

Valley Voter

League of Women Voters
Livermore-Amador Valley

November 2005

League Continues Redistricting Fight

(The LWVC issued this press release on Wednesday, November 9):

Yesterday the voters clearly said that Proposition 77 is not the way to reform the redistricting process in California. Jacqueline Jacobberger, president of the League of Women Voters of California, said, "Although the need to change the current situation is well recognized, voters understood that Prop. 77 had too many flaws to be a viable option for reform."

The League remains committed to pressing for a redistricting process that encourages public participation and scrutiny, has fair criteria for drawing the lines, and transfers responsibility for redistricting to an independent commission that reflects the interests and diversity of all California.

"Of all the issues on the special election ballot, redistricting offers the greatest promise for finding a fair, effective proposal that we can all endorse," said Jacobberger. Since January, the League has worked with other public interest groups and policy makers to seek consensus on procedural reforms and substantive standards for districts.

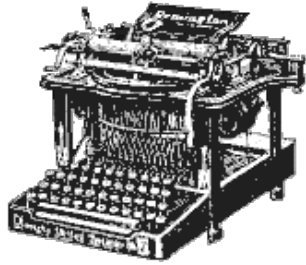
"We saw the Governor and legislative leaders take steps toward redistricting by an independent panel, and during the campaign the media solidly endorsed that concept," she continued. "We pledge our efforts to redesign the redistricting process without the flaws that plagued Prop. 77. And we challenge everyone concerned about our representative democracy to work with us to put a real reform measure before California voters in 2006."

For more information, or to sign up for redistricting updates, visit the League's redistricting page at <http://lwvc.org/lwvc/action/redistrict/>



President's Message

Thanks to all those members who worked on the election – registering voters, working at candidates' forums and pro and con presentations, maintaining the boxes of voter registration forms, working at the polls on election day and at the county office canvassing after the election, and helping wherever needed.



Those members who were able to attend the lunch with Dr. Daniel Kammen were given a jump start on the LWVC Energy Study that Julice Winter is leading. I hope you will all be able to participate in the two unit meetings she has scheduled in January. In the process, we will be learning a whole new vocabulary.

In the coming months our League will have an opportunity to participate with other Alameda County Leagues in learning more about the need for clean money legislation pertaining to elections and the importance of openness in government, "Looking for the Sunshine." Plan to attend these meetings and get to know your fellow League members in Alameda County.

My best wishes to all of you for a very Happy Thanksgiving!

Barbara Hempill

Sunshine Week

The seven Alameda County Leagues are jointly applying for a grant from LWVUS to provide forums to discuss openness in government during Sunshine Week, March 12-18, 2006.

The LWV at the local, state, and national levels is committed to openness in government. In assessing how best to work towards more openness in government, LWVUS became more familiar with the ongoing concerns and efforts of journalists in this same area. The goal of this project is to enhance the ability of state and local Leagues to address this issue, by providing updated information on: the federal and state Freedom of Information and related laws which exist; the extent and types of threats to these laws that have occurred in recent years; the other state and local players in this area; and other relevant information.



Please contact Barbara Hempill, barbehem@comcast.net or call 846-9739 if you would like to work on this project.

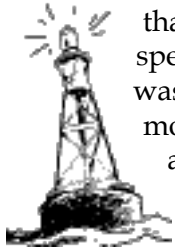
Voting Sites for June Election

The Registrar of Voters is looking for voting sites in Livermore. If you are willing to let your garage be used for a polling place next June, or know of another usable site, call the Registrar of Voters at 510-272-6933.



Alameda County Medical Center Concerns

The Alameda County Council, with representatives from the seven Alameda



County Leagues, is concerned that the Advisory Committee specified in Measure A, which was approved by the voters 18 months ago, has yet to be appointed. Measure A added a quarter-cent to our sales tax to provide addition support for the County Medical

System. The League will have two members on this Committee, and the ACC wrote Keith Carson, President of the Alameda County Board of Supervisors, asking when the Committee will be appointed.

Two replies were received from David Kears, Director of the Alameda County Health Care Services Agency. The first reply explained the delay and thanked the League for participating in the process. The second reply indicated that a letter had been received from the Board of Supervisors recommending adoption of the nominees for the Measure A oversight committee.

Clean Money Seminar

The seven Alameda County Leagues are planning a joint lunch meeting to discuss Clean Money legislation at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, December 3, at the Oakland City Hall. There is free parking in the garage behind City Hall; the City Hall is also accessible from BART.

Loni Hancock, Assemblywoman for the 14th District, has introduced legislation that addresses this issue. Further information will be forthcoming as plans progress. Please plan to attend to express your opinion. Call Barbara Hempill, 846-9739 for carpooling arrangements.

Calendar

Monday, December 5, Board Meeting, 7100 San Ramon Rd., #31, Gray Fox Circle, Dublin, 7 pm.



Wednesday, January 11 and 25, State Energy Study Units. Time and place TBA.

Friday, January 27, 2006, Bay Area League Day: State of the Bay Restoration and Access. Unitarian Church, Oakland. Keynote speaker: Will Travis, Executive Director of BCDC, speaking on why the Bay matters.

Board Briefs for November

- Our election forums and presentations during election season were well received.
- Training will be held in January or February for people who would like to help at future forums.
- A League 101 Meeting in January will cover LWV background information, advocacy policy, non-partisan policy, and the process we use to take action.

Ann Rathjen

WHO'S WHO IN THE LEAGUE

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LWV Bay Area: Housing on the Regional Agenda

The Association of Bay Area Regional Governments' (ABAG) Fall General Assembly focused on "Affordable Housing: Myths and Reality." ABAG has information on many housing issues; see www.abag.ca.gov under Regional Housing Programs, Housing Links.

Housing Supply/Affordable Housing.

