



League of Women Voters Eden Area

V O T E R

Vol. 53 No. 8 *Political Responsibility Through Informed and Active Participation* August 2010

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS EDEN AREA AND
CO-SPONSOR AMERICAN ASSOC. OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN (AAUW)
INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR A LUNCHEON FORUM**

September 24 (Friday), 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
San Lorenzo Village Community Hall, 377 Paseo Grande, San Lorenzo

FEATURING:

DELAINE EASTIN



**What is the Federal Government's Role in Public Education?
How Can We Ensure Adequate Funding for Education?**

Education is one of the top issues at the community, state and federal level. The National League will be conducting a two-year study on the Federal Role in Public Education to include the mandates and outcomes from No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top and recently, National Common Core Standards. Funding for Public Education has been battered and bruised for years. The cuts made this year have had to reach into the classroom. What can be done?

Delaine Eastin - After serving as State Superintendent of Public Education, she was Executive Director of the National Institute of School Leadership for two years and then a Distinguished Visiting Professor of educational Leadership at Mill College for four years. Before serving as State Superintendent, she served four terms in the State Assembly. She is a long-time member of the League of Women Voters.

11:45 a.m. - Buffet Luncheon 12:15p.m. -Introductions
12:25 p.m. - Speaker – Delaine Eastin
1:00 p.m. - Questions and Answers Session with Delaine Eastin

 Attend with lunch. Attend without lunch____
Lunch cost is \$10 prepaid by September 18 or \$15 if paid at the door.

Name: _____ Phone _____

Guests: _____

Please make out check to: LWVEA and mail to LWVEA, P. O. Box 2234, Castro Valley, CA 94546. Questions? Call Suzanne 510-538-9678 or email suzbarba@comcast.net.

President's Report

By Nancy Van Huffel

On July 29, the incoming Board met at its annual Retreat to establish priorities and plan programs for the year. The Board reviewed its role and responsibilities and discussed the League's non-partisan policy, emphasizing that although the League was not partisan, it was political in that it educated and advocated on issues.

We had two State League representatives—Helen Hutchison and Bonnie Hamlin to provide in-depth information on the League's advocacy role and the importance of maintaining a policy of non-partisanship.

We reviewed National, State and Local priority issues based on outcomes from conventions and our program planning meeting last January. The Board discussed Climate Change, Campaign Finance & Election Reform, Healthcare and Immigration Reform that were National priorities, Government Reform, Redistricting and State and Local Finance that were State priorities.

At the local level, the Board discussed an update of the Mental Health position and a proposed study of the Court System for Families and Children as suggested by Supervisor Gail Steele at the Annual Meeting. It was suggested that the latter be submitted to the LWV Alameda County Council since it would impact more than Eden Area.

Membership recruitment and retention was also discussed. It was agreed that we would plan future events with other groups to increase our visibility in the community and encourage younger adults to join.

The Board discussed the need for more members to step up and take on the leadership responsibilities for the many work groups the League has. Doris Marciel volunteered to chair the portion of Voter Service that manages the 75 sites

that provide voter registration forms for the public in Hayward, Castro Valley, San Leandro and San Lorenzo.

We agreed to tape "experts" on four of the November ballot propositions as part of the Pros and Cons presentations given by League members to various groups. That would leave six propositions reviewed "live" and four on tape.

Several programs and events were calendarized and the Board will finish the work on the 2010-2011 calendar at its next regularly scheduled Board meeting on August 18.

The Board also agreed it is important to keep in contact with all of our members. In the next month we will be contacting each of you to thank you for being a League member, and to explore ways you may enjoy working more closely with your League and our Board. We want to include your expertise and interests in this year's Board agenda.

Opportunities that are available:

- ▶ Register Voters
- ▶ Help with candidate forums
- ▶ Present Pros & Cons to groups
- ▶ Distribute Easy Voter Guides
- ▶ Letter writing and VOTER articles
- ▶ Observer at community meetings
- ▶ Phone tree caller
- ▶ Participate in one of the following committees:

Climate Change
State/Local Finances
Education
Health
Membership
Smart Voter
Website



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS—EDEN AREA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR FY 2010-2011

Following is some brief information on our new Board of Directors. In addition to these Board Members, we also have three Off Board positions this year: Sonya Howes, Chair of the Nominating Committee, Pat Piras, Representative for LWVBA Transportation & Inter-League Committee, and Beverly Reliford, Representative for Child Care & Family issues.

President Nancy Van Huffel is no stranger to the League Board, having served on the Board for most of her 20 years as a League member, including multiple terms as President, Vice President, and Treasurer. She is a strong advocate of transparency in government; and, as a 22 year Community Manager for San Lorenzo; she has put her principles and advocacy to practical use. Nancy believes that one of the major functions of the League is to help ensure voters have unbiased, clear, and dependable information on candidates and ballot measures before casting their vote.

Vice President, Membership Dr. Jennifer Ong, an optometrist in Alameda, served as the Director of MCT School Vision Screenings in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties then on the boards of her local and national optometric organizations advocating for accessible and affordable health care. Jennifer extended her work within the community as Commissioner for the Alameda County Commission on the Status of Women and as a member of the Hayward Clean and Green Task Force. The League has given her the opportunity to reciprocate towards an organization which has helped her realize how to better understand the challenges of social justice and environmental issues in our communities.

Vice President, Program Helene Carr is new to the Eden Area League Board. She recently joined the League because of the organization's dedication to inform and educate voters regarding issues and candidates in a fair and unbiased manner. Helene is currently the accounting manager for R. Zaballos & Sons, Inc. and is President of the Hayward/Castro Valley AAUW and Friends of the Hayward Public Library. She has a strong belief that a better informed voter makes for stronger government.

Treasurer Linda Slater is in her second year as the Eden Area League Treasurer. She came to the League within the last few years, having been a member of one of the organizations we often partner with, AAUW. She works full-time for Alameda County SSA, and also volunteers with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program. Linda appreciates and supports the work of the League to help ensure voters have unbiased, clear, and dependable information on candidates and ballot measures before casting their vote.

Secretary Maria Palmeri has been on the board since 2005 and has served as Secretary for three years. She has served on various community boards and committees advocating for better service and improvement of quality of life for residents of the unincorporated Cherryland and Ashland area. Her service on this board is just an extension of her belief that the League can have a greater influence educating the residents of the County in becoming politically active and knowledgeable about issues that could affect their communities.

Past President and VOTER Editor Suzanne Barba has been an active member of the League Board for 17 years assisting with Program, Voter Service and Membership. She provided training for and conducted LWVC Pros and Cons presentations on ballot measures for many groups and organizations each election cycle. Suzanne presently serves as a member of the Measure A Oversight Committee and is the League's representative on healthcare committees. She served for 16 years on the Eden Township Healthcare District Board of Directors and worked for 14 years as Public Information Officer for the Alameda County Office of Education before retiring. She has dedicated her skills and knowledge to the League because she is deeply committed to its Mission to educate and inform voters so that they can fully participate in government and influence public policy.

Board Members

Rene' Besold has been front and center in the fight for workers' rights for over 20 years while serving professionally as a Labor Relations Representative and later as the Director of Human Resources and Training for California School Employees Association. Her advocacy included work on political campaigns and get-out-the-vote efforts for propositions and candidates. So, it was no surprise that upon retiring, Rene' became active in the League. Rene' believes strongly that if our democracy is to survive, we must work tirelessly to ensure that voters are educated and that they exercise their right to vote.

Jewell Hargleroad, also known by her married name of Jewell Spalding, is a lawyer who has practiced law for over twenty years. After graduation she worked for a law firm which specialized in election law and has continued to use those skills to advocate for the community. Years ago, Jewell represented the Local League as a friend of the court advocating that the Court strike the false and misleading arguments contained in the ballot argument supporting the Walpert Ridge Development. Jewell also represented non-profit organizations before the California Energy Commission leading to the defeat of the 115 megawatt power plant which was proposed to be located near the Hayward San Lorenzo Shoreline known as "Eastshore." Jewell lives in the Fairview District and was the Hayward Hills Property Owners Association President for 15 years. She also is an appointee to the Board of Zoning Adjustments for the West County.

