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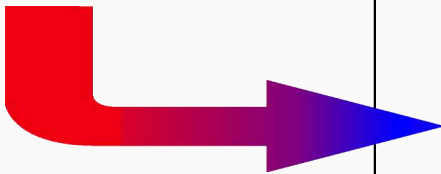
The *Fresno*

VOTER



Monday, February 11
Regular Board Meeting
5 p.m., League Office

Saturday, February 23
Annual Program Planning



BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

**** * REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS ARE NOW HELD on the SECOND MONDAY of the MONTH 5 p.m., League Office All invited MEMBERS AND GUESTS WELCOME**



COME TO PROGRAM PLANNING

SATURDAY, February 23

Stone Soup

9 a.m.

Use your vote to select our annual priorities

Read all about it on pages 4 and 5

Enjoy a catered breakfast

See old friends

Meet new members

President's Message



As members of the League, we have the opportunity to suggest the direction of our League work every year. In League lingo, “program” means issues that members have chosen for study, education, and action at the local, state and/or national levels. This year we will consider the program for our local Fresno League as well that of the California state League. On Saturday morning, February 23, we will gather for our annual “program planning” meeting (see details, pages 4 and 5)

The LWV Fresno Board has proposed several areas of work for our local League during the coming year. You will have the opportunity to hear about those suggested priorities, to choose which should be pursued and, of course, to sign up to help with that proposed work.

Additionally, we will give direction to the program of our statewide League. In response to the suggestions of its members, the state League will direct its resources (staff, board, volunteers, consultants, etc.) during the coming two years. The “issues for emphasis” may be continuing work that the League has in progress, or delving into new issues of statewide relevance, or updating a current position, or concurring with a position already adopted by a local League. The LWV Board has recommended continuing the program, “Making Democracy

Work,” and, so far, three Leagues have proposed positions for concurrence (criminal justice, voter representation, homelessness). After the program planning process is completed, the recommended program will be voted on at the statewide convention to be held in Pasadena, May 31-June 2.



This process of allowing every member to weigh in on the direction of the League is unique. It is how the League remains engaged in the issues of greatest importance to its members. Your voice during program planning is important. I hope to see you there.

— *Marianne*

MEMBER NEWS

Please edit your roster



It's always a good time for a gift to the League. LWVF is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization so your gift is tax deductible and gratefully accepted.

Checks should be sent to

LWVF

1345 Bulldog Lane

Fresno, 93710

Thank You

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

Mailing address: 1345 Bulldog Lane Fresno, CA 93710

Volume 78, No. 2 Editor: Francine M. Farber



Affordable Housing

by Nyla Zender

The Affordable Housing Committee discussed how it intends to move forward this year. We will track the progress the city has made in enforcing the Rental Home Improvement Act and investigate the availability of emergency housing for tenants to use until improvements on their rental spaces are finished.

Other committee members will interview the Mayor and the City Council to ask about their plans to address the lack of affordable housing. About 41,000 units are needed to house people who cannot afford



decent, clean housing for their families.

Another goal of the Committee is to work

with a coalition that is committed to increasing the number of affordable housing units. The coalition consists of the Housing Authority, Metro Ministry, college professor Matt Jendian, Patience Milrod with Central California Legal Services and possibly other individuals or groups.

The coalition is drafting a statement presenting the problems of the lack of adequate affordable housing in the Fresno area and the obstacles that must be addressed to make progress in accomplishing our goal. The coalition hopes to set up a meeting with Governor Newsom, who made the affordable housing crisis a central feature in his campaign. We intend to discuss with him the possibility that our area could be used as a model to solve some of the difficult issues involved in constructing proper affordable housing.

Water News

by Diane Merrill



Our local groundwater basin is **critically** over-drafted. Groundwater planning is important to: the quality of our drinking water; adequate local water supplies; local property values; the agricultural economy; rural disadvantaged communities; and the health of local ecosystems.



State-mandated Groundwater Sustainability Plans are currently being drafted, and there will be a public participation and comment period starting this summer before a coordinated plan for our area is submitted to the State by January 31, 2020.