The Bay Area is about the most expensive housing market in the nation.

Homebuilders mentioned as causes the cost of land, development impact fees that exceed the "nexus" requirements, long time frames to receive approvals, and litigation (especially the construction defect liability for condominiums).

To build affordable housing in California, each project must use multiple funding sources, from redevelopment set-aside funds, CDBG, commercial linkage fees, and inclusionary ordinances. It helps to identify "real sites" in the Housing Element and then pre-zone, using an Affordable Housing Overlay Zone (AHOZ). Prop. 46 State Housing Bonds will be mostly spent in the near future, and additional money will be needed.

ABAG's Regional Task Force to End Homelessness. Mayor Tom Bates, Berkeley, reported on the new task force that intends to fully document the extent of homelessness in the Bay Area, and to utilize Prop. 63 (Mental Health) funds to do the research and provide services.

Finally, the deadline for the adoption of **local Housing Element updates** has been extended for two years until June 30, 2009. Please refer to the ABAG website or contact Gillian Adams, gilliana@abag.ca.gov for more information

Linda Craig, President, LWVBA
President@lwvba-ca.org

New Members

You will have to walk fast to keep up with Kim and Rich Halket! Rich is on the DSRSD board of directors. Kim is head counselor at Dublin High School and is on the Dublin Arts Commission. Both are members of the Dublin Sister City Association and participate actively in their political party's local chapter.



They became interested in the League because of their interest in political action, political education, especially of youth, and voter registration. They learned about the League from Eileen Barr and M.J. Casper. Welcome!

Pat Mann

News from LWVUS

Reauthorization of the USA PATRIOT Act
House and Senate conferees are close to reaching a compromise on reauthorization of the USA PATRIOT Act. This is a crucial time to contact your Representatives and Senators and urge them to restore important checks and balances by supporting the Senate bill to reauthorize the Patriot Act and the SAFE Act. If you have not already done so, [please contact your Representatives and Senators](#) and ask them to protect our civil liberties.

League Urges Support for Internet Anti-Corruption and Free Speech Protection Act
The LWVUS and other organizations urged members of the U.S. House of Representatives to support and co-sponsor H.R. 4194, the Internet Anti-Corruption and Free Speech Protection Act, a bill proposed by Reps. Chris Shays (R-CT) and Marty Meehan (D-MA) that would protect Internet communications without undermining campaign finance laws.

Energy and the Environment

Twenty-three people (including eight guests) heard Dr. Daniel Kammen speak at the L-AV lunch on Saturday, October 22. One member commented that before hearing Dr. Kammen she was only mildly interested in the League's Energy Study, but now she wanted to learn more.

Dr. Kammen said that the five new energy "initiatives" unveiled by Pres. Bush this past April fail to address any of the real energy issues facing our country. Consequently, they only serve to expand our dependence on oil and widen the trade deficit. The President's proposals also fail to address the problematic economics of the nuclear industry.

Dr. Kammen said that the U.S. energy economy lacks the diversity it needs for flexibility. Higher oil prices do not bring a push for renewables; they only serve to make stockholders rich. On the other hand, significant energy savings could be realized if there were a requirement for including some energy resources when all housing is built. Perhaps it is not surprising to learn that the U.S. has the lowest average fuel efficiency of any country in the world.

Dr. Kammen believes it would effectively encourage a reduction in energy use if the government taxed more heavily those energy sources it does not want. He said that Executive Order 305 signed by Gov. Schwarzenegger is the strongest greenhouse gas bill in the U.S. However, it is meaningless because Executive Orders are unfunded, so there is no ability to enforce it.

To learn more about energy and the economy, be sure to come to the unit meetings January 11 and 25, 2006.

Barbara Hempill

Energy Update Study Committee Report

The Energy Update Study Committee met to discuss assignments and procedures for the January unit meetings. We have a lot to cover. The current LWVC Energy position dates from 1980. California's deregulation of the electric system in 1996 changed everything, and we are in the process of reeducating ourselves on what happens when we switch on the lights today and how it worked before 1996. And of interest to Leaguers are the questions of who is in charge, what are the interrelationships, and what are the processes that we have in place today.

We have ten members on the committee, including two new members and a member of the state writing committee. If you are interested in joining us, it is not too late; give me a call at 373-6623.

The glossary of electric industry terms is nine pages long. For your homework assignment, here are a few terms from the first page:

Aggregators: Brokers of wholesale generation.

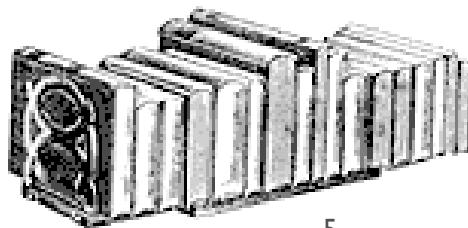
Ancillary services: The services other than energy that are required to maintain reliability.

Biomass: Plant material, wood wastes, or agricultural wastes used as a fuel or energy source. In some parts of the U.S. fast-growing trees and grasses are being planted, often on damaged or erodible lands, as a renewable fuel source.

Bulk power market: Sales and purchases of electricity among utilities; the wholesale market.

Stay tuned for more information. Remember that the consensus meetings are Jan. 11 and 25.

Julice Winter





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<http://www.geocities.com.lwvlav/newsletterindex.html>

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The League is open to all U.S. citizens, men and women, age 18 or older. Annual dues are \$55 for one person, \$80 for two people in one household. By becoming a member of the Livermore-Amador Valley League, one also becomes a member of the Bay Area, California, and National Leagues.

Please mail this form with your check, payable to the League of Women Voters of Livermore-Amador Valley, to LWV-LAV, P.O. Box 702, Livermore, CA 94551.

Name: _____ Telephone:

Address:

Email: