



Volunteers Vital to Registration Efforts

The main thrust of our voter registration this fall was registering high school seniors to vote. We visited three high schools (Oakland Tech, Oakland High, and Fremont, which was new for us this year) and met with a total of 16 classes. Since three volunteers visit each class, it requires a lot of people-power. Fortunately, we had many volunteers, several of whom visited multiple classes. Unfortunately, we couldn't visit a few classrooms which invited us at the last minute.

Visiting the classrooms is always interesting; each of them is different. We were delighted when we got a dialogue going about why it is important to vote, and we were impressed by the thoughtfulness and energy of many of the students and their teachers. Our efforts enabled us

to turn in 140 registration forms to the Registrar of Voters.

We also attended an evening candidate forum at Fremont High to register voters, and held our traditional "Midnight Madness" at Broadway and Pleasant Valley on the evening of October 20, the last day to register before the fall elections. LWVO also had a voter registration table at Rockridge Out & About.

We couldn't have done all this without the help of lots of volunteers, several of whom weren't even members

of the League but who understood our non-partisan stance and believed in the cause. Acknowledgement of all volunteers this election season starts on page 3 of this edition of *The Voter*.

- Sandy Venning



Carol Weed, Karen Ivy, and Carmen Murray helped register high school voters this election season.

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President's Message

When you receive this, it will be all over but the shoutin' and the fussin'. Now it is time to take stock and plan for the future: what did our League do to help make democracy work in Oakland (and in California, for that matter), what could we do differently, and what does it all mean for our city? As you can see from the long list of Voter Service volunteers recognized from pages three to five, we were incredibly busy with candidate forums, ballot measure presentations, useful publication descriptions, and voter registration. These are the things we do at every election and people look to the League for these voter education services. This year we also made a determined effort to establish the LWVO presence on social media – particularly Facebook announcements of events, colorful e-mail invitations to forums and Hot Topics meetings, and videos on YouTube. We wanted to make our voice heard in the extensive election-related chatter, and I believe we made a good start. Now we want to hear from our members: if you attended a candidate forum or followed LWVO on Facebook, what do you think we did right, and what didn't work? Please send your thoughts to info@lwvoakland.org

Education was a major topic during this election, both in audience questions at candidate forums



LWVO President Katherine Gavzy (center) at a mayoral forum with (from left) Spencer Gillette, CEO, Oakland African American Chamber of Commerce; Cheryl Perry League, President, Oakland Bay Area Chapter of the National Coalition of 100 Black Women; Lynn Haines Dodd, President, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Oakland East Bay Alumnae Chapter; and Shonda Scott, CEO, 360 Total Concept Oakland. Photo courtesy Ernestine Nettles.

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and in Oakland's Measure N for a new parcel tax to fund college and career preparation programs in high schools. The state League has launched a study on access to higher education, and we plan to participate – learn more on page 6.

Come to the November 19 Hot Topics informal roundtable discussion and share your own post-election reflections: what do the election results mean for Oakland? How will our daily lives be affected? One final thought, that came to me during

one of those 12-candidate (12!) mayoral forums: yes it is cumbersome, sometimes chaotic, and some of those candidates are so obscure they have no possibility of winning. But nearly all of them had at least one thought-provoking and useful thing to say. Oakland city politics is grass-roots democracy in the raw, and if LWVO helps everyone, both candidates and voters, have their say in the process, then we are indeed making democracy work in our city.

- Katherine Gavzy

Appreciating Our Election Season Helpers

Many thanks are due the many League members who contributed their time to Voter Service during this very busy election cycle. You will notice many names listed more than once; thanks especially to those who offered their services in multiple ways. If there are any names omitted by mistake, please accept our apologies and thanks for your service.

Before you read about the members who helped, I'd like to give a huge thank you to the nonmembers who helped us with several critical tasks. First, we owe an enormous debt of gratitude to the intrepid team at KTOP: Mike Munson, Michelle Morton, and Shomari Smith. They were incredible to work with; Oakland couldn't ask for a more friendly and responsible team than the one at KTOP.

Uploading the local pros and cons videos and the candidate forums to YouTube is essential to making our work available to the public. Frances Oman and her work colleague CG very kindly offered to upload the first forums. Then Mike Ubell answered an e-mailed plea to OakMtg for help and uploaded all other forums as well as the final local measure videos. He was invaluable and even answered an "emergency request" to add a last-minute caption to one of the videos. Without him, we would have almost nothing on YouTube this year. A huge thank you to Mike.

