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The

Our 81st Year!

FRESNO VOTER



Annual
Program Planning
Meeting

Saturday
February 18
10 a.m.

*Please join us
for a
complementary brunch*



This year we will discuss priorities for state and local league study and advocacy. The state has suggested these topics, with presenters' names listed.

Housing: Marianne Kast

Criminal Justice: Carolyn Evans

Climate Change /water: Diane Merrill

JUNE

Locally, our board has suggested these topics, with presenters' names listed.

Voter education/ underserved populations: Sue Goldman

Criminal justice/ schools: Kay Bertken

Housing: Marianne Kast

Climate/air quality: Connie Young

There will be a brief presentation on each of these issues. Members are encouraged to make other suggestions. We will discuss and select those issues that have members willing to work on them.



Co-President's Message



January 2023

The meeting was held virtually due to weather conditions.

Generous donations were received from Kathy Webb and from the estate of Sandra (Sandy) Williams

Member Meeting: Aaron Aguirre, director of the Parks Department, and Kimberly McCoy from the Parks Commission, will speak to members and guests on January 26.

Legislative interviews: Kay, Marianne Sue and Robin will set up meetings with our county and state legislators.

Convention: The Board voted to contribute \$250 to the state league in support of the convention which will be held in San Francisco May 18-21.

Mural Project: We will be looking elsewhere for a mural site since the county will not approve a mural for the Elections Office or warehouse.

Student Unit: We are still looking for a faculty advisor to re-start our Student Unit at Fresno State. We are tapping into various contacts.

Bequest funds: We have a significant sum in our budget from recent large donations including bequest funds. We need to be thinking about special worthwhile uses. Some of the money is supporting the electrification rural transit project in Fresno County. If you have any suggestions please send them to me at:

farberfrannola@gmail.com

It has been an impressive season for mind bending reversals. Rainstorms and flooding following years of draught and fire fears; checks coming out to California taxpayers because of excessive state revenues followed by deficit projections in the Governor's new budget. Boom or bust is the order of the day.



These reversals challenge our short-term memories to focus on long-term solutions. On the budget front, it is true that Newsom has continued to contribute to a reserve that will help the state through the leaner years. In addition, our State League is

hoping to see, lobby for, and back legislation to reconsider the Gann Limit requirement, which along with Prop 13 was passed in the anti-tax 1970's. That limit requires that when two years of state revenues pass a calculated ceiling, half the excess must be returned to taxpayers and half distributed to preK-12 education. The LWVC is also hoping for another opportunity to amend Proposition 13 itself. It is reassuring to note that the League does maintain a long-term focus.

On water: our State League, with our local representative on its Water Committee Diane Merrill, has had its eye on water policy for a long time. In the last years it has supported bills to provide affordable drinking water to deprived communities and to take land out of agricultural production to conserve water. It also backed a bill that would have made well-permitting align with the ambitions of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SIGMA). None of these bills passed, but some will be revived and receive our support.



On the local level, our county transportation Measure C will be coming back for reconsideration. Our League and its partners will be actively involved. As we dry out after these storms, it should provide hope that planning for the future based on solid League positions will continue to be the LWV approach.



Kay

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

Mailing address: 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno, CA 93710

Volume 82 No. 2 Editor: Francine M. Farber

LWVF IS A 501 C3 non-profit organization and all donations, including dues, are tax deductible. Donations are always accepted for the RBG Scholarship Fund at San Joaquin College of Law, the League's general fund, and any other purpose. Your estate planning is encouraged to consider LWVF. Please make out checks to LWVF and send to Treasurer, LWVF 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno 93710.

Voter Services

by Sue Goldman



Voter Participation Statistics

Starting this month, Leagues around the state will be conducting legislative interviews with the first few questions set by the state league.

The first question has to do with California’s voter participation gap. As stated in the LWVC legislative packet, “Despite the fact that we are a state where underrepresented groups are a majority of the population, and that we have recently passed laws designed to remove impediments and promote access to voting, there are significant disparities in participation among youth and voters of color compared to our older, non-Hispanic white population. This means that decisions about critical issues of local and statewide importance are being made by a predominantly older, white, profoundly unrepresentative electorate.”

