



Phone: 559-226-VOTE

Web site: LWVFresno.org

The Fresno VOTER



Tuesday, August 14
Regular Board Meeting
5 p.m.—League Office
(tentative date)

Monday, August 27
Women’s Equality Day
See celebration flyer

\*Upcoming Lunch & Learns\*

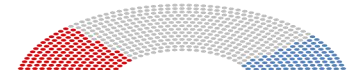
- Transportation
Office of Independent Review

Members and guests are invited to all League meetings and events



LWVUS CONVENTION REPORT: TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY

Prior to the 2016 biennial convention, the LWVUS undertook a process of self-reflection and evaluation with the intent of strengthening the League as it moves toward 2020, into its second century of activism. A 41-page document, “Assessment and Transformation Roadmap,” was produced in January, 2018, with input from national, state, and local League leaders as well as from external stake-holders, with the general finding that, “Although it remains a trusted household name, many stakeholders cannot describe clearly the purpose of the organization and are unclear about its relevance. The membership is much older and whiter than the population at large, and League membership has steadily declined by almost a third over the past few decades. Although the League has members in every state and in 752 affiliates, its impact is diffused.”



Following the publication of the “Transformation Roadmap,” the LWVUS Board adopted the following mission, vision, and value statements:

- Mission: Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.
Vision: We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence to participate.
Value: We believe in the power of women to create a more perfect democracy.

Work has already begun to move the League forward in four areas. First, advancing a clear strategic focus. By reaffirming The Campaign for Making Democracy Work, the League at all levels is committing to the work of voter protection and mobilization, election reform, money in politics, constitutional amendment, and redistricting. Second, building a more inclusive culture. The League has identified its lack of racial, economic, age, and social diversity as an impediment to achieving its mission and as a barrier to greater impact and growth. Third, building a healthier League network. LWVUS is working toward a “join at all levels” online experience, with the creation of an accessible nationwide data base. Fourth, increasing capacity at all levels. To tell our story more effectively takes technology, communications, training, and funding. WE know how effective the League is, but do others?

At LWV Fresno, we have begun to look at the League’s Transformation Journey and consider how we, too, will move toward a refreshed and reinvigorated League in 2020. In October, we will convene a Merced-to-Tulare meeting of League members, for further discussion and implementation of the Transformation Journey .

## President's Message



Last month Jacquie Canfield, Dolores O'Neal and I attended the LWVUS 53<sup>rd</sup> National Convention in Chicago. The League convened in the magnificent Grand Ballroom at the Chicago Hilton on June 28, and for 3 days, more than 860 delegates, representing 49 states and the District of Columbia, determined the program and direction for the League for the coming two years.

Tempering all decisions made by the Convention was the Transformation Journey, a self-study and plan of action initiated by the League, nationwide, in January, 2016. The League recognizes the need to clarify its focus and to demonstrate its relevance and impact in an increasingly crowded field of organizations claiming to empower voters and defend democracy. The League also suffers from a lack of diversity- racially, socially, economically. This prevents us from effectively advocating for some key issues in our communities.

Further, the League structure can be cumbersome; an important goal of the Transformation Journey is to make it easier to join the League locally, statewide, and nationally in one step. And finally, the demands of a more effective League require improved technology, communications, and funding. The full text of the 41-page "Assessment and Transformation Roadmap" is available on the LWVUS website, under "League Management."

The Convention approved the National Program, "The Campaign for Making Democracy Work," and was hesitant to amend it, since the work of the Transformation Journey will be plenty to keep the League, nationwide, busy for the next two years. Several resolutions were adopted, however, as the resolution process seemed to be the best way for local Leagues to get convention-wide endorsement of their members' preferred projects (*see page 1*).

The LWVUS budget for the biennium was approved; new officers, directors, and nominating committee were elected. And finally, Virginia Kase was introduced as the new executive director for the League.

- *Marianne*

## MEMBER NEWS

*Please edit your roster*



### New Members

**Jan Minami**

**8790 South Buttonwillow Avenue**

**Reedley, CA 93654**

**[jadminami@gmail.com](mailto:jadminami@gmail.com)**

**Beth Teviotdale**

**1072 Riordan**

**Selma, CA 93662**

**891-1497**

**[teviotdale@sbcglobal.net](mailto:teviotdale@sbcglobal.net)**

### New Address

**Judi Steele**

**1672 Alluvial, #150**

**Clovis, CA 93611**

**A donation to League makes a great birthday or holiday gift or as a memorial. Please make checks out to**

**LWVF**

**1345 Bulldog Lane**

**Fresno, CA 93710**

**The League is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization so your dues payments and donations are tax deductible and gratefully accepted.**



**The Voter is a monthly publication of the League of Women Voters of Fresno.**

**Mailing Address: 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno, CA 93710**

**Volume 77. No. 8 Editor: Francine M. Farber**

# Join a Priority Committee!

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



“Video is key” is the mantra that has encouraged the work of Terri Figgs and Bill Jordan who have produced videotaped versions of several of the League’s recent meetings. Look for them to be posted soon to our League website.

On August 14, we will create a 30-sec taped PSA highlighting the work of the League. This short piece will air on CMAC channels and be available to us for posting on our website and Facebook page.

Later in the month, we will begin a semester-long collaboration with students in CSUF Mass Communications and Journalism. The outcome will be two promotional videos, one 5-7 minutes, the other, 1-3 minutes.

Many thanks to Jacquie Canfield, with the assistance of Cathy Caples, for keeping our website current.

We have begun to plan for the League’s 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2020, and your input is welcome.

**Chair: Marianne Kast: [fourkasts@gmail.com](mailto:fourkasts@gmail.com)**

**Next meeting: to be scheduled**

## EDUCATION



The committee will be reviewing its entire trove of research to prepare for launching a final report. The report’s format and selection of audiences will be decided.

**Chair: Kay Bertken: [kayb@csufresno.edu](mailto:kayb@csufresno.edu)**

**Next meeting: Tuesday, August 7, 9:30 a.m.**

**Kay’s home: 752 East Buckingham, Fresno**

## HOUSING *Meeting as we go to press.*

**Chair: Nyla Zender: [nylajz@comcast.net](mailto:nylajz@comcast.net)**

**Next meeting: to be scheduled**



# At the LWVUS 53rd National Convention

Current **LWVUS positions** in the areas of Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources and Social Policy were retained

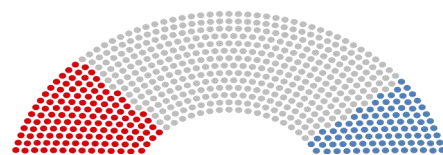
### The following program was adopted:



- ◆ Campaign for Making Democracy Work (expanding voter access, redistricting, money in politics, fighting voter suppression)
- ◆ The following non-recommended items were added to the Program
- ◆ Advocacy for the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact
- ◆ Focus on supporting a popular vote for President and abolishing the Electoral College
- ◆ Take the required steps to see the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) through whatever judicial or other challenges may occur until we see the Amendment added to the U. S. Constitution in clear, bold, black and white

### The following **resolutions** were adopted:

- ◆ Make gun control, safety and ownership limitations a lobbying priority
- ◆ Support the Equal Rights Amendment and remove time limits for ratification
- ◆ Reaffirm that the Electoral College should be abolished
- ◆ Support efforts to price carbon emission whether cap and trade, carbon tax/fee or another viable pricing mechanism. All proposed methods will be evaluated based on their effectiveness to abate emissions and ability to be successfully implemented
- ◆ Support energy policies that align with current climate science in light of the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees C. informed by the successful spirit of global cooperation in the UN COP 21 Paris agreement.



## Education

by Kay Bertken



While the Fresno Unified Board of Education is on summer break, I will take advantage of the chance to report on some events that are troubling for education on the national level. Besides a likely dead-on-arrival proposal by the Trump administration to eliminate the Department of Education by consolidating it with the Department of Labor, a Federal District court in Michigan has ruled that “access to literacy” also referred to in the case as a “minimally adequate education” is not a fundamental right.

This decision was the result of a class action suit on behalf of students in the failing schools of Detroit. Given that education enables political voice and that broad participation should be a goal of a democra-

cy, the ruling does not bode well for that goal.

Another challenge to broad participation in our democracy was raised in its current analysis of civics education by the Brookings Institute. Brookings looked at scores from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The NAEP was first administered on a trial basis in 1969, testing citizenship as well as science, math and reading.

In recent years, the civics assessment has been sporadic as a national focus on math and reading has taken time and attention away from social studies education. Forty-four percent of districts have reported spending less time on non-tested subjects in the elementary grades since the initiation of No Child Left Behind policies in the Bush administration. Recognizing the importance of civics education to full participation in our democracy, declines in civics education could be significant.



Civics scores in available year's tests showed modest gains, paralleling slight gains in reading scores, but less than the rise in math scores. The real news though was in the persistent achievement gaps revealed in all the tests. The black-white, Hispanic-white, and gaps by income are wide on 8<sup>th</sup> grade tests in reading and math; but the differences are as wide or even wider in 8<sup>th</sup> grade civics education.

In addition to looking at the test findings, Brookings investigated the quality of civics education across the states. It found that it was common in most states to follow recommended practices in providing discussion and knowledge building in their social studies classes but much less common in providing any community engagement experiences. 70% of students reported never writing a letter to give an opinion or help solve a problem; 56% reported never taking part in a role play, mock trial or drama; and 53%

*(continued on page 6)*

## Voter Services by Liz Shields, VP

Thanks to the many League members and friends who provided over 583 hours of work for the Elections Department by helping unfold ballots, staffing the phone bank and helping with the CANVASS. Your work helps the League in fund raising, in community service and in many other ways.



Now we turn our attention to the November General Election. Sue Goldman, our Director of Voter Services, and I will be setting up a committee to help with voter registration, to arrange candidate forums, to speak to groups about the ballot propositions (currently 12 statewide propositions have qualified for the November ballot as well as local measures), and to assist the Elections Department with our usual work there. Please give me a call (298-5183) or send email (elizs@yahoo.com) if you would like to help with this committee; otherwise you may be getting a call from me.

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## Behavioral Health

by Carolyn Evans



Fresno County Behavioral Health Board began its July meeting with a salute to Crestwood Behavioral Health on its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of service. Crestwood provides behavioral health services throughout the state, with two programs in Fresno County. The Kingsburg Healing Center is the only Mental Health Recovery Center in Fresno County; it serves clients who are conserved for long-term treatment. The Fresno Bridge is a transitional program that houses and assists individuals making the transition from hospitalization to life in the community.

Department of Behavioral Health Director Utecht reported that a Request For Proposals has been released for an expansion of the Crisis Intervention Team. Currently there is a pilot program matching police officers and mental health clinicians who together respond to 911 behavioral health-related calls. The department is seeking a contracted provider to double the capacity by matching eight clinicians with eight police officers, to better serve the metropolitan area, including Clovis. There already is a team serving the rural communities of Fresno County.

The Corporation for Supportive Housing assessed current Department supportive housing programs and made recommendations based on its findings. Concerns include: (1) missed opportunities for housing for department clients due to lack of communication between Clinical Team Case Managers and the Housing Team; (2) lack of support and training for on-site staff, and (3) sustainability of supportive housing. The department is moving forward with recommendations to improve current supportive housing for its clients.

The Mental Health Services Act Annual Update Process is beginning with stakeholder meetings being held by various programs and with public meetings yet to be scheduled. It was suggested that one stakeholder meeting be held prior to the August board meeting. In addition, community input is being solicited on-line through survey monkey and hard copy survey forms. League members are encouraged to participate by sharing their concerns about behavioral health services in our community.

## Water News

by Diane Merrill



A new California Department of Water Resources report describes the benefits and challenges of using flood water to recharge groundwater aquifers. It highlighted several award-winning recharge projects in the Kings Groundwater Basin underlying the eastern and central valley areas of Fresno County, and parts of Tulare and Kings Counties. Here is a description from the report with some added language for clarification.

### Offsetting groundwater overdraft

The McMullin On-Farm Flood Capture and Recharge Project in the Kings Basin was initiated under a Natural Resources Conservation Services grant investigating flooding agricultural lands to mitigate regional flood risks and offsetting groundwater overdraft. The 1,000-acre pilot project studied the infiltration rate of floodwater diverted from the Kings River, potential recharge of groundwater and farm scale logistics.

Based upon a 30-year historical record of Kings Basin surplus flood flows, the project estimated 30,000 acres operated for on-farm flood recharge would have had the capacity to capture 80 percent of available flood flows and potentially offset overdraft rates in the Kings Basin. The project was expanded to a regional scale under a DWR Flood Corridor Grant being implemented by the Kings River Conservation District, and with local matching funds from Terranova Ranch. This Phase 1 project included approximately 5,000 acres and was the first phase of a three-phase project to eventually enroll approximately 20,000 acres to divert 500 cubic feet per second of flood flows from the Kings River when available.

