



# VOTER

Fall 2006

Editor: Kate Quick

## The State Board Process For Action on Ballot Measures

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Every election cycle, the LWVC takes positions on ballot measures. The "Vote with the League" flyer and the Action Guide for local Leagues appear at the appointed time and Leagues gear up to go into battle. But how exactly does all this happen? How does the state League board decide which ballot measures to support or oppose? Who writes those useful publications? Why don't local Leagues get them earlier?

The process begins months before the election and involves the LWVC legislative consultants, on- and off-board program directors, the legislation committee and the staff Program Director/Advocate. We subscribe to the Secretary of State's e-mail alert list, which notifies us when initiative petitions begin circulation. We keep an eye on the petitions, knowing that some are much more likely than others to qualify. As the circulation period progresses, we monitor the progress of the various measures. Some well-funded, highly controversial, or popular measures qualify quickly. Others poke along at a more leisurely pace. During this period, we keep an eye out for news coverage and reports from other interested groups, and often hear from the proponents themselves. We seek research material from public policy institutes. The legislative consultants and off-board program directors may do initial analyses of measures assessed to be highly likely to qualify.

Once the measures have qualified, the research and analyses go into high gear. We seek further information from institutes and interest groups. We read the Leg-

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## Vote with the League . . . . . . Ballot Measures November 2006

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The November 2006 election will have 13 statewide propositions for voters to consider. The LWVC has taken positions on a number of ballot measures and we will review some of them here. Others are discussed elsewhere in this VOTER.

There are five bond measures on which the LWVC is taking a "support" position: Propositions 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, and 84.

The first four were part of the \$37 billion infrastructure package agreed upon by the Legislature and the Governor. Proposition 1B will provide funds to help rebuild California's state and local transportation infrastructure and will provide money for port security and for improving air quality. Proposition 1C will finance housing-related programs including affordable housing. It will also provide funds for brownfield clean up of contaminated property, for urban parks, and for infrastructure that facilitates infill development.

Proposition 1D will provide funds for construction of new school facilities as well as repair and renovation. Funds

will be available for public schools from kindergarten to the university level. Part of its goal is to relieve overcrowded classrooms. Proposition 1E is aimed at disaster and flood prevention and will provide financing for levee protection in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and for storm water management in other parts of the state.

Proposition 84 is a water bond directed toward improving water quality, safety and supply for the state. Funds will also be used for the protection of rivers, lakes and streams in the state as well as programs for forest, wildlife, and coastal conservation.

The LWVC will be neutral on Proposition 1A, a constitutional amendment that is also part of the infrastructure package. It amends Proposi-

tion 42 of 2002, which dedicated money from sales taxes on gasoline to transportation purposes. The LWVC did not support Proposition 42 because our State and Local Finances (SLF) and Constitution positions call for flexibility of revenue and discourage earmarking of state revenues and identifying tax sources and rates in the Constitution. While the LWVC favors improvements in the transportation system, it was felt that the conflict with our positions would dictate a neutral position on this measure.

Proposition 85 (the Parental Notification initiative) appeared on the ballot last year as Proposition 73 and was defeated. The LWVC, given its position on reproductive rights, opposed the measure last year and we oppose it again this year. We are concerned that teenagers communi-

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**Watch interviews of candidates for statewide office on the California Channel**  
[www.calchannel.com](http://www.calchannel.com)

## A Message from the President



The League of Women Voters of California is ready for another election season. Planning by your board and staff began the day after the June election.

This issue of the California VOTER is intended to inform you about the measures Californians will find on their ballots and tell you what we are doing to help voters make intelligent choices when they go to the polls.

Much of my activity during the summer focused on redistricting reform. There were countless hours spent on conference calls with our coalition partners and trips to Sacramento to pressure the Legislature to put a significant reform measure on the November ballot. There was support from all sides of the political spectrum, requiring compromises, but working with others strengthened our efforts for reform. We all worked until the final day of the session and were extremely disappointed when the Legislature failed to act.