VIDEOS

Deborah Shefler, with support from Katherine Gavzy and Judy Merrill, coordinated our new video project of pros and cons of the local ballot measures. Our goal was to avoid the "talking heads" look of past attempts, and our professional video producer pulled it off for us! Michael Zeligs of StartMotionMEDIA San Francisco Video Production was superb to work with and gave us six beautiful and informative three-minute videos. Our speakers, all LWVO members, were Ernestine Nettles, Jessica Stewart, and Ernie Ting. Preparing the material for their talks were Helen Hutchison, Mary Bergan, Katherine Gavzy, Marion Taylor, and Miriam Hawley (of LWVBAE). Reviewing the draft videos were the drafters plus Mony Flores-Bauer and Leslie Smith. After just a week online, the videos had been viewed over 150 times.

SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTION

Leslie Smith outdid herself as she single-handedly kept our events and videos on Facebook and Twitter, sending frequent links to our webpage (kept full of election-related highlights by Bev Solo), and acting as the cheering section for members to share the information on their own Facebook pages. During October, our webpage had the largest viewing audience ever. Without Leslie's strong push and pull, all our efforts

(continued on page 4)

Election Season Helpers (from page 3)

would have reached a much smaller audience.

RANKED-CHOICE VOTING EDUCATION

Judy Merrill, Marion Taylor, and Louise Anderson developed a Ranked-Choice Voting handout to help relieve the bewilderment felt by many voters about this system. The handout was distributed directly, sent out as links online, and prominently advertised on our website. Joanne Casey presented several talks to interested groups.

CANDIDATE FORUMS

As usual, the League was in demand during this election cycle. Louise Anderson contacted all the candidates and pulled off a beautiful Forum season of 12 forums in City Hall despite other crises along the way. Suzanne Loosen and Judy Merrill worked with our cosponsors on four forums. Community groups partnering with LWVO were the North Hills Community Association, the African American Chamber of Commerce, the National Coalition of Black Women, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Black Women Organized for Political Action, Pro-Arts, East Bay Housing Organizations, and Laurel Village Association. Mary Weinstein and Ernestine Nettles shared coordinating at each forum. Joey Hansell was indispensable as the organizer of forum helpers. Working as timekeepers, question collectors and sorters were: Katherine Gavzy, Rosalee Schubert, Chris Hadley, Susan Schroeder, Helen Bersie, Louise Anderson, Judi Bank, Judy Merrill, Rachel Kahn-Hut, Susan Veit, Gen Katz, Suzanne Loosen,

Ann Killebrew, Jody Nunez, Theresa Nelson, Chris Pagano, Debra Snow, Kathleen Cha, Meg Bowerman, Rachel Reinhard, Lyn Dailey, and Carol Agnello.

Extremely able moderators were Louise Rothman-Riemer, Sandy Threlfall, Mony Flores-Bauer, Helen Hutchison, Marion Taylor, Lyn Dailey, Meg Bowerman, Sandra Coleman, and Shonda Scott, executive producer and host of the KDOL community affairs show "Spotlight with Shonda Scott," which highlights positive stories about Oakland.

At each forum the Membership Committee had a representative. They were: Meg Bowerman, Kathy Collop, Lorraine Force, Ammarie Hallin, Ann Killebrew, Bonnie Hamlin, and Yolanda Schonbron. At an LWVO table covered with League material, they helped promote who we are and what we do, while extending a friendly invitation for others to join us.

PROS AND CONS

Thanks to Allene Warren's contacting many venues we had spoken at before, as well as some new ones. The League presented neutral pros and cons on the ballot propositions to over 900 people at approximately 32 sites around Oakland (the number continues to increase as requests keep arriving), including one in Spanish. Helen Neville very capably organized and trained the speakers. The intrepid speakers included: Abigail Martin, Ann Killebrew, Anna Mathai, Carmen Murray, Deborah Shefler, Ernestine Nettles, Julie Waldman, Katherine Gavzy, Mary Bergan, Meg Bowerman, Mony Flores-Bauer, Phyllis White-Ayanrouh, Ronile Lahti, Rosalee Schubert, and Yolanda Schonbron.

