

The Palo Alto *VOTER*

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto
February 2011

Vol. XXV
No. VI



Program Planning

Saturday, January 22, 2011,
9 a.m. to noon

Alice Smith's House

(Please see Membership Handbook for address)

9 am Brunch & conversation

9:30 am Program

New members encouraged

The Story of the Palo Alto Baylands

February 22, 7-9 pm

First Presbyterian Church

Fellowship Hall

1140 Cowper St.

Palo Alto

We the Grassroots, speak but for what will we speak? LWV California and LWV Palo Alto are planning our future based on meetings like this one. Yes, YOU will be choosing the focus of the League work for the next two years for LWVC and for at least the next year for our local Palo Alto League.

Please bring 1-3 goals or issues that you believe are the most important work for the LWV Palo Alto to do next year. Consider Palo Alto, Stanford, and Santa Clara County. Also bring 1-3 goals or issues that you believe will be urgent for the LWV California to accomplish. These goals will start our brainstorming, lead to evaluation, and ultimately to recommendations.

The purpose is to review our existing program, possibly recommend new areas of concern and recommend to LWV Palo Alto Board the areas of emphasis for the next one to two years. **What would you like to see our League do next?**

This is an excellent meeting for new members to learn how we work and for long time members to review where we stand.

Selecting a Program. Our overall program is determined by the membership starting with a general meeting of members. This will be our meeting on January 22. This program embody the issues that we choose for concerted study, education and action at local, state and national levels. Program can include both 501(c)3 education and 501(c)4 advocacy work. Our members, that is you, are invited



Endangered California Clapper Rail

grassroots
PROGRAMS

Either in June or November, Palo Alto citizens will likely vote on amending the Bixbee Park dedication ordinance so as to remove roughly ten acres from the park in order to allow some form of recycling to continue. This is the first of two meetings to look at issues facing the Baylands. This overview will look at the whole Baylands, its history, the master plan, the accomplishments and today's issues.

Our next meeting, tentatively set for March 22, will discuss several proposed changes for the Baylands in detail including the proposed "digester" and changes to the Water Treatment plant.

If you have been part of the story, come and share your tales with us. If you are new, come to learn the background to today's issues. There is much to learn and to share.

Submitted by Phyllis Cassel ■

For more information, see Baylands Master Plan-page 4



The League is a broadly based, nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and involved participation in government through voters service, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The League welcomes articles. Please submit them to: lwvpaoffice@gmail.com. Deadline is the first Monday after the first Tuesday of each month.

Program-continued on page 4



President's Message

Dear League Members,

It was with sadness that we reported last month of the death of our vice president Irene Sampson. Included in this VOTER is our tribute to Irene's work with the League. Irene was also deeply involved with the work of the South Palo Alto Food Closet and her church. In Irene's absence many of us are learning new skills. Traditionally presidents are supposed to mentor their vice presidents but Irene with her long experience mentored me. I miss her as does our whole League. Irene would want us to keep doing good voter education and study and taking careful deliberate action, and so we will.

Plans for the rest of our League year are taking shape. The "League Grassroots Speak" on January 22 is our annual program planning meeting and brunch. What will the LWVC do for the next two years and what does the LWVPA want to accomplish? We can not do everything. What are your choices? Bay Area League Day on January 29 is always educational and interesting; the topic is: Reuse, Reduce and Recycle. In February and March, we will be discussing the Palo Alto Baylands. The League was one of the organizations instrumental in the protection of the Baylands. It is time to reassess the Baylands Master Plan in our February 22 meeting, and the current proposals for changes in the Baylands in our March 22 meeting. In late April we may be discussing the federal role in education or perhaps state budget issues. We continue to monitor the Stanford Hospital expansion, the City of Palo Alto's Comprehensive Plan and the Housing element. The hospital expansion and housing element should be completed before our annual meeting. Notice I said should, not will. The month of May will cap our year with our annual meeting on Saturday, May 7, and the LWVC convention in Ventura May 18 – 20. Everyone is wanted at all meetings. Please join us! Bring a friend!