Polling conducted by the League, Common Cause, and the Rose Institute in April shows that Californians, even those who voted against Prop. 77 last November, overwhelmingly prefer that redistricting be done by an independent commission. This polling also indicated that the League must be a prominent voice in building public support for reform. Delegates to the 2005 state convention selected Redistricting as one of the three Issues for

Education and Advocacy. We will continue to seek reform and discussions are underway with our partners to determine the best course of action.

We have not neglected our educational mission. Before the June election we began discussions with UC Davis about cosponsorship of a gubernatorial debate. The board re-affirmed the need for a set of criteria for selecting the candidates who would be eligible to participate and issued those criteria in a press release on July 18. Letters went to the candidates and a definite date will be set if they agree.

The Easy Voter Guide will be available with five languages in printed form, plus an additional two languages posted on the Web site. As it has for the past ten years, the Smart Voter Web site will carry comprehensive information about candidates, ballot measures, and just about everything else you want to know about the election. By the time you read this, our Pros and Cons publication will be in the hands of local Leagues. I encourage you to inform as many people as possible about the resources the LWVC has available. And, of course, your local League can always use your help in distributing materials.

Be sure to check the LWVC Web site for detailed information about issues and projects described in this VOTER.

*Jackie*

## Homeowner Association Elections

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We have had lots of inquiries from local Leagues about the new homeowner association election law that went into effect on July 1. For those who still haven't heard, the law requires all homeowner associations (also known as common interest developments) in California—no matter how small—to hire an "inspector of elections" to oversee any election that involves such topics as assessments or selection of board members. This could be a boon to the League in terms of both visibility and fundraising, as our political expertise makes us a logical group to turn to.

Marjorie Murray from the Center for California Homeowner Association Law has been working very closely with the Ed Fund to help us understand what this new law may mean for us. There are very specific requirements for election inspectors. Before tackling this job local Leagues need to know: What problems prompted the law? What do we do about proxies? Absentee ballots? Cumulative voting? How can we avoid financial liability? How much should we charge?

The following are some ways the Ed Fund hopes to help prepare local Leagues for involvement in the HOA election process.

- Offer at least four training sessions (either live or on-line) for local Leagues during the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

- Develop an on-line resource center and "How To" manual for local Leagues with FAQs, templates, suggested fee schedules and an online survey form that local Leagues would submit after each election.
- Develop a set of criteria for possible "certification" of local Leagues and then maintain a list of "certified" League election inspectors.

We want the League to be the "go to" place for homeowner associations when they need information and/or help with their elections. However, we must make sure that we're fully prepared when people "go to" us. The certification would insure the homeowner association that the League they are dealing with has been trained and will conduct their election in full compliance with the new law.

## Hulda Hoover McLean Celebrates 100th Birthday

**Joanne Leavitt**, *LWV Santa Monica*



Hulda Hoover McLean, LWVC President 1941-43, celebrated her 100th birthday on August 19 at home in Santa Cruz. Hulda was born in London and her family returned to

the U.S. when she was a small child, crossing the Atlantic during WWI, then traveling by rail across the country and horse and cart from the rail station to their new home above Santa Cruz. Hulda served as LWVC president while the mother of three young boys, sharing trains from Pasadena to Sacramento with troop carriers. Following her tenure she continued to be involved in civic affairs. She was the first woman to be elected to the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors and the first woman to chair the county Grand Jury. She is a published writer, a

gifted painter and an experienced naturalist. Her collections of historical papers and sea shells of the local coast have been given to UC Santa Cruz. Most of the family ranch has been donated to expand Big Basin Park to the coast.

A reporter asked what she considered the most important development of the past 100 years. Her answer was, ". . . the growth of freedom, acceptance and encouragement of women to use their capabilities in fields of their choice. This has happened only in the Western countries. The 21st Century should bring about worldwide opportunities for education, income security and public acceptance that will make possible the utilization of women's largely untapped potential. Women comprise half the human race. Release of their abilities would accelerate the discovery of marvels in medicine, science, technology and other fields as yet undreamed of."