Gail Lundholm retired as the Public Information Officer for the City of Hayward and joined the League about five years ago. She enjoys the camaraderie of the group and has helped with fund raising, voter registration and Pros and Cons presentations. Currently, she serves as the Smart Voter coordinator for the Eden Area League and has high praises for Bonnie Hamlin and Eileen Barr, who have coached her in that position.

Doris Marciel is a new member on the Board of Directors and the League. She retired after teaching 38 years in the San Lorenzo Unified School District. She is currently on the Board of the California Retired Teachers Association, Southern Alameda County Division 59 and member of the Citizens Advisory Committee for the Ashland Redevelopment Area. Doris teaches San Lorenzo History and authored the San Lorenzo History Book. She became a member of the League because of her interest in politics and the outstanding work the League does to educate the public about the candidates and ballot measures.

Jo Murdach has been a League member since her oldest son, who is now 41 was an infant. She has served in many capacities over the years but is most proud of helping Barbara Shockley with the first Unincorporated Areas study back in the "70's. She learned more about how the LWV operates and thinks in that time than in any other way. She believes that the best way to becoming a committed and firmly believing member is to get into a study!

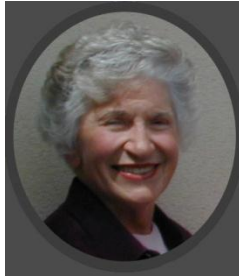
Connie Rusk advocates transparency in government, having worked as a local journalist covering many civic boards and issues. Her favorite anecdote on open meetings is of one where an elected official said, " We can talk freely because the press isn't here." I was new to that body, and another, wiser member said, "The press IS here." She has served on music and theater boards of directors, and did PR at Saint Mary's College for twelve years before retiring. She is a member of the Hayward Literacy Plus Council and tutors an adult learner in reading and writing, and travels to visit relatives (as well as just for fun). She has lived in the area since 1964.

Shelia Young IS a stranger to the League Board, having never served during her years as a League member. She has, of course, participated in many activities of the League, including leading community discussions around proposition education and supporting advertised events and fundraisers. She has served Alameda County in many capacities throughout the last four decades, including a two year term as Mayor of San Leandro, among many others. She looks forward to learning more about the League through personal service as a Board member.

ELEANOR PARKER NOMINATED AT LWVEA 'BRIGHT STAR'

Each year, the Hayward Volunteer Recognition Dinner honors outstanding volunteers nominated by community-based organizations in the Eden Area. This year, the League submitted Eleanor Parker to be honored at the dinner on Oct. 5, for her outstanding record of achievement as a dedicated volunteer. If you are interested in joining us at the dinner to honor Eleanor and dozens of other outstanding volunteers, please contact Suzanne at 538-9678 or email suzbarba@comcast.net.

Eleanor Parker has been a League of Women Voters member since 1962, joining when her youngest child was one year old—saying that she needed some intelligent conversation to supplement diapers and breast feeding!



Her initial role on the Board was Secretary in 1965. Her first national study was civil rights and she led a popular discussion examining the extent of racism in ourselves and our institutions. She later led the discussion and consensus on a national health care position.

Her early years in League were filled with registering voters at public schools and places. She also visited local high schools, explaining to seniors the value of their exercising their right to vote and how to judge candidates and issues.

She served as Speakers Bureau Director for many years, training members on how to deliver pros and cons on ballot measures as well as conducting many meetings on ballot measures at local clubs, churches, senior and public events. She has written many articles and for a number of years edited the local League's newsletter, The VOTER.

She has served as Vice President, President (twice) and many years as a Board Director. Because she served the last ten years as Historian of the Eden Area records, she is recognized as the group's memory bank. At other League levels, she has been President of the Alameda County Council of Leagues and Vice President of the Bay Area League.

Because of her many years of training and orienting new Board members, she was selected as a charter member of the California State League's Management Training Assistants who provide local leagues with Board of Directors' Training and assistance in solving complex management issues. She was instrumental in developing training materials, forms, and procedures specific to League techniques and then using those materials and visuals to meet with other Bay Area League Board members.

She chaired the Re-districting Monitor Committee (composed of members from the seven Alameda County leagues) in the League's study of redistricting, publishing numerous articles to educate members and leading public discussions to assist the community in better understanding the importance of redistricting to the acquisition of local public funding.

