



# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SAN FRANCISCO THE VOTER

Winter 2008

## Election Day is Tuesday, February 5, 2008

### Letter from President

#### Karen Clopton

In 2008, San Francisco will have three elections. The first on Tuesday, February 5 is our new primary which was moved from the original June date so that our California votes would have more impact nationally. There will also be ballot measures as you will see below. On June 3<sup>rd</sup> we will have our statewide direct primary which will include new ballot measures in addition to Federal and State Congressional Primaries. Our presidential election on November 4<sup>th</sup> will include local elections for the Board of Supervisors, Community College and Board of Education. Your vote is important in all of these elections.

There are three measures on the San Francisco Ballot, as you can see from our Pro/Con Guide which is included in this issue of The Voter. Proposition A is a policy measure which would turn Alcatraz Island into a Peace Center. Proposition B is an amendment to the City Charter which would authorize the establishment of a Deferred Retirement Option Plan for San Francisco Police Officers. Proposition C is a \$185 Million Bond Proposal, called the Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks General

**(continued on Page 2)**

### Traditional Holiday Party Brings Together League Members & Friends

On Saturday, December 1, about sixty members and friends and one charming little girl came together for an afternoon of good cheer and good food at the League's annual holiday party. The event was held at the



Community Learning Center at St. James Church on California Street. The little girl, wearing a holiday party dress,

is the daughter of League Treasurer Kristin Murphy Chu.

Membership committee co-chairs Marilyn Campbell and Suzanne Gautier and Program Manager Mary Anderton organized the festive party. League President Karen Clopton welcomed everyone and recognized Nancy Lawrence for the more than 50 years she has been a League member during which, Ms. Lawrence said, she's never missed the holiday party.

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Obligation Bond, to provide for the construction, reconstruction, purchase, and/or improvement of park and recreation facilities within the City and County of San Francisco.

There are also three State Propositions. Proposition 91 is a Transportation Funds State of California Initiative Constitutional Amendment. (Majority approval is required.) Proposition 92 is for Community Colleges. - Funding. Governance. Fees and is a State of California Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute. (Majority approval is required.) Proposition 93 puts limits on Legislators' Terms in Office State of California and is an Initiative Constitutional Amendment. (Majority approval is required.) In addition, there are four Referendums on Amendment to Indian Gaming Compact -- State of California and are subject to court ordered changes. (Majority Approval Required.) To learn more about these propositions, please visit [www.Smartvoter.org](http://www.Smartvoter.org).

As I mentioned in the last Voter, we have revived our Women Who Could Be President Gala with a Gala Reception on February 12 at the City Club of San Francisco from 5:30 to 8:00pm. The Gala is chaired by Chandra Friese and will be emceed by Cheryl Jennings.

Our honorees are Elmy Bermejo, Chair, The Women's Foundation of California and Deputy Secretary, External Affairs, State and Consumer Services Agency; Kimberly Brandon, past president, San Francisco Port Commission and senior VP with Morgan Stanley; Clothilde Hewlett, partner, Kirkpatrick & Lockhart Preston Gates Ellis; Adrienne Pon, CEO of Zeum; Dr. Elisa Stephens, president, Academy of Art University. Their photos and bios follow in a separate article.

Among the sponsors are Wells Fargo, Stonefield Josephson, Inc, Chandra Friese, Diane B. Wilsey, Guaranty Bank, Comerica Bank, Morgan Stanley and K&L Preston Gates. Former honorees include Dr. Condolezza Rice, Dede Wilsey, and Charlotte Schultz. The invitation is on our website at [www.sfvotes.org](http://www.sfvotes.org) and will be sent in the mail on January 2. So stand by.

## Holiday Party (continued from Page 1)

Charlene Smith who is leaving the Board because of family and professional commitments was honored for her long service to the League which included a term as president. While she is cutting back on her duties for the present, Charlene insists she'll be back as an active member as soon as possible.

Current board member Emanuel Pleitez reported about the League's ongoing immigration study and invited anyone who's interested in the topic to join the group by calling the office at 415-989-8683. (See Immigration consensus article on page 3.)



# Participate in the Immigration Consensus

One of the important missions of the LWV is formulating stances on issues and working to change public policy accordingly. The LWVUS is currently conducting a national study on immigration. The two-year study is now nearing the consensus stage, which is when local leagues meet to determine their positions on specific immigration issues.

As a member of the San Francisco League, your views are needed to help us reach consensus on these important issues. To contribute your perspective, attend a consensus meeting. There are two consensus meetings scheduled, both in January 2008. Choose the date from the list below that is more convenient for you.

Prepare for the consensus meeting by reading about immigration. The League has prepared eight background papers as a springboard for education on specific immigration issues. To read them, visit [lwv.org](http://lwv.org) and go to the Immigration Policy page. Other resources are available on the site, including articles from the National Voter and a list of recommended books. Just as important as reading, is learning about your community members' experiences with immigration. Inquire how immigration affects friends, colleagues, and other residents of San Francisco, specifically

with respect to the workforce, social issues, family reunification, and other relevant topics.

Readying yourself for taking consensus involves a lot of work, but doing so will allow you to contribute to changes in immigration policy. Once the San Francisco League forms consensus, our views will be forwarded to the national League. The LWVUS will then consider all submitted consensus documents to form a position. The resulting document will be used as the League's official stance on all policy reform.

### Consensus Meeting Option 1

Thursday, January 10, 2008

6:00 – 9:00 pm

Kristin Chu's home

Food will be provided

### Membership Breakfast/Consensus Meeting Option 2

Saturday, January 12, 2008

9:30 am – 12:30 pm

Marilyn Campbell's home

Food will be provided

**Please RSVP to the League office at 415-989-8683 or [lwvsf@lwvsf.org](mailto:lwvsf@lwvsf.org)**

## Who May Register to Vote

You may register to vote if you meet the following criteria:

You are a United States citizen

You are a resident of California

You are at least 18 years of age (or will be by the date of the next election)

You are not in prison or on parole for conviction of a felony

You have not been judged by a court to be mentally incompetent to register and vote

<b>In order to be eligible to vote in the statewide election on:</b>	<b>Your Registration must be postmarked no later than:</b>
February 5, 2008 - Presidential Primary	January 22, 2008
June 3, 2008 - Direct Primary	May 19, 2008
November 4, 2008 - General Election	October 20, 2008

## Women Who Could be President Gala Honorees

Elmy Bermejo has been dedicated to public service for more than 20 years and has worked in different parts of California and in Washington D.C. She



currently serves as Deputy Secretary for External Affairs for the State and Consumer Services Agency. Elmy currently serves as Chair of The Women's Foundation of California, President of HOPE, Hispanas Organized for Political Equality and is

also immediate Past Chair of the California State Commission on the Status of Women.

Kimberly K. Brandon is the first African-American Woman to serve on the San Francisco Port Commission. She is currently serving her sixth term as Vice President. She spends numerous hours



serving the community on various non profit boards and is currently active as a board trustee of the Museum of African Diaspora, Plan of Action for Challenging Times, Inc and The Young Scholars Program. Currently she serves as Senior Vice President and Wealth Advisor

with Morgan Stanley.

Clothilde Hewlett is a partner in the San Francisco office of Kirkpatrick & Lockhart Preston Gates Ellis LLP (K&L Gates). In 1999, she was appointed by



Governor Gray Davis to the position of Undersecretary of the State and Consumer Services Agency in California. In 2002, the Governor appointed Clothilde as Interim Director of the Department of General Services (DGS). Clothilde served for five years as a San

Francisco Police Commissioner.

Adrienne Pon is CEO of Zeum, an arts and tech museum. Prior to this, Pon served as Interim Executive Director of the Asian Law Caucus, Founding Executive Director of the Community Technology Policy Council, and spent many years in the private sector at SBC (formerly Pacific Telesis/Pacific Bell). Appointed to the



San Francisco Civil Service Commission in 1993, she served two mayoral administrations over a 10-year term, completing an unprecedented four consecutive terms as president and two as vice-president.



Dr. Elisa Stephens became President of the Academy of Art University in 1992, the third generation Stephens to lead the university since its founding by her grandfather in 1929. Dr. Stephens is a leader in many community based organizations: Young President's Organization, San

Francisco Junior League, Achievement Rewards for College Scientists (ARCS Foundation) and the Royal Society of Arts, and she recently completed a two-year term as President of the Nob Hill Association.

**Buy tickets for the Gala:  
Tuesday, February 12  
at the City Club of San Francisco  
From 5:30 to 8:00  
Go to the website: [SFVotes.org](http://SFVotes.org) or call  
the League Office at 415-989-8683**

## California Voters Look forward to 3 Elections in 2008

**February 5, 2008** Earlier this year the California Legislature split the scheduled June 2008 Presidential and Statewide Direct primary so voters in the most populous state in the nation could participate with other early voting states in a Presidential Primary on February 5, 2008.

**June 3, 2008** The Statewide Direct Primary Election for Congress, the State Senate and the State Assembly will be held on June 3, 2008.

**November 4, 2008** The General Election.

### California has a Modified Closed Primary System

Senate Bill 28 (September 2000) implemented a "modified" closed primary system in January 2001, that permits "decline to state" (unaffiliated) voters to participate in a primary election if authorized by an individual political party's rules and duly noticed 135 days before the primary by the Secretary of State for each primary election.

Historically California had a "Closed" primary system that allowed only voters registered with a political party to vote the party ballot.

The "Open" primary system", authorized by California voters in 1996 was subsequently (June, 2000) declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of the United States because it violated a political party's First Amendment right of association.

### "Decline to State" Voters - 2008 Presidential and Statewide Direct Primary Elections – Modified Closed Primary

If you are a voter who has "Declined to State" an affiliation with a political party, you may vote for a candidate in the upcoming February 5, 2008 Presidential Primary Election in the **Democratic Party**, (letter dated September 19, 2007) or the **American Independent Party**, (letter dated August 23, 2007). You may request, from your county elections official or at your polling place, the ballot of a political party authorized by the party's rules and duly noticed by the Secretary of State. If you do not request such a ballot, you will be given a non-partisan ballot, containing only the names of all candidates for nonpartisan offices and measures to be voted upon at the primary election.

The deadline for parties to send authorization letters to the Secretary of State for the June 3, 2008 Statewide Direct Primary Election is January 22, 2008.

Voters should always check with their local election officials or the Secretary of State's web site to determine which parties have sent letters of authorization for non affiliated voters to vote their ballot, at every primary. Historically, the number of parties authorized has changed with each primary.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
**WHERE WE STAND**

FEBRUARY 5, 2008 ELECTION

**PROP 91    Transportation Funds**

**OPPOSE**

The League supports stable funding for transportation projects, but Proposition 91 is not the way to provide it. Measures like this remove the flexibility that our representatives need in crafting state budgets, especially in difficult times. Even the proponents of Prop 91 urge a NO vote on this measure, recognizing that its aims were accomplished by Prop 1A of 2006.

**PROP 92    Community Colleges: Funding, Governance, Fees**

**OPPOSE**

Proposition 92 locks in new constitutional provisions that would mandate increased spending on K-14 education without regard to the overall state budget situation. It doesn't provide new revenues and thus it threatens our ability to address the state's other pressing needs. The League respects supporters' desire for adequate, stable funding and improved governance in the community college system. However, we cannot support further restrictions on the state's ability to fund *all* the programs that serve Californians, especially in our tight budget times.

**PROP 93    Limits on Legislators' Terms in Office**

**NEUTRAL**

This initiative, by itself, makes relatively minor changes to the structure of legislative term limits. Without a package that includes reform of the redistricting process, it does not achieve meaningful improvement of the functioning of our state legislature.

Because League positions do not cover the issues in **PROPS 94 through 97, Referenda on Amendments to Indian Gaming Compacts**, the LWVC is taking no stand on those measures.

11/27/07

**VOTE ON FEBRUARY 5!**

## Update on San Francisco Voting Machines

San Francisco voters will be using new electronic voting machines in the February 5, 2008 primary election, because of a decision made by the Board of Supervisors at the general meeting on December 15. The new system will cost the taxpayers \$12.65 million dollars.

Since November of 2000, the City's voters have been using ES&S Eagle opti-scan computers. The Director of Elections, John Arntz, had been working with Sequoia to finalize a contract in order to replace the ES&S system, which he stated was becoming old and unreliable. Sequoia won the RFP (Request for Proposal ) in September of 2005. There were strong objections from the public and voting rights activists: Sequoia did not yet have the capability of performing Ranked-Choice-Voting (RCV), which is required by law in San Francisco; they also objected to the non-transparency of vote-counting performed by all computerized voting systems, including the ES&S in current use. At the early Budget & Finance sessions to consider the Sequoia contract, the committee questioned Sequoia about adding an "Open-Source" clause, whereby the vendor would agree to open the internal source code for review and monitoring by the public, including those experts who could understand it. This was unacceptable to Sequoia, and the contract was not approved, but was instead "continued": a temporary victory for those who had worked against it.

The old ES&S agreement was renewed, and strict requirements of the Secretary of State were implemented as a condition of granting the fourth extension of its certification from the State of California. Debra Bowen, Secretary of State, extended the certification only through the June 2008 Primary, stating that this was absolutely the last extension she would grant without a major review. She also required a manual tally of 10% of all the precincts as an audit of the accuracy of the computer count. This would result in a delay of four weeks before the official results could be announced.

At the Board of Supervisors meeting in December, each Supervisor addressed the issue. Public comment was not allowed. Supervisors Daly and Ammiano spoke in favor of open, transparent elections, security of the vote counting, and accuracy over speed. Supervisor Alioto-Pier praised the new system, that, while imperfect, was a major step for the disabled to be able to vote with independence. She gave the example of the blind having had to ask someone else to mark their ballot and submit it for them, without being able to verify its accuracy. Sean Elsbernd stated that ES&S is currently the subject of lawsuits brought by the state and the City for illegal practices. Unfortunately, the Sequoia company has a record of lawsuits, as well as being the subject of a critical report by Dan Rather (HDTV) linking Sequoia to the hanging chads of Florida in 2000. Its RCV certification application is going through the federal channels, and it will be a race against the clock to get it certified in California before November.

The Board of Supervisors expressed respect for the reliable job of running our elections performed by Director Arntz. The history of ES&S has not been a positive one in terms of service and professionalism. Mr. Arntz felt that it was necessary to stop doing business with this vendor, and that Sequoia had won the RFP. Short of hand-counting the November election, which would have required creating an election plan from scratch (not impossible, but a monumental task), there were no alternatives which included open-source software. The Board of Supervisors voted, 9 to 2, to approve the four-year Sequoia contract.

# Calendar of Events

**Immigration Study Consensus Meeting Option 1**  
**Thursday, January 10, 6 to 9 pm**  
At the Home of Kristin Chu

**Membership Breakfast and Immigration Study Consensus Meeting Option 2**  
**Saturday, January 12, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm**  
At the Home of Marilyn Campbell

**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Tuesday, January 15, at 6 pm**  
582 Market Street, 10th Floor

**Election Day: Consolidated Presidential Primary Election**  
**Tuesday, February 5**  
Polls open from 7 am to 8 pm

**Women Who Could Be President Gala Reception**  
**Tuesday, February 12, 5:30 to 8:00 pm**  
City Club of San Francisco, 155 Sansome Street

**Bay Area League Day: Transportation Solutions to Climate Change**  
**Friday, February 22, 9:30 am to Noon**  
Nike Hall Preservation Park, Oakland  
All League members are invited to these outstanding policy forums.

**RSVP FOR THESE  
EVENTS AT:**

**415-989-8683 or  
lwvsf@lwvsf.org.**



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF  
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**VOTER NEWSLETTER**  
**Feb. 08 Election Edition**

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