## Make Clean Money Happen With Proposition 89

### Donna Chipps

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Special interests—like the big oil, drug, and tobacco companies—have too much influence over politics. It's time for change! Proposition 89—the Clean Money and Fair Elections Act—creates a level and fair playing field for California elections and reduces the influence of lobbyists and special interests in our state.

The LWVC, California Clean Money, California Common Cause, Public Campaign, Greenlining, and many other organizations and individuals committed to changing California's election process have joined with the California Nurses Association, the initiative's original sponsor, to mount a vigorous campaign to educate and convince voters to vote for Proposition 89 in the November General Election. Grassroots efforts will be the very core of the campaign and are essential for successful passage of the initiative. League members are urged to go to [www.89now.org](http://www.89now.org) or [www.buckthesystemnow.org](http://www.buckthesystemnow.org) to volunteer to take regional training to become speakers in your local community, write letters to the editors of your local newspapers, host house parties for fundraising, make calls at phone banks and give donations directly to the campaign. We are expecting corporations and unions to fund an aggressive opposition campaign to protect the currently entrenched system that has been advantageous to their issues and concerns. We must mobilize volunteer and financial support from League members across the state.

The heart of this measure is a public financing program similar to those that have been successfully implemented in Maine and Arizona and that will be implemented in Connecticut in 2008. The public financing aspects of Proposition 89 are similar to AB 583, authored by Loni Hancock and supported by the League, but are more comprehen-

sive. In exchange for a voluntary agreement to an overall campaign spending limit, candidates for state legislative and constitutional offices who receive qualifying \$5 individual donations (750-25,000, depending on the office sought) receive \$250,000-\$15,000,000 to run a campaign through use of a state debit card. Up to five times the base amount is available for candidates if nonparticipating opponents or opposition independent expenditure campaigns spend more than the base limit. Additionally, unopposed primary and minor party candidates receive lesser amounts of campaign money.

California's last campaign financing measure, Proposition 34 in 2000, was a Legislature-sponsored measure that implemented contribution limits ranging from \$3,000 to

\$20,000 (currently adjusted to \$3,300-\$22,300) depending on the office. As a reaction to these high limits, Proposition 89 imposes limits of \$500-\$1,000 on contributions to non-clean money candidates by all "persons" which includes individuals, unions, and corporations, and significantly changes the amounts contributed by small contributor committees and political parties. Proposition 89 also places a \$10,000 limit on direct corporate donations to ballot measure campaigns. Of course, corporate executives, directors, employees and shareholders can contribute through PACs and recipient committees set up to support or oppose any ballot measures. Nonprofit organizations that do not receive business donations are exempt from this prohibition as are unions that



represent individual members with their contributions.

The public financing will be funded by an additional 0.2 percent tax on corporations and financial institutions that is expected to raise \$200 million per year. The LWVC looks carefully at any measure that dedicates a tax to a particular use. The state board recognized that without a designated funding stream, Proposition 89—which can increase candidate diversity, voter involvement and legislative productivity—might never be implemented by the Legislature. Indeed, that is exactly what happened to a voter-approved Clean Money program in Massachusetts.

The League's opinion is widely respected but individual member action will be the most powerful force of all. Get involved and let's pass Proposition 89.

## A Proposition on Redistricting?—Not This Time Around

**Chris Carson**, *Government Director*  
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One measure that Californians won't see on this November's ballot, despite the League's best efforts, is a proposal to turn the job of drawing legislative and Congressional district lines over to an independent citizens commission.

A year ago, the LWVC helped defeat Proposition 77, an initiative that would have ended legislative control of the redistricting process. Although we agreed with the aim of the measure, we objected to specific provisions that would have allowed for a mid-decade redistricting, used a panel that could not reflect California's diversity, and given too little protection to communities in the mapping of district lines.