Another love besides the League, is libraries: She served as a member of the Castro Valley Library Advisory Committee, and was recognized along with other Committee members for securing the State grant of \$13 million that helped build the Castro Valley Library. She served on the Board of the Friends of the Castro Valley Library for many years, and chaired the community-wide re-opening event at the Castro Valley theatre that netted thousands of dollars for the Library.

She was the charter Secretary for the Alameda County Library Foundation, having served six years as a member of the Alameda County Library Commission. Later, when she moved to Danville, she represented that Town on the Contra Costa Library Commission for four years.

Also locally, Eleanor was appointed to the Alameda County Blue Ribbon Task Force to review and make recommendations for compensation levels for the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. She served on the second county committee appointed to study the incorporation of Castro Valley.

Besides her League service, Eleanor is most proud of her three children, their spouses and four grandchildren who live in San Ramon, Danville and Idaho.



**League of Women Voters
Alameda County Council**

*Alameda
Berkeley/Albany/Emeryville
Eden Area
Fremont/Newark/Union City
Livermore/Amador Valley
Oakland
Piedmont*

July 14, 2010

Chair Mark Green and Board Members
Alameda County Transportation Commission
1333 Broadway
Oakland, California 94612

Dear Chair Green and Board Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Alameda County Council of the League of Women Voters (“ACC”) which is a cooperative organization representing all seven Leagues in Alameda County. We thank you for your early attention to the ballot measure proposed for 2012 to reauthorize and extend the sales tax for transportation in the Bay Area. Our special concern is for our transit operations and facilities, which suffer from funding deficits that imperil their ability to adequately serve the people of our County. The ACC urges you to adopt, as one program to be funded by the sales tax, a measure to provide free bus passes to all middle and high-school students in the County. This measure would help achieve a number of goals that the League supports, including:

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles. As a report to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission last September indicated, “School trips constitute at least 10 percent of the morning peak trips in the region, and are higher in predominately residential cities; and “driving children to school (and high school students driving themselves) has become a significant issue for local congestion, student health, air pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions.”
(Report to MTC: *Transportation, Land Use, and Greenhouse Gases: A Bay Area Resource Guide* 9/09)

- Encouraging transit use. The proposal offers the opportunity, at relatively low cost, to encourage life-long transit use and reduce vehicle miles traveled. It also helps to balance off-peak transit loads, especially in the afternoon travel periods.
- Advancing equity in public services and encouraging young people to stay in school. Clear historical data from school districts in lower-income areas indicates that in those that rely on public transit (rather than yellow school buses), attendance tends to drop off in the latter part of each month when families have to make a decision between buying a bus ticket to send their children to school or paying for food and other household needs. We also note that having students get to school on a regular basis helps to improve school funding.

Participating transit systems in Alameda County would include AC Transit, LAVTA, and Union City Transit. The idea has been tried on a limited basis, for less than a full school year, in the AC Transit area, but it was seriously under-funded and faced administrative problems. Nevertheless, based on this limited test, researchers from UC Berkeley found that it did indeed encourage transit use and reduced financial burdens on low-income families. We consider it important to include this proposal early in the reauthorization process so that members of the Expenditure Plan Committee and the public can become familiar with the idea and it can be fully considered. Thank you for your consideration. We would be happy to discuss this proposal with you at any time.

Sincerely,

Syeda R Inamdar, Chair Alameda County Council of The League of Women Voters

RANKED CHOICE VOTING IN SAN LEANDRO ELECTION

San Leandro, Oakland and Berkeley will be the first East Bay cities to use Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) for city elections in November. San Francisco has been successfully using RCV for more than four years. The Leagues in all three cities will participate in a public education campaign with the Registrar of Voters to improve public understanding of RCV. In San Leandro, it will be used for the Mayor and City Council races.

Briefly, here is how it works. Voters rank a first, second and third choice candidate for a single office. So, instead of voting for just one candidate for a particular office, the voter will choose three—first, second and third choice. At that point, the voter is finished. The Registrar's Office then counts the votes as follows.

First, all first choices are counted. Any candidate who receives more than 50% of the first choices is the winner. If no candidate receives more than 50%, a process of eliminating candidates and transferring votes begins.