LOCAL EASY VOTER GUIDE PRODUCTION

Kathleen Cha oversaw and Alec MacDonald professionally coordinated our amazing Easy Voter Guide. Alec contacted every candidate (multiple times) for a statement and photo, set up a focus group at Next Step Learning Center to test ballot measure descriptions for readability, designed and laid out the guide, and coordinated its translation into Spanish



Terry Kulka

✕8 LWV members have entrusted me with the sale of their homes – let's make yours ✕8 #9

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and Chinese. The *East Bay Express* printed a total of 32,000 for us, with 20,000 of those distributed inside their October 8 edition.

EASY VOTER GUIDE DISTRIBUTION

Miriam Laska gathered the helpers for sorting and distributing the many Easy Voter Guides. Louise Anderson, in her “spare time,” phoned all the sites to clarify how many they would need, and organized the actual sorting and distribution to 63 sites of 12,000 state and 15,000 local Easy Voter Guides. Sorting in Louise’s living room were: Bea Rudney, Rosalee Schubert, Carolyn Devol, Polly Amrein, Miriam Laska, Louise Anderson, Judy Merrill, and Phyllis White-Ayanruoh. Distributing all over Oakland were: Judy Merrill, Karen Ivy, Carole Agnello, Bea Rudney, Gail Weininger, Annmarie Hallin, Louise Nathe, Louise Anderson, Eleni Hub, and Mary Weinstein.

SMART VOTER

The League’s excellent website, Smartvoter.org, is a treasure trove of information and links to even more information that voters might want or need to know (like where their voting place is). Its mother hen has been and still is Bonnie Hamlin, who is the Alameda County coordinator. LWVO’s Smart Voter volunteer Trisha Gorman invited candidates to create their pages, while Adrienne Aiona input ballot measure information. Kudos to all three for a superb resource.

VOTER REGISTRATION

As noted on page 1, Sandy Venning is continuing our tradition of registering teens in their high school government classrooms. She and a crew also tabled at different events and at our traditional Midnight Madness, our down-to-the-deadline voter registration at Safeway on October 20. See the box at right for a list of those involved.

REGISTRATION AFFIDAVIT BOXES

Peter Bank has been ably organizing the affidavit

boxes team, whose task is to check on and resupply registration forms to boxes as needed at 70 sites spread all over Oakland at least every two weeks, for which the Oakland League earns money. These faithful box watchers are: Polly Amrein, Nancy Auker, Karen Engel, Denise Fleig, Bonnie Hamlin, Helen Hutchison, Terry Kulka, Miriam Laska, Barbara Newcombe, Mary Stevens, Mary Strauss, Allene Warren, Barbara Abernathy, Pete Crigger, Susan Schroeder, Annmarie Hallin, and Louise Nathe.

ELECTION DAY OFFICE PHONE BANK

Every election day voters suddenly realize they’re missing important information and call the League office in desperation, not knowing where else to go for help. Manning the phones were Bonnie Hamlin, Ann Killibrew, Katherine Gavzy, Deborah Shefler, Louise Anderson, and Mary Bergan.

PHEW! So very many of us contributed so much of our time and our skills to make our democracy work. Hooray for each of us, however much or little we did. And my personal gratitude is that we go all out like this only every two years.

- *Judy Merrill*

More Acknowledgements: Voter Registration

For high school registration, thank you to members Louise Anderson, Carol Agnello, Nan Butterworth, Karen Ivy, Lynn Jones, Jane Klein, Karen Long, Janet Leban, Anna Mathai, Carmen Murray, and Deborah Shefler, and non-members Carol Weed and Shirley Kaiser.

For tabling at other events: Louise Anderson, Pete Bank, Katherine Gavzy, Bonnie Hamlin, Karen Ivy, Jane Klein, Louise Rothman-Riemer, and Deborah Shefler; non-members Alice Gold, Emily Jackson, Drew Levitt, and Bette Birnbaum.

- *Sandy Venning*

Money in Politics Program

A topic of great concern to many of us, “Money in Politics” was the title of the LWVO program meeting on September 17. Two experts informed us on different aspects of the issue. Nancy Skinner, a longtime member of the state Assembly representing parts of Oakland and Berkeley, gave us a summary of some of the recent bills related to money in politics that have been considered in the legislature. Helen Hutchison, former president of LWVO and new president of LWV California, talked about the work of the FCC and FPPC and how she thinks the League should address the issues around money in politics.

Rep. Skinner spoke about a number of relevant bills that have been considered by the legislature over the past few years that have required new disclosures of large financial contributions, new penalties for failing to disclose, and more transparency so that the public can more easily have access to the disclosures. Some of these measures have become law, but others have languished. Rep. Skinner said that in the next session legislators should work with outside groups

to get consensus on the language in bills so that there is more agreement and they can move through the legislative process more quickly.