**We're starting to plan now for 2020
100 year celebration of women's suffrage
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PROGRAM PLANNING

LOCAL PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

HOW IT WORKS

After hearing brief presentations about the following issues, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO number them according to your preference, with number one being your favorite. At the end of the meeting you will be asked to sign up to be on one or more committees. Any issue that does not have enough volunteers to form a committee will not be selected as a priority.

GET OUT THE VOTE

The LWV of Fresno has focused extensively on voter registration, particularly young voters. However, voter turnout is usually less than half of the registered voters. While registering people to vote continues to be of utmost importance, it is equally important to focus efforts on getting out the vote to increase participatory democracy. How can we help this process?



HOMELESSNESS

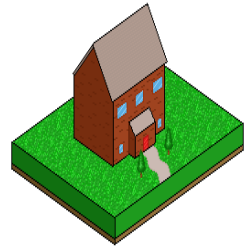
The problem of homelessness in Fresno is frequently addressed but never resolved. Are there policies and practices that impede rather than support resolution. What can we do to help meet basic human needs?



Some issues involved are housing, support services and facilities, both to assist those who are homeless and those who are about to become homeless.

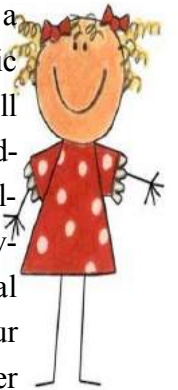
HOUSING

The Affordable Housing Committee has joined a coalition and hopes that the group can meet with Governor Newsom to ask for state involvement in solving our low-income housing problems. We will also follow the progress of the Rental Housing Improvement Act and what the City Council plans to do to improve the affordable housing situation.



UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL

Our league has been advocating for free universal preschool for more than a decade. Although there are more public preschools available, there are still many families that do not take advantage of it. Once Fresno County children are behind, they stay behind. Governor Newsom is promoting universal preschool and we need to continue our advocacy as well as partner with other organizations to reach out to all Fresno families.



CLIMATE CHANGE Locally the health and economic impacts of a longer and more intense hot season include



worsening air quality, crop damage and challenges to water access. We need to educate leaders and voters about the benefits of the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act. It is also imperative to increase voting among the many registered voters who identify climate and the environment as a key issue of concern, yet do not vote regularly. Whether at a city or school board meeting, a public health discussion, or a Congressional office, we can add climate change to the conversation as a factor that must be taken into account.

STATE PRIORITIES for PROGRAM PLANNING

The League of Women Voters of California has selected Making Democracy Work in California as its priority for 2019-2021. Our members will be asked whether they approve this priority. It is multi-faceted and focuses on voter protection and mobilization, election reform, money in politics, constitutional amendment, and redistricting.

Voter protection

- ◆ Continue to work to make the electorate more representative of the population as a whole
- ◆ Increase voting centers and vote by mail

Money in politics

- ◆ Increase transparency of money spent on elections
- ◆ Limiting the size of campaign contributions

Redistricting

- ◆ Support local redistricting reform efforts
- ◆ After the 2020 census attend to measures that count people in prisons and a robust outreach process for recruiting the Citizens Redistricting Commission

2020 Census

- ◆ Ensure that the census counts all Californians

LOCAL PRIORITIES (continued from page 4)

WATER SUSTAINABILITY

Groundwater planning is important to the quality of our drinking water, adequate local water supplies, local property values, the viability of rural disadvantaged communities and the agricultural economy, and the health of local ecosystems.



Our local groundwater basin is **CRITICALLY** over-drafted. State-mandated plans to achieve long-term groundwater sustainability will be ready for public participation and comment this summer before submission to the State in early 2020.

CONCURRENCE REQUESTS

Three local leagues in California have taken positions for which they are asking support. This represents a request for concurrence. At our program planning meeting on February 23, members will be asked whether they wish us to be in concurrence with any or all of these positions. Summaries are listed below, but by googling these leagues you can get full information about their proposals.

CONCURRENCE ON VOTER REPRESENTATION:

Sacramento County

- ◆ Encourage voter participation and engagement
- ◆ Encourage those with minority opinions to participate
- ◆ Promote access to voting
- ◆ Promote sincere voting over strategic voting
- ◆ Discourage negative campaigning
- ◆ Encourage meaningful discussion
- ◆ Require winners to receive a majority of votes for executive and other single seat offices

CONCURRENCE ON HOMELESSNESS:

San Diego County

- ◆ Housing First policy for persons who are homeless
- ◆ Provision of supportive services such as case management, behavioral health, etc.
- ◆ Organized data sharing and resource development among governmental agencies and non-profit organizations
- ◆ Rescission of policies and laws that criminalize the homeless for engaging in necessary life activities
- ◆ Provision of facilities to meet the needs of the homeless

CONCURRENCE ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM:

Los Angeles County

- ◆ Crime prevention and promotion of public safety
- ◆ Police engagement with community members
- ◆ Police accountability via independent citizen oversight
- ◆ Dissemination of information to the public about policies, procedures for complaints, rights and responsibilities
- ◆ Training officers to identify individuals with behavioral health issues and divert those people to treatment instead of jail

Behavioral Health by Carolyn Evans



The quarterly Housing report from the Department of Behavioral Health represents information that is a major concern to our community. The Department has contracted with the Independent Living Association to improve the quality of Room and Board homes. Training will be provided to those home operators and providers who join the Association which will develop standards and then refer clients only to homes that meet those standards.

A one-time allocation of \$729,000 for housing and outreach treatment programs for individuals with serious mental illnesses who are homeless or at risk of homelessness was approved.

No Place Like Home was approved by voters and will use Mental Health Services Act funds to provide housing for individuals with serious mental illnesses. Counties will receive funds determined by population and may compete for additional funds through grant applications. Requests for Proposals will be released for consultant services and housing development, The

Housing Authority will partner in the development and creation of Permanent Supportive Housing, but the Department will seek out other interested and qualified developers to partner in future housing units.

The Department is joining other agencies in housing projects such as Street2Home with the City of Fresno and Project Ignite with the Housing Authority.

The Department continues to work for improvements at its current supportive housing sites based on the recommends from the evaluation by the Corporation for Supportive Housing. The Board is especially concerned about the Renaissance Project at Santa Clara and will continue to monitor that site, located near Poverello House.

In its 2019 Recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, our Board includes “Move forward with a permanent supportive housing project available to all clients of Department of Behavioral Health. The Department continues with efforts to provide adequate housing for individuals living with behavioral health disorders but progress is excruciatingly slow.

evansalca@comcast.net

PROGRAM PLANNING * February 23

You would never skip voting in a local, state or national election . . .

so don't skip our program planning meeting because that is your voice in selecting local and state League Priorities for the coming year. What'll it be?

- ◆ Climate Change
- ◆ Get Out the Vote
- ◆ Homelessness
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Universal Preschool
- ◆ Water Sustainability

See You at the Meeting!



**Pat Campbell
Director
Program Planning**

Education

by Kay Bertken



ing, Trustee Terry Slatic from the Bullard area had been in the press asserting his desire to reform what

Next Meetings ; Feb 13 and 27
In person or streaming on line

The Fresno Unified School Board held a special meeting to discuss facilities projects under the Measure X bond. The board member's comments were combative and resulted in a hiatus on project planning until a follow up meeting when these Board members can revisit old determinations and establish their own priority interests for the remaining million plus bond dollars.

School planning halted?

There is a list of many millions of dollars worth of facilities needs among the districts many schools and administrative facilities. Previously, planning was proceeding for a new SE Fresno Juan Felipe Herrera Elementary School and the relocation of the Phoenix Academy alternative education site to make room for that elementary campus. In addition, there was some planning imagined for the recently acquired former juvenile hall property.

Trustee Mills, particularly, was insistent that existing campus needs ought to precede any new construction. She was particularly vocal about air conditioning projects and second gyms on high school campuses without them.

Prior to the regular Board meet-

he has called "a totally broken" school district and his right to involve himself in meetings and issues across schools and in the administrative offices. His criticisms led Superintendent Nelson to offer to have his positive evaluation reviewed by the new board. Subsequently, Trustee Slatic was filmed in an altercation with a student at Bullard that led to another closed door special meeting over a possible law suit. During the regular Board meeting, two members of the public criticized the trustee. One called for him to resign.

Newsom's budget adds funds

The rest of that Board meeting was relatively subdued, mainly focused on a review of Governor Newsom's proposed budget. His budget would provide benefits to the district in the form of new special education funds, on-time funds to ease districts' burdens in

shouldering more and more of the unfunded pension liabilities for teachers, facilities money to build or remodel classrooms to accommodate full day kindergartens, and money to increase preschool access.

Cradle to Career model Outside of Fresno Unified, the Local Children's Movement is being introduced to the Cradle to Career Partnership (a group composed of top executives of educational agencies. They have developed a model for youth success beginning at conception and ending with a healthy and stable adulthood. Their model identifies benchmarks for progress along the life course of a child.

kayb@csufresno.edu



February 9, 2019
 Google Community Space
 188 Steuart
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 \$45 w/Lunch | \$30 w/o Lunch

more information: lwwba.org
 visit the website for scholarship information

Bay Area League Day 2019
Diversity Equity & Inclusion (DEI) in the Bay Area
DEI in Action-DEI in Practice?

- Why Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is Right for the League of Women Voters
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and What It Means to CA
- System Change: Personal & Organizational
- Allies and Opportunities

Tickets: tinyurl.com/LeagueDay2019



Recently I accepted the task of screening faxed patient referrals to the Family HealthCare Network's Rheumatology Clinic located on the downtown Community Hospital campus. Screening potential new patients is a difficult and sometimes arbitrary process that becomes necessary when the staffing of the specialty clinic can no longer provide timely appointments to patients who will benefit most from those specialty services. By the end of 2019, because of loss of rheumatologist staff members, new patient appointments to our clinic were being scheduled for mid-2020, making our services to severely affected patients nearly irrelevant.

Delays in patient care

The close reading (including "reading between the lines") and detective work required to process these bulky documents—stuffed with useless boilerplate and almost always devoid of basic history and physical data about the referral condition—can sometimes feel like an entertaining puzzle-solving task. I am aided in this by previous medical data scattered throughout the hospital's electronic health record (EHR). But the global, discouraging message I have been getting is that most patients, at least in our area, are getting delayed and/or interrupted care. Nationally this is costing our economy billions of dollars because early and continuous therapy works to prevent more expensive medical care and societal costs.

This is not the result of any single defect in our health system, but rather a diffuse health services culture where the emerging unit of health care is a silo. Patients gravitate to one or another of these silos—clinics, walk-in health centers, physician group or individual practices, hospitals, health plans and their associated pharmacy benefit managers (PBM's), pharmacies—without ever experiencing deliberate coordination of services to maintain continuity of care.

The evidence is everywhere one looks. Despite the efforts of some technology start-ups, there is no standard, portable health record—or even a standard immunization record. There is no standardization and very limited interoperability of EHR's. The computer-savvy

youth of the world would marvel at use of the dial-phone-age faxes for communication between health centers. Pharmacies have not developed systems to report medication adherence or non-dispensing. PBM's constantly change their formularies—brands of insulin, for example, as reported in "The Insulin Wars" in a recent New York Times article - so that patients go without essential treatments.

Problems after changing health plans

These are problems even among patients who can access health insurance. But just changing your insurer or having your insurer modify its health plan can untether your treatment for chronic conditions. And having an



insurance card does not guarantee that you can get an appointment in time to sustain your treatment. That has certainly been true of patients needing rheumatologic care in the Central Valley.

Shortage of physicians

The silo problem is compounded by health care manpower shortages. The Central Valley has two-thirds of the national average supply of physicians, a deficit that cuts across all specialties but afflicts some grievously. The eight counties of the Central Valley have less than a third of the rheumatologists needed to provide adequate care to the population of four million. In Fresno County, meeting standards for rheumatologic care for the MediCal population would require five rheumatologists. We have one and a quarter.

The obvious directions to improve this situation—increased manpower, integrated and more intelligent EMR's, better education of primary care providers, mandates for sustaining patient care across health systems—will require steady and determined advocacy for federal, state, and possibly local governmental action.

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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.

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