1. The candidate with the fewest first choices is eliminated.
2. Voters who selected the eliminated candidate as their first choice have their votes transferred to their second choice candidate.
3. Votes are recounted to include the transferred votes.
4. A candidate receiving more than 50% is the winner. If no candidate receives more than 50%, the process of eliminating candidates and transferring votes continues until there is a winner.

UPDATE ON HEALTHCARE

This week, www.HealthCare.gov, a new online portal where anyone can go to find insurance options in their state, went live. It's a very handy resource for information that used to be difficult to find. It's available to help millions who need insurance find it, and as a resource for those who want to shop around for new options or find out their new benefits under the new law.

States are starting to create new insurance pools for hundreds of thousands of people with serious medical conditions who had previously been unable to get insurance. Federal grants to help with setup are on their way to states right now.

In June, 80,000 checks were mailed to seniors to help with prescription drug costs not covered by Medicare. By the end of the year, an estimated 4 million checks will go out.

Many of the key insurance reforms—allowing young adults to stay on their parents' insurance until age 26, and making it illegal to deny a child or baby insurance because of a "pre-existing condition"—have already started to take effect.

Now, many of the major reforms—the new health insurance exchanges, an end to pre-existing condition discrimination for adults, and more—have yet to go into effect.

HOW ACTIVE IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

An Interview with Senator Ellen Corbett

One of the charges of the League of Women Voters' Board is to ensure transparency and accountability for the local officials who represent their district. A detailed standardized set of questions that represent some of the priority issues for the League is established by the State League. Each local League is then assigned to have a few members meet with members of the State Assembly or Senate from the respective districts to interview their representatives on these issues. To view the questions and answers posed to Senator Ellen Corbett, please visit our website at www.lwvea.org for a detailed transcript of our conversation with Corbett.

We invite you to engage in future conversations with our elected officials. Contact LWVEA if this would be a project that interests you. Democracy is most effective when we engage in active membership participation.

Also, please consider sharing the gift of "democracy in action" by gifting a League membership to the next generation of voters. Many of our members have given memberships to their children or grandchildren on their birthday when they reach voting age.

For your convenience, you may use the membership form in this VOTER or visit www.lwvea.org for a gift that encourages education and advocacy on the important issues that impact our lives.

Jennifer Ong, V. P. Membership

League of Women Voters of Eden Area

P. O. Box 2234 – Castro Valley, CA 94546 • 510/538-9678
 Representing cities of Hayward and San Leandro
 and unincorporated areas of Ashland, Castro Valley,
 Cherryland, Fairview, and San Lorenzo

**IT'S EASY TO JOIN THE
 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**

Just cut out and mail this coupon with your check to:
 League of Women Voters of Eden Area
 Treasurer, P.O. Box 2234, Castro Valley, CA 94546

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Dues: Regular \$50 Same Household \$25, Student \$20

*The League of Women Voters, a
 nonpartisan political organization,
 encourages the informed and active
 participation of the public in
 government and influences public
 policy through education and advocacy.*

CALENDER OF EVENTS

DATE & TIME	EVENT	PLACE
Aug. 12– 5 to 8 p.m	Register voters at San Leandro Sports Foundation fundraiser	Ryan O’Connell Hall, 576 Estudillo Ave., San Leandro
Aug 18-- 5:45 to 7:15p.m.	LWVEA Monthly Board Meeting Agenda posted on web 8/14	SLZ Conference Room 377 Paseo Grande, San Lorenzo
Aug 28-- 9:30 am to 2:30p.m	State League Regional Training <i>Advocacy, Redistricting, Partisan</i> email lwvea@aol.com for flyer	San Leandro Library 300 Estudillo, San Leandro
Sept 24-- 11:45 to 1p.m.	Delaine Eastin/Education Forum <i>Topic: State of Education</i>	San Lorenzo Village Hall 377 Paseo Grande, San Lorenzo
Oct. 5 – 6 to 9 p.m.	Hayward Volunteer Recognition Dinner—See page 5	St Rose Hospital, White Tent Hayward

**Please visit our website for
 up-to-date event information— www.lwvea.org**