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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – November 2004

President's Message

Frequently we hear from local League members that either they are not aware of the existence of the LWV of the Bay Area, or they have little idea what we do.

Interleague organizations, such as LWVBA, LWV of Los Angeles County, LWV of Orange County were formed out of concern for regional issues that cross county boundaries, and out of necessity because it is very cumbersome to establish positions and take action if all affected Leagues need to be involved with each step. In the Bay Area, our efforts are more complicated because our region consists of 20 Leagues (and one Member at Large Unit) that cover the 9 counties in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Local League members can keep in touch with our LWVBA in several ways. We have a website www.lwvba-ca.org where we post our positions, our Pros and Cons on regional ballot measures, issue papers, our monthly Voter, and information about regional meetings we organize. LWVBA Education Fund also publishes a Bay Area Monitor that is mailed to each League as well as 3,000 or more people in the Bay Area that are interested in regional issues. This is also available on the website www.bayareamonitor.org. If you want to follow regional issues, this is an excellent reference about current issues and important meetings.

Finally, we ask each LWV to designate a Bay Area Representative. This person should be assigned the specific responsibility of keeping in touch with the LWVBA, attending our region-wide meetings in September and January and in bringing regional information of interest to the local League. An Interleague Network of Bay Area Representatives meets every other month in the North (Berkeley) and every other month in the South (Menlo Park/Palo Alto) where current issues can be shared and discussed (contact programvp@lwvba-ca.org to get on the e-mail list). Often LWVBA becomes involved in action as a result of issues discussed at the Interleague Network meetings. We also have regional policy committees for Transportation and for Natural Resources/Water. If you have questions, or would like more information, you may always contact me at president@lwvba-ca.org

Linda Craig, President
LWVBA

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Know Your Bay Area Day Event on Saturday, October 2, 2004

The topic for the day was Ocean Water on Tap: Desalination Issues in the Bay Area. The event was hosted by the LWVBA, their Natural Resources & Water (NRW) Committee, and friends (there are many people to thank for making this day a successful one). The location was the educational center for the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' Bay Model in Sausalito. The 75 attendees arrived from various Bay Area counties and were fully engaged by the panelist's PowerPoint presentations and thorough explanations of the political, economic, and environmental aspects of desalination plants.

LWVBA President Linda Craig warmly welcomed the group and after a few announcements and thanks to the organizers, handed the lectern over to NRW Co-Chair Eileen Whitty.

Ms. Whitty explained the program, introduced the Keynote Speaker Rita Sudman, and the first three of six panelists. Ms. Sudman, as the editor of the Water Education Foundation's Western Water magazine, led off with a comprehensive lesson on the history of the use of desalination and why California will probably have desalination plants to augment its future water supply. The members of the first panel echoed and expanded on your points. Marc DelPiero, Pajaro-Sunny Mesa Community Services, carefully explained how water rights relate to desalination. Jared Huffman, Marin Municipal Water District Board of Directors, illustrated the steps Marin County is taking to fund and site a pilot desal plant. Al Wanger, Coastal Commission, described how permitting practices of the Coastal Commission will allow

plants on the California coast.

After questions and answers, a break and a stretch, Ms. Trish Cypher, NRW Co-Chair, moderated the next three panelists. Hasan Abdullah, East Bay Municipal Utility District, depicted the actual operation of a desalination plant. Ernest Avilla, Principal Consultant of his firm shared the winning formula of how a group of agencies can organize themselves to fund and build a desalination plant. Jeff Blanchfield, Bay Conservation and Development Commission, noted the permitting ramifications of building a desalination plant on the San Francisco Bay.

A large number of questions from the audience were deftly answered by the panelists and the Keynote Speaker, but due to time constraints, many questions were not. Thus, a follow-up piece outlining the questions and their answers will soon be posted on the NRW committee website: <http://www.lwvba-ca.org/lwvba/committees.html>

Lastly, the audience enjoyed a water taste-test, comparing two mystery waters. Water 'B' from a Poseidon desalination plant in Southern California was preferred over Water 'A' from Kentfield, Marin County.

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HELP WANTED

Administrative Assistant for the LWVBA Education Fund Bay Area Monitor office in downtown Oakland. Approximately 10 hrs/week, \$14.50 - \$18/hr depending on experience. In addition to general office skills, a candidate should be experienced with Windows-based programs including Word or WordPerfect, and familiar with Quickbooks and a database program such as FileMaker Pro. Other desirable attributes include good writing skills, knowledge of LWV, and interest in local and regional government issues. Send a letter of interest and resume to 1611 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 300, Oakland 94612. Deadline for applications is November 22. For more information, please call the Monitor Editor, Leslie Stewart, at 510-839-1608 or e-mail her at leslie@lwvba-ca.org.

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[Refer to the October Voter for information on the following forum.]

LWVBA will be a co-sponsor of the following Forum:

BUS RAPID TRANSIT – A BAY AREA PERSPECTIVE

MTI records the session and produces an edited summary of the proceedings that is published on the Institute website (<http://transweb.sjsu.edu>) and in hardcopy.

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Save These Dates:

Thursday, November 11, 2004, 12:15 – 2 p.m., IN Committee South. Because this date is Veterans Day, the Menlo Park Library will be closed. Another location will be located and directions will be forwarded to the reps. In the meantime, please send agenda items for Nov 11 to Iris R. Winogrand: programvp@lwvba-ca.org or (510) 482-4439

Friday, November 12, 2004; MTC Planning & Operations Committee meeting at 9:30 a.m. Release of the Draft Transportation 2030 Plan.

Friday, November 12, 2004; 1:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.; Metro Center, 101 Eighth St., Oakland: BUS RAPID TRANSIT. For details, see above.

Friday, January 28, 2005: The LWVC northern forum on current energy issues is being planned for this date in SF at 455 Golden Gate. It will be co-sponsored by the CPUC (California Public Utilities Commission), the CEC (California Energy Commission), the ISO (International Organization for Standardization) and probably the Commonwealth Club for starters. We expect to have the most significant decision makers in the state as presenters. It will be a 9 to 4 event. Rather precedent setting with the increasing need for regional planning of energy facilities - and to some extent water facilities.

Saturday, January 29, 2005: Bay Area League Day, focusing on the status of Regional Planning in the Bay Area. Details of speakers and location will be announced in the December 1 LWVBA Voter.

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Web Sites:

Bay Area Monitor: <http://www.bayareamonitor.org>

LWVC: <http://www.ca.lwv.org>

LWVBA: <http://www.lwvba-ca.org>

LWVUS: <http://www.lwv.org>

Smart Voter: <http://www.smartvoter.org>

Barbara Boxer: <http://boxer.senate.gov/>

Dianne Feinstein: <http://feinstein.senate.gov/>

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Barbara Boxer: senator@boxer.senate.gov

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George W. Bush: president@whitehouse.gov

Arnold Schwarzenegger: Governor@Governor.ca.gov