum feasible open space, defined as sufficient communal green space, walking paths, playgrounds, tot-lots, and other naturally landscaped areas to encourage and enhance livability and strong community identity.
- III. Meet or exceed current standards for energy efficiency. All designs should show consideration for minimum negative impact on air, water, and surrounding natural environment.
- IV. Provide an appropriate number of off-street parking spaces for each type of housing in the mix.
- V. Maximize the use of public, accessible, and alternative modes of transportation in order to maintain livability and decrease traffic on residential streets.
- VI. Ensure the safety of entrances and exits to housing developments, schools, business and shopping areas.

## LIBRARY (1991, 2016)

The League of Women Voters of Alameda (LWVA) supports the work of the Alameda Free Library in meeting the diverse needs of all Alamedans (all cultural groups, age groups, students, handicapped and military). Open hours, evening and days, should be increased. The current emphasis on popular materials, reference, and children's sections should be continued. Funding should be increased in order that the Alameda Free Library meet and surpass the minimum standards for library funding set by the state. Funding from the general funds should be increased, and if the library tax is raised the general fund should not be reduced.

### Join the Alameda League or renew your membership today!



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Other Names \_\_\_\_\_  
(if a family membership)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\$70 Single Membership     \$97 Family Membership     free Student Membership (full-time, voting age, enroll by mail only) Dues year is Jan 1 – Dec 31. Dues assistance available for those on limited income: e-mail [membership@LWVAlameda.org](mailto:membership@LWVAlameda.org) or call 865-2439. Printed and mailed VOTER ADD \$10 (e-mailed newsletter is free).

Please make check payable to LWV Alameda and mail to: LWVA, P. O. Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501.

**Membership dues are tax deductible. To pay online, visit [LWVAlameda.org/join.html](http://LWVAlameda.org/join.html).**

### Consider a Donation to the League

Please consider sending an additional tax-deductible donation to LWV Alameda, P. O. Box 1645, Alameda, CA 94501. We count on your support to do our education and advocacy work in the community.