After last November's election we were heartened by promises from the leaders of both houses of the Legislature and the Governor that they would offer a better redistricting reform proposal to the voters through the legislative process. The League joined with others interested in reform, including both opponents and supporters of Prop. 77, and formed a coalition that went to work immediately. We began by hammering out a statement of principles to guide our work. Our meetings were widely advertised and attended by a wide range of organizations and individuals as well as legislative staff from both houses. Our vehicle was SCA 3 by Senators Alan Lowenthal (D—Long Beach)

and Roy Ashburn (R—Bakersfield), a bill modeled after the independent redistricting commission in Arizona.

During 2006, SCA 3 underwent extensive examination through well-advertised coalition meetings, legislative committee hearings, and an unusual series of "discussion meetings" held by the Senate Elections Committee. It was amended to reflect a growing consensus of support for the provisions worked out at those meetings.

However, on the way to a Senate floor vote on SCA 3, the process took a detour. Legislative leaders called a conference committee to discuss both redistricting and the extension of legislative term limits. We expressed the League's support for both types of reform, but our opposition to tying the two into a single proposal. To our relief the conference committee's work was abandoned. We continued our intense lobbying for SCA 3, and a day later on August 16, the Senate passed it with the minimum two-thirds vote needed for a constitutional amendment!

Unfortunately, time was running out for proposals to go on the November ballot, and further dithering by the Legislature sealed the fate of SCA 3. Even our attempts to get it passed by the Legislature for placement on the next ballot in 2008 were futile. Legislative leaders who were holding last-minute negotiations

***Vote continued from page 1***

cate with their parents on these matters but do not think this initiative will foster that. Further, we are concerned about the safety of teenagers and feel that this initiative could jeopardize the lives of some. Proposition 85 is the first step in overturning Roe v. Wade and banning all abortions.

The LWVC supports Proposition 86, which increases the tax on a pack of cigarettes by \$2.60 to pay for children's health coverage, emergency care services and nursing education, tobacco-use prevention programs, and research and treatment of various tobacco-related illnesses. This measure will save lives and save billions in health care costs. Although

it means the earmarking of a tax, the LWVC board decided that the benefits of Proposition 86 far outweigh its impact on budgetary flexibility.

The LWVC opposes Proposition 88, which amends the state Constitution to impose a first-ever statewide property parcel tax and earmarks the proceeds for support of several K-12 education programs. Our support for public education funding that is adequate, flexible, and equitable is not satisfied by this measure. The regressive nature of this tax, its use at the state level, and placing a tax source and rate in the Constitution led to our opposition.

Finally, the League opposes Proposition 90, the regulation of private

property initiative. This measure will make it more difficult for government at the local and state levels to enact and enforce environmental, land use, consumer protection, housing laws and regulations to serve the citizens of California. It unreasonably expands the circumstances under which government would be obliged to compensate property owners, thereby greatly increasing costs to taxpayers. This measure is vaguely worded in parts and will likely result in extensive litigation.

The League has no position on Proposition 83, and is neutral on Proposition 87.

***Process continued from page 1***

islative Analyst's financial report and often obtain complex legal briefs detailing the possible legal effects. The legislation committee holds teleconferences to discuss the material.

Reports are put into the State Board Kit so that the board is aware of the background of the issues. Finally the legislation committee meets to decide its recommendation to the board. Sometimes it takes two or three teleconferences if the propositions are extremely technical or controversial. We consider what League positions might apply, the fiscal and other impacts and whether the measures match the priorities chosen by League members for the biennium.

If any League positions conflict, we weigh whether the proposed good outweighs the possible problems. We also consider our resources and how the League can be most effective.

The legislation committee makes its recommendations to the board, which then discusses the material. The debate may be short, or long and complex. When the decision has been made, it comes at the end of a long, careful, and thoughtful process that honors the League tradition, is solidly based on our positions, and results in a plan of action and those terrific publications local Leagues need to take action.

At this point, we gear up to pro-

duce action material. A project manager for the Action Guide is found and the writing is begun. The president, the advocate, legislation director and program directors decide what our campaign strategy will be as well as when and how we should work with other groups. Many decisions must be made within a very tight deadline. There are also difficult questions to answer such as: Do we want to sign ballot arguments? Be on a campaign steering committee? Thus, after a decision of support, neutral, or oppose has been reached, the program committee still has a great deal of work to do to get through the election.