### Raisin City Water wins environmental award

Most recently, a U.S. Department of Agriculture's Regional Conservation Partnership Program award was awarded to Raisin City Water District for the next phase, enrolling approximately 5,000 more acres and implementing the needed infrastructure. Terranova Ranch is a 2017 Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award winner for the McMullin On-Farm Flood Capture and Recharge Project under the Ecosystem and Land Use Stewardship category.



I have been on the lookout for trends in health care delivery, especially locally, that presage integration and extension of services. Locally, modest progress is evidenced by VA Health Systems clinics in Merced, Oakhurst, and Tulare; Kaiser clinics in Oakhurst and Selma; and school-based clinics in Madera and Fresno.

### Clinics and hospitals partner

But a potentially wider and more innovative development has been in the offing for years: the partnering of our community health clinics—Federally Qualified Health Centers—with specialist-laden metropolitan hospitals. In this scenario, hospitals expand their outpatient base of potential hospital clients without having to do the difficult groundwork of developing their own outpatient care units. The community health clinics envision faster and more efficient access to specialty care.

In 1991 Social Security Omnibus legislation created specific criteria for “safety net” community clinics to meet the need for primary care and basic health needs, on sliding scale fees, for people earning less than twice the Federal poverty level. These became known as Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC’s). They were required to have a location that was medically underserved, a staff that maximized the use of medical assistants and mid-level practitioners, and a focus on primary care and public health. Patients would constitute a majority of the voting members of the governing boards. Government remuneration was based on a simplified fee-for service payment system and on systematic quality assessment. Because the reimbursement formula

provided for ample income, FQHC’s expanded dramatically. Currently, the U.S. has 1300 FQHC’s operating 9000

clinics serving 24 million patients. Over 40% of their patients are uninsured.

### Changes underway

I was reminded of this at my recent rheumatology clinic by the sound of elevator music filling the examining room. I was standing in Community Regional Medical Center’s Ambulatory Care Center where I have worked for the last seven years and have never heard music played while interviewing a patient.

Most of my very proficient clerical, nursing, and administrative staff were gone, taking advantage of their tenure by moving to other roles in the Community Hospital system. The Community logo I spent hours copying, sizing, and framing on the banner of my patient questionnaires was extinguished with blank labels. They would soon be replaced with the logo of my new contractor, Family Health Care Network, an FQHC headquartered in Visalia.

### Financial issues dominate

What was not changing were the awkward referral processes, the 20<sup>th</sup> century modes of communication between clinicians, and the mission statements of the hospital and its allied FQHC. All these clues led me to suspect that this joint venture between CRMC and Family Healthcare network, is foremost a marriage of convenience in response to financial issues. It could evolve into a fully integrated system with common electronic records, rapid communication between clinicians, standardized referral patterns, and best practice standards. But for the moment, it is tasked with solving CRMC’s large deficit spending on MediCal outpatient care.

According to local health care experts, other Valley hospitals are actively seeking affiliations with FQHC’s for similar financial reasons. The situation has been described as a “free-for-all,” most likely in response to the crumbling structure of Obamacare and the lack of federal leadership in providing definite alternative directions.

Obamacare did provide substantial money to the states for healthcare innovation, and this money should be used to facilitate the genuine marriages—ones with high levels of connectedness and common purpose—between hospitals and ambulatory care systems.

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## EDUCATION

*(continued from page 4)*

never went on a field trip or had an outside class speaker in their civics education experience.

A final analysis involved the qualities of social studies teachers. Brookings found that secondary social studies faculty disproportionately shoulder more responsibilities for extracurricular activities (particularly coaching), are more likely to teach classes outside their social studies training area, and have more students than teachers in other subject areas. They are otherwise similar to other teachers --in age, experience, course loads and satisfaction; but in disadvantaged schools, social studies teachers (like other teachers) have fewer years of experience and are more likely to have entered teaching with alternative certification.

The Michigan court case and the Brookings paper provide uncomfortable evidence that our schools may not fulfill their promise of “levelling the playing field” —particularly in the realm of broadening active citizenship.

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*Men and Women age 16 and above Making Democracy Work*

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**DIVERSITY POLICY:** There shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the LWVF on the basis of race, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or socio-economic level.

**What do you get when you join the League?** All for one fee, you become a member of the Fresno, California and National Leagues and receive their newsletters. You may participate in League studies of issues; receive leadership training; hone your public speaking skills; become knowledgeable about local and state issues; learn more about government, natural resources and social policies as your time and interests dictate. You will also meet some interesting and friendly women and men who represent diverse backgrounds but find common ground in keeping abreast of current issues.

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