

VOTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Barbara Murray

Happy New Year to everyone! I hope everyone had a joyous holiday season.

2009 should be an interesting political year as state, local, and national governments tackle unprecedented challenges. Hopefully, they will take a page from the League on using nonpartisanship, consensus, and compromise to achieve results.

January presents several opportunities for the Bay Area League to "Make Democracy Work."

- Leagues across the state are **interviewing state legislators** in preparation for the beginning of the 2009 state legislative session. Sara Young and Melba Heselmeyer will be interviewing Mike Jackson, state senator from District 11. Information from the interview will be shared with the state League and Houston League to help in lobbying preparations.
- We will start work on updating one of our most popular and valuable publications - **The Bay Area's Voters Handbook**, *Bay Area Guide to Elected Officials*. This concise, easy to use pamphlet provides contact information for all of our elected officials ranging from local entities through state and federal representatives. I am very happy to report that Shell Oil Company has once again generously offered to underwrite the cost of publication. Check out Elizabeth Glenn's article on how you can volunteer to help in this very worthwhile project.
- Our next discussion meeting on Saturday, January 31 will focus on looking at state voting laws and election procedures that affect voter participation. Diane Sheridan's article describes some of the possibilities that we will discuss as we begin the state study on **Voting in Texas**. I hope to see you on the 31st.

Once again, I send you my best wishes as we begin the New Year of 2009 working together to fulfill the League's mission:

Encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government, work to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

VOTING IN TEXAS: Your Thoughts?

Saturday, January 31, 2009
9:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m.

At the home of Diane Sheridan
1107 Live Oak Lane, Kirby Woods, Taylor Lake Village

Delegates to the LWV-Texas Convention voted to restudy the *state position on Voting Rights and Election Laws* to consider various procedures to increase voter participation. The study will include, but not be limited to, vote-by-mail, Internet voting, same-day registration, election-day centralized voting, overseas ballot procedures, other procedural barriers to voting, and procedures that may increase voter participation.

On Saturday, January 31, members of the League of Women Voters of the Bay Area and guests will start discussion of topics on which we all have knowledge and opinions. We'll socialize from 9:30 – 10:00 a.m., then talk about voting procedures from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. Hope to see you January 31.

Directions: KirbyWoods is off Kirby Road between NASA Road One and Red Bluff. From NASA One, turn onto Kirby at the Jack in the Box. Pass TLV City Hall and the water tower. Turn right at the KirbyWoods subdivision sign. When the short street ends, turn left onto Live Oak; 1107 will be on your left about three-fourths of the way down the block. There is a red fire hydrant and street light by the driveway. Questions? Diane Sheridan 281/326-5253 DBSheridan@aol.com

AN OPPORTUNITY TO VOLUNTEER!

The *Bay Area Guide to Elected Officials* is our best known and most requested publication. It contains contact information for the national, state and county officials in our Bay Area, as well as precinct information for southern Harris County and northern Galveston County. We revise it every two years after the general election and distribute it throughout the Bay Area – mostly through our libraries.

It requires about two weeks of research at the end of January to update the information contained in the *Guide*. If you have an hour (or two or three) to volunteer to make a few phone calls to bring our information up to date, **please call me** – Elizabeth Glenn – at 281-482-1067. I will look forward to hearing from you!

THANKS TO OUR DONORS!

The Italian Cafe

Located on NASA Road One at Kirby Road, the Italian Café provides great Italian food in a casual atmosphere--and you may bring your own wine. Bessilyn and Frank Piazza are the genial owners. The Bay Area League appreciates their loyal support.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME--ANYTIME!

- \$54 annual dues for an individual membership
- If additional household members would like to join, it's only \$27 a year for each.
- \$27 for full-time students

Paying your dues to LWV-Bay Area automatically makes you a member of the LWV-Texas and LWVUS.

Contact Membership Chair Diane Sheridan for an application form and details. 281-326-5253 or DBSheridan@aol.com

CALENDAR

January 2009

- 13 Legislative session begins
- 31 **LWV-BA discussion** of state position on Voting Procedures to Increase Voter Participation, 9:30-11:30, home of Diane Sheridan

February 2009

- 7 **LWV-BA Board meeting**, 9:00 a.m., home of Verva Densmore

March 2009

- 28 **LWV-BA discussion** of National Voter Compact (Electoral College)