See you soon.

Phyllis ■



eAction Tree

The eAction Tree is a convenient way to participate in action on State and National program items. Timely "Calls to Action/Action Alerts" are received locally and forwarded to local members who have signed up to participate. The time lines needed for action, our League position, background and all contact information are furnished. Make a phone call or send an email and you have participated in the League's voice on important issues. It is that simple - and it is very simple to add your name to those who wish to participate - contact Nancy Olson at nso2341@cs.com, or leave a message on the League office phone.

Submitted by Nancy Olson ■

LWV of Palo Alto: Officers, Directors, Chairpersons, (650) 327-9148

OFFICERS

President

Phyllis Cassel
president@lwvpaloalto.org

1st Vice Pres., Action, Transportation, & LWVBA Representative
Vacant

2nd Vice Pres., League-a-thon
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Ellen Forbes

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Doris Petersen

Voter Service Coord., New Voices & Smart Voter Monitor
Veronica Tincher

Director, Candidates Forums

Trina Lovercheck

VOTER Editor & Webmaster

Karen Sundback
lwvpaoffice@gmail.com

Co-Chair, Membership

Bonnie Packer
Membership@lwvpaloalto.org

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Liza Taft

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Geri Stewart

Housing

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Housing: Community Liaison

Janet Owens

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Luise Maier

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Mary Jo Levy, Chair

Bonnie Packer

Ellen Forbes

Alice Smith

Suzanne Bayley

Speakers Bureau

Carol Bechtold

VOTER Mailing

Mitzi Henderson

The VOTER is online at www.lwvpaloalto.org

Events page



**Bay Area League Day
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle:
Taking it to the Next Level
Saturday, January 29, 2011,
9 am - 2 pm**

MetroCenter, 101 Eighth Street, Oakland

Featuring keynote speaker: Dan Reicher, Director of Energy and Climate Initiatives at Google

And three panel discussions addressing:

What Government Is Doing

- **California Energy Commission Programming:** Arthur H. Rosenfeld, Former California Energy Commissioner
- **Port Sustainability (Deconstruction, Cold Ironing, and Asphalt Reuse):** Richard Sinkoff, Manager of Environmental Planning, Port of Oakland
- **Municipal Waste Reduction Programming:** John Stufflebean, Environmental Services Department Director, City of San Jose

What Science Is Doing

- **Water Recycling:** Lori Steere, Water Recycling Program, East Bay Municipal Utilities District
- **Hydrogen and Other Alternative Fuels for Transit:** Jaimie Levin, Director of Alternative Fuels Policy, AC Transit
- **Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure**
- **Bay Area Air Quality Management District**

What We Can Do

- **Community Service, Recycling, and Secondary School Students:** Nate Ivy, Service Learning Waste Reduction Program of Alameda County
- **Analyzing and Upgrading Home Energy Use:** Karen Kho, StopWaste.Org (Waste Management and Source Reduction/Recycling for Alameda County)

Registration is available online through January 24 via PayPal at www.lwvbayarea.org. For more details, call (510) 839-1608 or send an e-mail to editor@bayareamonitor.org

Interested in carpooling? If so, please call the League office at 327-9148 before January 28. ■



**World Affairs Council
Wednesday, February 9
Refreshments: 7pm;
Program: 7:30 - 9 pm.**

**Los Altos Youth Center
1 South San Antonio Rd., Los Altos**

LWV members and friends are invited to a program entitled *Youth Philanthropy and Humanitarian Aid in Haiti* with Seth Donnelly, Social Studies Teacher, Los Altos High School. Free Admission. For information, call Carol Stevens (650) 494-0757. ■



Great Opportunities Great Discussions Great Decisions

The Great Decisions discussion group will meet each Friday in February and March at 9:30-11:30 a.m. at Channing House in the "living room" on the 6th floor (thanks to our member and C.H. resident, Geri Stewart).

This really is a great opportunity to discuss and learn more about specific foreign policy problem areas. No previous experience necessary - we learn as we go. Of course, if you have expertise in any of these areas, you are strongly encouraged to attend.

Members who have already ordered the Great Decisions briefing book will be notified when the books arrive. There is still time for YOU to order a book (\$20 each when received).

If you are not sure this group is right for you, please come to one of the meetings and observe for yourself. Never a dull moment.....

The titles selected for 2011 by the Foreign Policy Association:

Rebuilding Haiti; U.S. National Security; Horn of Africa; Responding to the Financial Crisis; Germany Ascendant; Sanctions and Nonproliferation; The Caucasus; and Global Governance.

Questions? Contact Nancy Olson at the League Office, 650-327-9148. ■

Program-continued from page 1 to look at our current positions as well as our areas of focus for action and decide what the priorities for the next few years should be. Locally, member recommendations are compiled and considered by our Board and final recommendations are sent to our members. We do this review every year, and make the final determination at our annual meeting. At the LWVC level we do the review on odd years and for LWVUS and LWV Bay Area we do the review in even years. Final determination is made by the delegates at relevant conventions.

Our decisions are based on the current positions that we have developed to date at each level of the League. In our membership handbook that each of you received is a summary of our local league positions. Our complete positions are on our web site www.lwypaloalto.org under "Where We Stand". The LWVC positions are also under "Where We Stand". These positions may or may not be applicable today. *Do we need to retain, drop, or update our positions? Do we need a new study to deal with an urgent issue? Should a current position become a priority for action? Your opinion is important.!*

Definitions for Position Options

RETAIN: Members decide to keep a position because it is still relevant.

DROP: Position is no longer useful in its present form or is not supported by most members. Action on this position will end. Any future action at state or local levels of League using this position would require a new study.

STUDY: The process of gathering information for discussion by members with the aim of reaching consensus and establishing a position.

UPDATE: A study of limited scope to reevaluate an existing position in light of new information, changed circumstances, and/or conflict with another League position. The goal is consideration of a change in position.

Issues for Education and Advocacy

When recommending an area for concerted action/attention or study, you may want to consider criteria such as these:

- Is this an issue that would attract participation from the community and our members? Would it entice new members and diversify our membership?
- Is this an issue on which legislative or regulatory action is needed? Will political realities permit effective government action during the next two years?
- If this is a topic for study, will the issue still be timely when the study is completed in several years?
- Does this issue involve a need not being well met by other groups?
- Is there member interest and commitment to this topic?
- Could the League play a significant role in impacting community concern and/or public policy decisions on this issue?
- Is this an issue that will attract financial support?

Submitted by Veronica Tincher & Phyllis Cassel ■

A Few Notes for the Palo Alto Baylands Master Plan Feb 22 Meeting

Baylands Master Plan, reformatted with Information Update 2008 is the latest version of this dynamic document. The Master Plan sets the goals, policies and programs for the developments or non-development of the City Baylands. It covers land and marsh east of Route 101, north of San Antonio Road and south of San Francisquito Creek plus a marsh called Faber & Laumeister tract owned by Palo Alto but located in East Palo Alto.

During the 1920s pressure for redevelopment resulted in the City of Palo Alto purchasing adjacent marsh land. In 1923 John Fletcher Bixbee, Palo Alto's first city engineer, began the development of an elaborate plan that envisioned a yacht harbor with navigable channels, a yacht clubhouse, a sewage treatment plant, incinerator, airport, golf course, wild life preserves and more. About this time San Francisquito Creek was rerouted north to its present position. It is not clear if the purpose was flood control or land reclamation. In the 1950s a developer proposed to build a hotel, condominiums, and a marina at the harbor area leaving no marshes. Harriet Mundy, Lucy Evans, Enid Pearson and others rallied to stop the development. By 1960 the city had purchased 1,880 acres of marsh land, and much of it had been diked or filled.