***Redistricting continued from page 3***

and moving bills with amazing speed on all manner of other issues were unwilling to put their energy and influence behind redistricting reform, and the legislative session ended on August 31 without further action on SCA 3.

We appreciate the strong support of League members statewide who answered Calls to Action and pressured legislators to act on our bill. Further impetus for redistricting reform came from the Voices of Reform project of the Commonwealth Club, which has brought together policy leaders from all areas of California affairs to push for reform of

state governance.

Where do we go from here? The LWVC board and our coalition will be examining that question in the coming weeks. Is it time to stop pur-

suing this issue? If we continue to work for reform, should it be through the Legislature next year? Is an initiative something to consider? Your input is welcome.

**League Advertising Goes Big**

Bonnie and Earl Hamlin, Oakland League members, were fortunate enough to win their silent bid on a ClearChannel donation of two billboards at a charity event. So what does one do with two billboards when one is a SmartVoter coordinator? Why, use it to advertise SmartVoter, of course! Bonnie worked with the ClearChannel staff to design the billboard. One was in Oakland, near a shopping center at a heavily trafficked crossroads, and the other was on the San Francisco Peninsula off Highway 101. Our thanks to Bonnie and Earl for their generous donation. We don't know what their bid was, but we do know that the money was well spent! To see the billboard go to <http://smartvoter.org/voter/about.html#outreach>

**California VOTER**

Fall 2006

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**Editor:** Kate Quick

**Design & Layout:** Marni Forcht

**About the League:**

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The League has two separate and distinct roles. The League of Women Voters of California Education Fund, which conducts our voters service and citizen education activities, is a 501(c)(3) corporation, a nonprofit educational organization. The League of Women Voters of California, a membership organization, conducts action and advocacy and is a nonprofit 501(c)(4) corporation.

The League never supports or opposes any political party or candidate. We advocate only on issues that members have studied and on which they have come to consensus. In an era of proliferating and powerful special interests, the League's advocacy in the public interest is increasingly recognized as an essential voice of democracy.

With membership comes the opportunity to work with well-informed, grassroots activists on a broad range of public policy concerns. The League provides members with opportunities to learn valuable, transferable skills, including how to organize and run productive meetings, write more effectively, speak in public, organize and run effective campaigns, conduct research studies, and coordinate general civic leadership training.

The League invites your comments, letters, articles, and book reviews. They may be sent, faxed or e-mailed to the LWVC.

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## LWVUS 2006 Convention—Smart Voter Receives an Award

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The California delegation, the largest at the LWVUS convention this spring, was a big presence in ways other than its numerical strength. Our members led several caucuses, staffed a popular table in the wares mart selling both League logo items and our two best intellectual properties: SmartVoter and League Easy Web (LEW). California local League members were seen participating actively in every offering of the Convention. Traffic at the LEW/SmartVoter table in the wares market was non-stop and the Smart Voter caucus on the final morning of convention was standing room only!



LWVC President Jackie Jacobberger, Don Jacobberger, and Kate Quick enjoy a good laugh listening to banquet speaker Garrison Keillor of "Prairie Home Companion" fame.

Smart Voter, our internationally recognized voter information Web site received the LWVUS 2006 Voter Education Award. The Voter Education award recognizes a project that over the 2004-06 biennium demonstrated outstanding success in voter education as well as positive impacts on League fundraising, organizational growth, community outreach and overall visibility. Smart Voter has proven to be a truly exceptional project. It received more than five million page views in the 2004 general election, raised almost \$200,000 from 2004 to 2006, involved local Leagues in gathering candidate information, secured partnerships with media outlets and county registrars of voters, presented streaming video of candidate interviews and presented election material in foreign languages.

The honor of this award heightened an already growing interest in Smart Voter and League Easy Web (LEW) among Leagues across the United States. We expect many more state and local Leagues to get "on board" in the coming months and hope that Smart Voter will become a player at the national level as

well. It didn't take this award for us to know that SmartVoter should be seen as a powerful way for League to get election information to the public,



LWVC Education Fund Chair Robbie Davis was honored to accept the award on behalf of the Smart Voter team

but it is wonderful to see it being recognized as such by the LWVUS.

