



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS FRESNO

Volume 77 No. 2

February 2018

Phone: 559-226-VOTE

Web site:  
<http://fresno.ca.lwvnet.org>

# The *Fresno* **VOTER**



**Program Planning Meeting**  
Saturday, February 24  
9 a.m. Stone Soup

**Regular Board Meeting**  
Monday, February 26  
5 p.m.—League Office  
Note change of date

**Regular Board Meeting**  
Monday, March 19  
5 p.m.—League Office

**Regional Meeting**  
Saturday, March 24  
10 a.m.—1 p.m. Visalia  
More information to follow

Members and guests are always  
invited to all League meetings  
and events



## Program Planning

**Saturday, February 24, 9 a.m.**  
**Stone Soup**

**Help us focus on local and national  
priorities for the coming year**



**Enjoy our new format  
and shorter session**

***Delicious breakfast  
included!***



**Get ready! See pages 6 and 7 for planning information**

## President's Message



**W**hat is LWVF Program Planning?

I'm pretty new to the LWV process of program planning. I have known the League's tag-line, that we are a "grass-roots" organization, but honestly, how do you tease out and corral the issues of importance to League members in 700 communities across the United States, then prioritize them into a manageable bundle? What about getting just the Fresno League members to agree on direction? It seems an impossible task to give all members a say and also reach consensus so that you can advocate with some kind of unity.

It is the Program Planning process, undertaken annually, that shapes the League's bundle of priorities and guides its work for the near future.

This month, we will choose priorities for our local LWV Fresno activities. During 2017, LWV Fresno committees delved into Education (Charter Schools), Housing (Affordable Housing), and Civic Engagement. These topics were investigated by meeting with experts, comparing findings, reporting in The Voter and in local media, and creating learning opportunities for League members and the greater Fresno community.

These processes are laborious, but in the end, the self-education process is why League members are respected voices in our community. Simply, we know what we are talking about. And remember, this work is in addition to our ongoing portfolios of involvement in local education, water, transportation, behavioral health, land use, and voter services issues.

This year, too, the LWVUS is asking us to endorse "The Campaign for Making Democracy Work," the core mission of the League, nationwide.

If all this sounds like a lot of stuff to do, it is! And, that is why we need all kinds of help. Are you interested in being part of this League work? Do you belong to another organization that would be a good partner for our League in any of what we do? Contact me by email or phone, and let's get going.

- *Marianne*

**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 2 Editor: Francine Farber

## Member News

Please edit your roster



### WILDA MOLLER

We regret to note that Wilda Moller, a LWVF member since 2000, passed away on New Year's Day at the age of 86.

Wilda was an accountant with many interests, including the Unitarian Universalist Church and the Fresno Philharmonic Orchestra. She was predeceased by her husband, Dick Moller.

A memorial service was held at San Joaquin Gardens on January 27.

**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 © (3) non-profit organization so your dues payments and donations are tax deductible and gratefully accepted.**



**Thank You!**

# Join a Priority Committee!

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

We met with Ken Riddick, newly appointed publisher of the Fresno Bee, trying to flesh out a series of events we hope to sponsor to encourage local discussion of issues. We are now seeking to meet with representatives of local professional groups before determining the subjects of our events. We are seeking Fresno State students or others who might volunteer with the League to assist our media outreach and research needs. We are continuing our work on the new League website, looking for launch in the near future.

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



## EDUCATION

We are evaluating the data we have collected during our visits to charter schools. We are also investigating the processes by which Fresno Unified and the Fresno County Office of Education determine whether to offer and renew charter applications. We have met with the new area representative of the California Charter Schools Association,



Michelle Murphy, and learned about its own accountability model-- a model that was the basis for their recommendation to deny renewing Kepler's charter. The Kepler renewal will be considered by FUSD at a February Board meeting.

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

*See page 8 for more education news*

## HOUSING

Affordable housing is defined as costing no more than 30% of the annual income of the occupants. In Fresno, 45% of all households fall in that group. Concentrated areas of poverty exist in Pinedale, apartments near CSUF, Southwest Fresno and in and around downtown.



The city can assist in affordable housing without adding to concentrated areas of poverty by strengthening partnerships with affordable housing developers, expediting processing, developing incentives to actively seek resources for disadvantaged communities, and exploring opportunities in areas throughout the city.

**Co-Chairs: Nyla Zender: [Nylajz@comast.net](mailto:Nylajz@comast.net)**

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

**If you have expressed interest in volunteering for the League and haven't been contacted yet, please send an email to [tfiggs@comcast.net](mailto:tfiggs@comcast.net) and let her know how you'd like to help.**



## CCLS

**Central California Legal Services**

**PATIENCE MILROD**

**Executive Director**

2115 KERN STREET, SUITE 1, FRESNO, CALIFORNIA, 93721

O: 559.570.1214 \* C: 559.970.6020

[PMILROD@CENTRALCALLEGAL.ORG](mailto:PMILROD@CENTRALCALLEGAL.ORG)

# *Behavioral Health*

by Carolyn Evans  
Chair, Behavioral Health Board



**Next BHB Board Meeting \* February 21**

**2:30 p.m. \* 1925 East Dakota \* Fresno**

The Behavioral Health Board began its new year with the sharing of stories by board members about their experiences related to Substance Use Disorders (SUD). There had been some concern from community members about the board's commitment to SUD programs. The board hopes to have alleviated that fear by sharing personal stories that showed interest, experience and expertise in SUD.

During her presentation Department of Behavioral Health Director Dawan Utecht reported that Fresno County's plan for Drug MediCal Redesign had been approved by both the state and the federal governments. The implementation of that plan, which will

provide many more services for those with SUDs, will begin soon with timelines and Requests For Proposals from service providers.

The Program Review, with Outcome results, was of the Exodus Crisis Stabilization Center, which serves both children and adults who are experiencing mental health crises, are a risk to themselves or others, and/or are at risk of becoming gravely disabled. Exodus is open 24/7 to walk-in clients and to those on welfare, as well as those on Institution Code 5150 involuntary holds. Clients usually stay less than 24 hours, are stabilized, and then either released or sent to an inpatient treatment facility.

The most encouraging outcome is the reduction in the number of individuals with multiple admissions. The reasons for this dramatic reduction are unclear, but the Department will be studying data to determine reasons and to assure that this trend continues. Board members had done a site visit at Exodus the previous week, and were impressed with the staff members' commitment to a "whatever it takes" approach to serve the needs of their clients.

The facilities are dated and not ideal for providing the best service, but staff is adapting, and making efforts to make the space more welcoming and more comfortable for clients and for families who are visiting.



**A New York Times on-line study of subscribers who answered the question "What If All Americans Voted?" yielded the following results:**

- ◆ **17% said the country would be the same**
- ◆ **75% said it would be better**
- ◆ **8% said it would be worse.**



**Make sure you  
are registered to  
vote June 5  
STATEWIDE  
PRIMARY  
ELECTION**

**See pages 6 and 7 to prepare  
for important  
Program Planning meeting.  
WE NEED YOU TO BE THERE!**



# *Education*

by Kay Bertken



The big news this month is that one day before the anticipated receipt of an independent Fact Finding Report, Fresno Unified and the Fresno Teachers Association have avoided a strike by agreeing on terms for a new three-year contract. Though it still needs Board ratification, the tentative agreement includes some compromises on the part of the district and the FTA including an increase in the District's salary offer from 3.5% to 6.5%--8.5% by 2018-2019 (an additional 2% raise in that final year is contingent on increases in the district's allocations from the state. The FTA was asking for 10%.

The agreement promises a reduction in class sizes to 29 for grades 4-6 and in core classes in grades 7—12, again contingent on funding. It also includes a provision for more formal cooperation with teachers on discipline policies. Most other contract provisions, including the increase in the district's contribution to health insurance payments, remain what they were in earlier district offers.

Governor Brown's new budget proposals include increases in school district allocations, advancing the schedule for full implementation of the state's local control funding goals. In addition, the governor has proposed specific increases in special education funding and accountability provisions based on the poor performance of the state's disabled students under California's new accountability system. Under that system, districts are required to get technical assistance from their county Office of Education when any designated subgroup gets multiple failing grades.

Two-thirds of the 228 districts in the state that were identified as needing that technical assistance were identified on the basis of the poor performance of their special education students.

In Fresno Unified, disabled students are in the lowest evaluative category for very high suspension rates, very low graduation rates, and English Language Arts test scores. They were in the next to the lowest category in math. As part of its bargaining agreement with FTA the district has agreed to fund additional special education staff, fund a specific recruitment and retention effort, plus establish a labor-management committee to make recommendations for the improvement of special education. It has designated two million dollars to fund those recommendations.

The State's accountability model requires assistance when multiple low measures are associated with any designated subgroup; but if an ethnic subgroup receives either the lowest (red) or the next lowest (orange) designation in math or language arts testing, the district must address that failing and its planned amelioration in its Local Control funding plan. Fresno Unified's African American students tested poorly in both language arts and math. Several months ago, the district hired a coordinator for its African American Academic Acceleration Plan to develop and provide services that would specifically target the needs of those students. The new contract with FTA provides for resource counseling assistants at eight elementary schools and teachers at middle and high schools who will work with that coordinator in providing guidance and support.

## **NEXT FUSD BOARD MEETINGS**

**February 7, February 21**

**STREAMING ON YOUR COMPUTER**



**POPPY LANE**

**PUBLISHING**

**Elizabeth Peterson**

**(559) 299-4639**

**E-mail: Bettel234@aol.com**

**Fax: (559) 299-4639**

**www.poppylane.com**

**Fresno, CA 93755**

Congratulations  
League of Women Voters  
on its contributions  
to our  
community



**HEBERGER & COMPANY**  
AN ACCOUNTANCY CORPORATION

**JD Heberger, CPA, CVA**

5090 N. Fruit Ave., Ste. 102

Fresno, CA 93711

(559) 227-9772

[www.hebergercpa.com](http://www.hebergercpa.com)

# PREPARING FOR PROGRAM PLANNING ON FEBRUARY 24

## LOCAL PRIORITIES

Last year at Program Planning we presented our members with six issues and asked them to select their top three. Our members selected Civic Engagement, Education and Housing. Here are the descriptors that informed their selection and what the committees have accomplished to date.

### CIVIC ENGAGEMENT



*Advocate for greater civic engagement among Fresno's diverse populations, including "get out the vote" efforts."*

This committee developed a series of attractive cards to use as handouts for interested individuals and groups. The committee is about to launch our newly re-designed web site and is in the process of developing a series of public meetings to engage more diverse populations and encourage new members. The Fresno Bee has expressed interest in partnering in this new venture.

**Do you have a priority you think we should consider in addition to Education, Housing and Civic Engagement? If so, please call or write Marianne Kast at fourkasts@gmail.com, 270-7937. Only those suggestions recommended to Marianne by February 15 can be considered at the Program Planning meeting on February 24.**

### EDUCATION *Advocate for equality of educational opportunity for all students*



The committee decided to focus on charter schools because the new federal secretary of education has indicated her interest in supporting charters and vouchers. Committee members felt they needed to be better informed and gathered information about the charters in Fresno, including visiting them to speak with teachers and administrators, observing in classrooms, and reviewing data on demographics and test scores. They are in process of compiling a report on their findings which may be shared with members, education professionals and the public.

### HOUSING

*Advocate for quality affordable housing*

Committee members have met with a series of authoritative speakers in both the public and private spheres to learn about the needs, problems and possible solutions in this area.

Their plans include the possibility of panel discussions and publishing a report on their findings.



**OF COURSE, BOARD MEMBERS WILL CONTINUE TO WORK ON THEIR REGULAR PORTFOLIOS INCLUDING NATURAL RESOURCES, VOTER SERVICES, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, EDUCATION, ENERGY, LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION.**



**9 a.m., SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24**

**Breakfast included**



# PREPARING FOR PROGRAM PLANNING ON FEBRUARY 24

## NATIONAL PRIORITIES

**The LWVUS Board recommends that Program 2018-2020 continue The Campaign for Making Democracy Work® with Leagues throughout the country working on:**

- **Voting Rights**
- **Improving Elections**
- **Campaign Finance/Money in Politics**
- **Redistricting.**

### **Accomplishments of the 2016-2018 Campaign**

Since Convention 2016, LWVUS sent 21 action emails to our network of grassroots activists on voter suppression tactics, including the creation of the “Election Integrity Commission” as well as fighting budget cuts to key federal election-related programs. These efforts resulted in 75,300 letters to Congress, more than 25,340 petition signatures and close to 10,000 contacts with the Executive Branch. Through our outreach we were able to engage 6,320 new activists.

### **Voting Rights**

LWVUS continues its core work to expand voting rights by advocating for expanded early voting and online voter registration, ensuring existing pro-voter laws are being followed and challenging all efforts that limit the ability of voters to exercise this basic right. We are actively opposing voter photo ID laws, advocating against barriers to the voter registration process, working to prevent last-minute Election Day obstacles and helping millions of voters get the information and any required documentation they need to vote.

As in previous Congresses, LWV is lobbying both the House and Senate for restoration of the Voting Rights Act by supporting passage of the Voting Rights Advancement Act,.

### **Improving Elections**

At all levels, the League is working to modernize our voting systems and make it easier for all eligible voters to become active participants in our electoral process. In our efforts to improve the voting experience, the League works to establish permanent and portable statewide voter registration, expand early voting, improve polling place management, expand online voter registration and implement electronic streamlining.

We continue to lobby against Congressional attempts to terminate the Election Assistance Commission which works to ensure the efficacy, reliability, and trustworthiness of our nation’s election systems by conducting research, collecting

data, and sharing information among elected officials, the public, and interested organizations. The EAC is also responsible for improving the election experience for disabled voters.

In the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress, the League is supporting the Automatic Voter Registration Act of 2017. Under this legislation, when eligible voters interact with a government agency, they will automatically be signed up to vote unless they decline. This bill also provides online voter registration for all eligible voters.

### **Campaign Finance/ Money in Politics**

In addition to supporting positive campaign finance reform proposals, Leagues are fighting attempts to cut back on existing campaign finance laws. In 2017, the LWVUS lobbied against Congressional attempts to eliminate public financing for presidential campaigns and supported the Honest Ads Act.

LWVUS also supports the We the People Democracy Reform Act of 2017. Provisions include small dollar fundraising, disclosure, defining coordination and overhauling the Federal Election Commission.

### **Redistricting**

In 2016, convention delegates adopted a new position on redistricting which enables state Leagues and the LWVUS to call for fair representation in the redistricting process. We are working in the courts to challenge state laws that enable partisan gerrymandering. The LWVUS has filed an amicus brief in the case of *Gill v. Whitford* which was heard by the Supreme Court in early October. The League brief argues that partisan gerrymandering violates the First Amendment and the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution and points out that traditional redistricting principles – such as compactness, contiguity, and respect for political subdivisions – have no constitutional foundation

### **2018 and Beyond**

Despite all this action, there is still more work to do. For almost 100 years, the League of Women Voters has championed voting rights and this programmatic work is more important now than ever. Local and state Leagues and the LWVUS have made progress in The Campaign for Making Democracy Work® but our work is not finished. At the local, state and federal level, our work on voter protection and mobilization, election reform, money in politics and redistricting is at the heart of the League’s mission and its future.



Water and climate change were the centerpiece of the January Interfaith Scholar Weekend. The featured speaker was Fresno native Dr. Christiana Zenner Peppard, Associate Professor of Theology, Science, and Ethics at Fordham University.

## **Statistics presented during the weekend highlight the importance of taking care of the planet's fresh water supplies:**

97.5% of water on earth is salt water, while 2.5% is fresh water.

70 % of fresh water is held in glaciers, and 30% in the soil, leaving less than 1% of fresh water readily accessible to humans and environmental uses.

Water availability worldwide varies by location, with 1.1 billion people lacking adequate water access and 2.6 billion people lacking basic water sanitation.

Closer to home, more than 300 communities, and more than one million Californians, lack access to adequate supplies of safe and affordable drinking water. Local representatives from the Leadership Counsel and the Community Water Center gave a presentation on what is being done to remedy this situation.

Dr. Peppard challenged attendees to question and discuss how water is defined, used, allocated, and priced. Is water a human right, an economic commodity, a natural resource, a common good? What are our religious and ethical values relating to water? Who benefits and who pays for water when there is often a tendency for water to flow toward socio, economic, and political power? What should be the roles of private equity firms and local stakeholders in decisions about water use and the development of water infrastructure?

Dr. Peppard offered her opinion that water should not be commoditized beyond the cost of provision.

A memorable quote by Travis Huxman caught the audience's attention: **"Water is the hammer by which climate change will hit the earth."**

## **DMV voter registration won by LWVC, other groups**

Millions of Californians who renew their driver's license or state identification by mail will be able to use the renewal form to register to vote or update their voter registration starting in April of this year.

The changes to the DMV registration process are the result of a negotiated settlement in a federal lawsuit. "The freedom to vote is the most critical component of our nation's democracy and difficulty registering is one of the greatest barriers to exercising that freedom," said Helen Hutchison, LWVC president. "There are more than 5.5 million eligible but unregistered voters in California and people of color are disproportionately represented in that group" she added

The case began in 2015, when the plaintiffs notified widespread violations of the National Voter Registration Act, a law requiring DMV to incorporate voter registration into applications, renewals, and changes of address. The DMV subsequently incorporated voter registration into its applications and online renewals pursuant to a 2016 Memorandum of Understanding with plaintiffs, but refused to incorporate voter registration into its mail renewal process.

The lawsuit was filed against the California DMV in May of 2017 on behalf of the League of Women Voters of California, California Common Cause, ACCE Institute, and UnidosUS. It charged the state was failing to offer federally mandated voter registration opportunities to millions of Californians.

The new procedures will be implemented as part of the New Motor Voter Act, which requires that eligible citizens get registered to vote during their DMV transactions unless they opt-out of voter registration.

---

**OUR NEW WEB  
SITE IS  
COMING SOON**



<http://my.lwv.org/california/fresno>



MOTORS  
SOLD • REPAIRED • REWOUND

PH (559) 650-1153  
FAX (559) 650-1186



**Electric Motor Shop and Supply Co.**

ELECTRICAL WIRING "Since 1913"  
No. 246015

253 FULTON ST.  
P.O. BOX 446  
FRESNO, CA 93709

North of Herndon &  
East of Fresno

530 E. Herndon Ave., Ste. 104  
Fresno, CA 93720-2990

*Frederick J. Kruger, D.P.M.*  
Diplomate, American Board of Podiatric Surgery  
Diseases, Injuries and Surgery of the Foot

(559) 447-9040  
(559) 447-9042 Fax

By Appointment

**Be a Voter sponsor—\$100 per year—226-8683**



This space sponsored by  
**Joan Lipton**

*Merci*

**Gracias**

**THANK YOU**

**NELSON**  
PHYSICAL THERAPY

Larry Nielson, P.T., O.C.S.

2747 W. Bullard, #105, Fresno, Ca 93711  
Phone: 559.261.1425 Fax: 559.261.4573



**HELPING TO PRESERVE  
FRESNO'S PICTORIAL HISTORY**

**The Howard K. Watkins**

**Photographic Archive Project**

**[www.watkinsphotoarchive.com](http://www.watkinsphotoarchive.com)**

**Donations payable to Fresno Regional Foundation**

**NOTE: "HKW Photo Archive Fund"**

**5260 No Palm, Ste 122, Fresno, CA 93704**

**Contact info: 1785 W. Dovewood Lane, Fresno, CA 93711**

**TRANSITIONS  
COUNSELING CENTER**  
Margot E. Tepperman, LCSW.



**Alternative Lifestyle Counseling  
Complete Confidentiality**  
Warm, inviting, safe environment  
Bi, Gay, Poly, Transgender, BDSM

(559) 233-7250  
171 N. Van Ness Avenue, Fresno, CA 93701  
Most insurance accepted  
License # 9267



**Robert H. Gunning**

Principal Financial Group  
Senior Financial Services Representative  
(559) 650-2645 Work  
(559) 999-0773 Mobile  
gunning.bob@principal.com  
1350 E. Spruce Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93720  
principal.com

**Alice Powell**  
**Member since 1982**

**Frank Powell**  
**Member since 1999**

***In support of the League  
and the Voter***



***Be a Voter Sponsor - only \$100 per year for 12 issues, both print and digital***



League of Women Voters Fresno, Inc.  
1345 Bulldog Lane,  
Fresno, CA 93710  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization  
US Postage Paid  
Fresno 93706

Permit # 896

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Marianne Kast
Executive Vice President	Nyla Zender
Vice President, Voter Services	Jane Worsley
Secretary	Sue Goldman
Treasurer	Terri Figgs
VP Natural Resources	Mary Savala
Director, Water	Diane Merrill
Director, Education	Kay Bertken
Director, Program Planning	Pat Campbell
Director, Student Unit	Lisa Bryant
Director, Membership	Dolores O'Neal
Voter Editor	Francine Farber

---

Webmaster: Jacquie Canfield

# ***Democracy is not a spectator sport***

## JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS!

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

**MISSION:** The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of interested individuals and influences public policy through voter education and advocacy on issues. The League does not support or oppose any candidate or political party.

**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.

**Yearly Dues Individual - \$70 ~ Family - \$100 (2 members, same address) ~ Student - Subsidized**

**Please send your check payable to the League of Women Voters, Fresno, with registration form (below),  
to: LWVF, 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno, CA 93710.**

.....  
Name \_\_\_\_\_ Ph. \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_