Attitudes about the conservation of land changed in the 1960s. Community members from around the Bay began to resist the filling of the Bay. In 1965 the City dedicated the marsh land area as parkland. In the early 1970s work began on the Baylands Master Plan. The LWV Palo Alto published the *Palo Alto Baylands Handbook* in 1975 and the Baylands Master Plan was adopted in 1978, amended in 1979, in 1988 and again in 2008. The 1998 Comprehensive Plan reviewed the Master plan and added supporting policies to the Comprehensive Plan for reinforcement.

The Master Plan document is an interesting compilation of history, the listing of studies, progress assessment towards completing the plan and finally the actual updated objectives. It is available in hard copy but can be accessed on-line by going to the Palo Alto City web site and doing a search for the Baylands Master Plan. *Submitted by Phyllis Cassel ■*

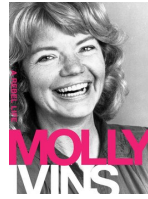


Nominating
Committee

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto Wants YOU!

Nominations for officers of the off-board and the directors of the board for 2011-2012 are now being considered. Positions open include President, First Vice President, VOTER Editor and several Directors. Take a look at the board and off-board roles, listed in your League Membership Handbook.

It's easy to express interest in contributing to the work of the League. Start by coming to the Program Planning Meeting on January 22, described on the front page of this issue, to find out more about our priorities. Consider your interests and skills and please phone or email one of the Nominating Committee members to discuss how you might participate in this valuable community organization. We are: Mary Jo Levy, Nominating Committee Chair, mjlevy@comcast.net; Suzanne Bayley, Bayleys@comcast.net; Bonnie Packer, bbpacker@comcast.net; Ellen Forbes, eforbes@ix.netcom.com; Alice Smith, asmith36@sbcglobal.net. We are looking to a February 16, 2011 deadline, so contact us soon! *Submitted by Mary Jo Levy* ■



LWV Palo Alto Book Group Friday, January 28, 10am to 1pm Doris Petersen's house

This will be our annual luncheon meeting, so please bring a small salad to share.

We will discuss *Molly Ivins: A Rebel Life* by Michael W. Smith. Most of us remember Molly Ivins' humorous, satirical and to-the-point guest columns in the New York Times. Her motto was to laugh at all the foibles and craziness she saw in politics, and she encouraged her readers to laugh with her.

If you are a new member or have been thinking about coming, please join us. We believe in having a good time. Call me, Doris Petersen, if you plan on coming, and I will set a place for you. ■



December 2010 Board Summary

At its December meeting, your board took the following actions:

- approved the Emergency Action Committee's letter to the Planning & Transportation Commission re: the city's draft housing element,
- elected Bonnie Packer to serve on Nominating Committee,
- received an initial report from Veronica and Trina on an improved set of forum ground rules, which the board will discuss more in 2011,
- volunteered as individuals to review the various pieces of our local and county program positions, in preparation for the Jan. 22 Program Planning meeting, and
- voted to establish a memorial fund to honor Irene Sampson's long commitment to a better community.

The Board also learned that:

- the 2010 League-a-thon (LAT) received more than \$15,000, and the 2011 LAT phoning will be done on Mon. and Tues., Feb. 7 and 8,
- DSL has been installed and is running in the office, and
- LWVPA will begin accepting donations via PayPal to both the League and, separately, to the Education Fund. ■

January 2010 Board Summary

At its December meeting, your board:

- discussed the memorial fund we have set up to honor Irene Sampson's longstanding dedication to voter education,
- talked about how to maximize attendee input at the Jan. 22 Program Planning meeting,
- suggested possible speakers for the May 7 Annual Meeting,
- went over plans for two general meetings on Baylands issues, scheduled for Feb. 22 and March 22,
- voted to give Smart Voter \$1,000, and
- signed up to personalize LAT donor letters.

It also learned that:

- while our web site does not yet support PayPal donations because of a technical glitch, that amenity should be available soon,
- LWVPA gained seven new members last month, and
- Alice Smith (chair), Veronica and Liza will conduct this year's bylaws review.