A personal note from Kate Quick: On my last night in Minneapolis I was invited to tour the City and have dinner with a group of volunteer workers from Minnesota. They were mightily impressed with the Californians and how "together" our state appeared to be. "You people don't just party, you work!" was the comment I heard the most. "SmartVoter" is a good name for your voter education Web site—it is just about the smartest way to inform voters that I have ever seen," was another frequent comment.

## Something New on the Program Planning Scene

**Kate Quick**  
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Every two years local Leagues, in preparation for letting the LWVC know what direction to take for program planning and emphasis, review state program. In years past, each local League has done this individually, with no communication between Leagues that may want to share ideas and resources for their high priority program recommendations. Many Leagues have trouble getting members excited about program review and planning, even though it is one of our main grassroots efforts—a way to express our concerns to the LWVC.

This year, we are going to try something new. Right after the November election, the LWVC will host a list-serve and/or a blog site for the development of program planning ideas. As usual, local Leagues will receive their program planning materials, but they can share their ideas as part of the process of developing their responses.

The LWVC board observed with

interest the exciting conversations that took place when the LWVUS did the same thing last year. Out of those conversations, local Leagues began to coalesce around issues of interest and developed great written materials, shared articles, and created interesting caucuses at the LWVUS convention.

The purpose of this effort is to give local Leagues a place to enrich their thoughts about state program by hearing what others have to say on their topics of interest. We feel that this will make program planning more interesting, dynamic and result-oriented than it has been in the past.

Early in 2007, the purpose of the list will be changed to pre-convention planning. Caucus planning, information about logistics, room-sharing and ride-sharing opportunities, and where to dine and sightsee in the Bakersfield area will be among the topics we will be sharing in pre-convention planning.

## Student Voting Project

**Jackie Jacobberger**, *President*  
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In April, the California Secretary of State convened a meeting to discuss strategies to encourage participation of students and young people in civic and governmental affairs, specifically elections. There were thirty participants, including county election officials, county superintendents of schools, and representatives of organizations interested in civic education. I represented the LWVC.

The goal is a 10-year program that will start slowly, but eventually cover all grades, K-12, in California. For this school year, the Secretary of State and the Superintendent of Public Instruction have developed and distributed materials for September and October. The program will kick off with activities for Constitution Day on September 19 and continue with a Student Mock Election on October 24 for all students in grades 7 through 12. Materials are being provided free of charge and include the *Easy Voter Guide*, our League publication.

I co-signed a letter with the Secretary of State and the Superintendent of Public Instruction which was sent recently to all local League presidents. Our Leagues were asked to support these activities by encouraging their local schools to participate. If you have contacts in your local school districts, please let your League president know and offer to help with this effort.

By doing what we can to increase student knowledge of democratic processes and principles, we will help our young people appreciate what it means to become active and engaged citizens.



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#### (\$750-\$999)

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Jean Schuyler  
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Linda Burden

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Lawrence Wallin

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### Suffragist

#### (\$100-\$249)

Beverly and Barnet Adelman  
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Joel Allison  
Elisabeth O. Anderson

Gloria Anderson

Roberta T. Anderson

Roxana Anson

Fred Askham

Eva Auchincloss

Marguerite J. Bader

Ann Baker

Hoang Banh

Peter Bank

Dr. Joseph Barbaccia

Kathryn Barnhart

Sharon Barovsky

Mayrene Bates

Liz Bathgate

Ursula Batz

Martha Beattie

Muriel Benedict

Beth Bhatnagar

Herman Birch

Judy Bloom

Debra Blum

Stephen Booth

Roberta Borgonovo

Juelle Ann Boyer

David A. Brew

Thea Brodtkin

Barbara K. Bryan

Wendy Buchen

Ida Bucher

Vickie Butcher

Florence Butter

Helen Cahill

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