Helen Hutchison suggested that money in politics is not going to go away; money will always be a factor in politics. What can make a difference is the disclosure of the money in politics. If people know who is bankrolling campaigns, that knowledge can influence their votes. The current state database for disclosures, Cal-Access, is unwieldy; it needs to be improved. Oakland’s Open Disclosure database will be much easier to use. Helen said that the League of Women Voters does not believe a constitutional amendment in response to Citizens United is the answer because the issue is just too complicated, big, and difficult. LWVUS calls on us to work on small, incremental changes.

LWVO President Katherine Gavzy urges those who could not attend the program meeting to learn more by visiting www.opendisclosure.io and archive.lwvc.org/lwvonly/moneyinpolitics.html.

- Sandy Venning

League to Study Access to Higher Education

The League of Women Voters of California (LWVC) is conducting a study on access to California public higher education, including the areas of funding, affordability, equity, preparedness, and barriers to success. Upon completion of the study, the long-term goal is to enable the LWVC to take positions and advocate in the regulatory, legislative, and electoral processes on the issue.

The League of Women Voters of Oakland will hold a panel discussion regarding the current ability of California to provide public higher education to our population (stay tuned for details). We will be talking to local leaders about their perceptions regarding accessibility to higher education in California, what the barriers are to getting into a public college or

university, and how the League of Women Voters might help on this issue in the public arena. This will be a great opportunity to hear whether a greater percentage of our population has access to UC, CSU, and the community colleges now as compared to 1960 – is that equitable across all populations, how are tuition and financial aid policies mitigating the impact of the high school zip code, and how is lack of preparation slowing down the time to a degree.

The State study committee will be completing its work this spring and locals will begin the consensus process next fall. This will be a great opportunity to hear the background information on where California stands on access to public higher education.

- Leslie Smith

It's all the rave! Have you seen the new videos? They've gone viral! There are four comprehensive yet short videos on Public Ethics, Measure N, Measure Z, and Measure BB. Check them out on Facebook and tell us what you think: www.facebook.com/lwvoak

- *Dawna Williams*

Save the Date: LWVO Holiday Party

Come celebrate the holiday season with the League on Friday, December 12 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Louise Rothman-Riemer and Davis Riemer (check your member directory for the address). Meet, greet, chat, and relax with League friends old and new. Savor the victories and/or commiserate over the losses from the November election. Think about what you would enjoy doing with the League in 2015. Bringing something to share would be lovely – but more important, come!

Welcome New Members

Dorothy Black, Wanda Peake,
and Arlene Pearl



Join our social network!

twitter.com/LWV_Oakland

facebook.com/lwvoak



SHARE THIS WITH A FRIEND – INVITE THEM TO JOIN US!

Membership in the League of Women Voters of Oakland is a bargain and a statement. It's a bargain because you will have access to valuable information and insights via the Voter newsletters and LWV websites, through membership not only in LWVO but also in LWV Bay Area, LWV California and LWVUS, and via a variety of events and dialogues with key leaders throughout the year.

Your statement as a League member will be that you are committed to providing non-biased, well-researched information to voters, and that the issues your League follows are those that affect every area in Oakland: schools, public safety, local government, parks, our economy, and more.

Join the League, one of the nation's most trusted, nonpartisan grassroots organizations where "hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement."

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|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Membership (\$65) | <input type="checkbox"/> Each additional member at an address (\$32.50) |
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Name/Names: _____

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Make checks payable to LWVO, and mail to 436 14th Street, Suite 1213, Oakland CA 94612.

Dues are not tax deductible.



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CALENDAR
 (Visit lwvoakland.org for more event listings)

Monday, November 10 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.	LWVO Board Meeting	Central Building 2nd Floor ConferenceRoom 436 14th Street
Wednesday, November 19 6 to 7:30 p.m.	Hot Topics Reviewing the Election Results	Central Building 2nd Floor ConferenceRoom 436 14th Street
Friday, December 12 6:30 p.m.	LWVO Holiday Party	Rothman-Riemer Residence (Check your member directory for the address)

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Is there a date at the top of it?
 If there's no date at the top of it, you're not a member. Please join; see how at www.lwvoakland.org.
 If there is a date, it shows when your membership expires. Renew using the form in this Voter or online.