Submitted by Ellen Forbes ■



Tribute to Irene Sampson 1927-2010

Irene Sampson joined the League of Women Voters of Palo Alto in 1968 and quickly became involved in a wide variety of issues. Her interests began with housing and moved on to transportation, land use and the environment. Her specialty became transportation issues, but realizing how all these issues are interconnected, she spoke of her “jobshousingtransportation work”, all one word. In 1972 she was elected to the LWV Bay Area Board, where she served several terms until 2006, focusing on transportation issues. She chaired the LWV-Santa Clara County Council from 1973 to 1974. For many years she served as legislative consultant on transportation to the LWV California Natural Resources Director.

After joining the LWV Palo Alto board in 1978, she served as vice president 1979-1981 and president 1981-1983. From 1984 until her death she served continuously, holding a variety of positions including co-president 1996-97 and 1st or 2nd vice president for most of the last 12 years. She handled the transportation, land use and program portfolios. She served on every study committee including the study of the Palo Alto Baylands, chaired the Comprehensive Plan Study in the mid-80's, and worked on nominating committees. As action chair and program chair she drafted numerous statements on League positions. Because Irene was concerned that issues be presented fairly, she wrote the Pro and Con arguments for many local election issues. She trained other people to make Pros and Cons presentations and gave dozens herself. She was also a respected moderator for election forums. She attended years of public meetings, including those of the 1990's Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Community Advisory Board, City Council and Planning & Transportation Commission.

Irene served as the League observer at the Santa Clara County Transportation Commission and represented the LWVPA at the Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce Government Advisory Committee, CEAP

(the Community Environmental Action Partnership), and ALPA (Alliance for a Livable Palo Alto). She willingly helped with innumerable other League functions. She reviewed our bylaws, maintained the files, and served as historian. She volunteered for mailing parties and called donors during the annual League-a-thon. She also participated in both Great Decisions and the LWV Palo Alto Book Group. She was an excellent gardener and often brought edible produce from her garden to share at our meetings. Irene was an integral part of the League of Women Voters and the community for over 40 years. Her contributions were enormous and her absence will leave a huge void. Her wise counsel and knowledge will be greatly missed. In 2004 she was given a life membership by the LWVUS for her continuing dedication and untiring work with the LWV. ■

Irene Sampson Memorial Fund

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto has established a special fund to honor Irene's immense dedication to voter education. Donations in Irene's memory may be made to the Palo Alto League of Women Voters, 953 Industrial Avenue, Suite 113, Palo Alto, 94306 or online at <http://lwvpaloalto.org/donation.html>. In the message box, please write “Irene Sampson Memorial”. From the bottom of our hearts, we at the League thank you for remembering Irene. ■



THANK YOU

We would like to thank the following people for making the assembly and delivery of the Dec/Jan *VOTER* possible: **Barbara Bowden, Geri Stewart, Janet Creelman, Janet Owens, Vivian Blomenkamp, Isabel Arabian & Mitzi Henderson**, organizer.

Thank you **Sally Probst** and **James G. Moore** for proof-reading the *VOTER*. ■



League President Phyllis Cassel & outgoing Assemblyman Ira Ruskin

Winter Luncheon December 4, 2010 Garden Court Hotel

Outgoing Assemblyman Ira Ruskin was our featured speaker. His topic was:

Lessons learned in the legislature

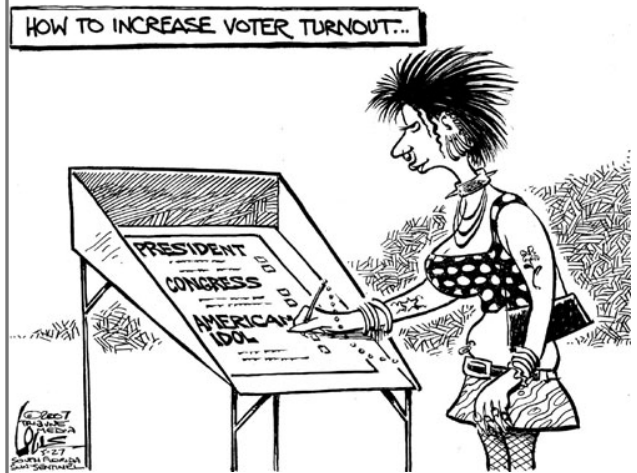
10. It is important in politics to love what you are doing.
9. It is important to remember that constituents are # 1.
8. Focus. Establish credibility in a few areas.
7. Build consensus whenever possible.
6. Don't take everything personally.
5. Don't lose sight of the objective. Be flexible.
4. Sustain momentum through the ups and downs.
3. Expect a good deal of frustration.
2. Make yourself accessible and communicate to others.
1. An individual can make a difference. ■

WELCOME

Marilyn Abrams
Michael Abrams*
Florence Dean
Walter Dean
Robert L. Fisher
Joann Gold
Charlene Maltzman
Erwin Morton
Jean Wang*

* Student winners of Essay Contest.

We are delighted to have you as members. ■



The League of Women Voters, born out of suffrage, now educates and advocates. Anyone of voting age, male or female, may become a League member.

It's easy to join the LWV —Do it now! You will be glad you did.

Joining at the local level makes you a member at all levels: National, State, Bay Area and Palo Alto

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____ e:mail _____

Annual Membership: \$70.00 Additional membership, same address: \$35.00

Mail check to LWV, 953 Industrial Ave., Suite 113, Palo Alto, CA 94303

Membership dues to the LWV are not tax deductible.

Men are encouraged to join.

Dues grants are available.

For information, call
Membership
Chair
(650) 327-9148

League of Women Voters of Palo Alto
953 Industrial Avenue, Suite 113
Palo Alto, CA 94303
(650) 327-9148

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<p>CALENDAR is constantly updated at http://lwvpaloalto.org/Calendar.html</p> <p>January</p> <p>22 Sat 9am-noon. Program Planning. Alice Smith. See front page.</p> <p>29 Sat Bay Area League Day. See page 3.</p> <p>February</p> <p>1 Tue 7:15 pm. Board Meeting, Luise Maier</p> <p>7 Mon Noon. VOTER deadline.</p> <p>18 Fri 9:15 am. VOTER mailing, Channing House</p> <p>22 Tue 7-9 pm. Baylands Overview. See front page.</p> <p>March</p> <p>1 Tue 7:15 pm. Board Meeting, Karen Sundback</p> <p>7 Mon Noon. VOTER deadline.</p> <p>18 Fri 9:15 am. VOTER mailing, Channing House</p> <p>22 Tue 7-9 pm. Baylands Current Issues</p>	<p>UNITED STATES</p> <p>President Obama.....(202) 456-1414 Send e-mail messages to- http://www.whitehouse.gov/CONTACT/</p> <p>Senator Feinstein.....(415) 393-0707 Send e-mail-http://feinstein.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=ContactUS.EmailMe</p> <p>Senator Boxer.....(415) 403-0100 Send e-mail - http://boxer.senate.gov/contact/email/policy.cfm</p> <p>Rep. Anna Eshoo.....(650) 323-2984 Send e-mail - http://eshoo.house.gov/</p> <p>CALIFORNIA</p> <p>Governor Jerry Brown(916)445-2841 Send e-mail messages via website - http://gov.ca.gov/interact</p> <p>Senator Joe Simitian(650) 688-6384 Send e-mail messages via website-http://www.senatorsimitian.com/main/contact</p> <p>Assemblyman Rich Gordon(650) 691-2121 Send e-mail -http://asmc.org/members/a21/</p> <p>SANTA CLARA COUNTY</p> <p>Supervisor Liz Kniss(650) 965-8737 Send e-mail -liz.kniss@bos.sccgov.org</p> <p>LWVC GUIDE TO GOVERNMENT Locate your elected officials with your street address http://www.guidetogovernment.org/</p>
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