This is brought into stark reality by the figures in the tables to the right from Fresno County. which list party preference and age groups.

Calculating percentages, one can see that seniors make up 21% of registered voters but are responsible for 35 percent of actual voters in this last election.

Also of note is that in 2020, one third of voters preferred to vote in person with greater percentages of Black, youth and persons with disabilities preferring to vote in person.

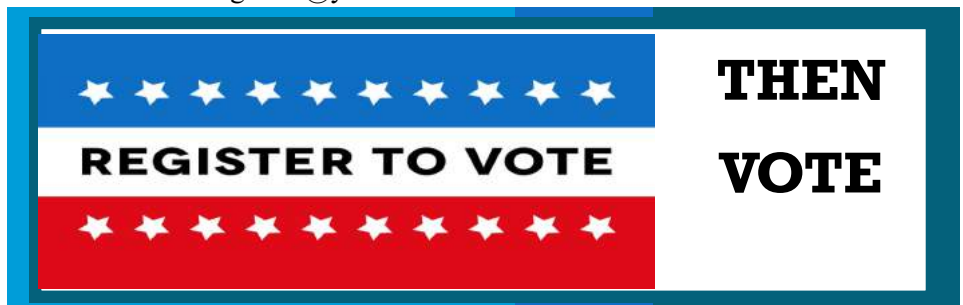
About a quarter of voters stated that they didn’t know where to find information about voting locations. While the county

	Nov 2022 Registered Voters	Nov 2022 Voters	Percentage
Total	499803	*219958	44
Democrat	197251	85693	43
Republican	160310	93214	58
American Independent	20025	7698	38
Green	1747	562	32
Libertarian	5285	1875	34
Peace & Freedom	3157	435	14
Other (inc NPP)	112028	30481	27

	Nov 2022 Registered Voters	Nov 2022 Voters	Percentage
Total	499803	*221184	44
18-24	63777	14705	23
25-34	98899	24581	25
35-44	88794	31238	35
45-54	68950	32071	47
55-64	72178	42507	59
65-74	61794	44202	72
75+	45411	31880	70

Editor’s Note: The difference in these two numbers is because they were recorded on different dates throughout the election process

voter guide lists locations, many people discard or misplace these as evidenced by calls to the elections office when the League staffs the phone bank. In the past the Fresno League has focused on voter registration and education. We are looking at ways to increase voter participation by seeking to coordinate with other organizations. If anyone is interested in participating in any of these activities, please contact Sue Goldman at sueg4676@yahoo.com.



Education

by Kay Bertken



At the first meeting of the new year, Superintendent Nelson announced new community partnership agreements. He has secured an agreement with the Fresno Police and Fire Departments to ensure that the district will be notified of any student experiencing a crisis in the community. The notification will focus district supports for that student.

An arrangement with the Fresno FAX system will give all adult school and high school students free bus passes. These can be used seven days a week and 24 hours a day so can facilitate student transportation to destinations other than their school.

Nelson also announced that he is currently working with other districts to improve the safety of students on our streets. In December a Hoover High student was hit and killed as he crossed the street near the school. Safe routes to schools is a topic that a board member has indicated needs to be addressed in the next iteration of Measure C.

Applications are currently available for the 200 scholarships the district will award to graduating seniors this year; and at the end of January, a new cohort of FUSD parents will be able to take advantage of the FUSD Parent University Parent Leadership Academy. A number of recent graduates of that program attended the board meeting to attest to its value by making them comfortable going to their child's school, interacting with teachers and principals, and utilizing the district's communication systems. They also spoke of being able to better understand and deal with their children. For the first time, the Academy offered English, Spanish and Hmong facilitated groups.

Preparation of the district's Local Control Accountability Plan is well underway. Forty-one separate community meetings involving thousands of students, parents, staff, and community members have offered opinions about where the district should focus its attention. High on many lists was the quality of school provided meals.



Coincidentally, a Board workshop was held this month to discuss the district nutrition program. It provides free breakfast, snacks, and after-school super snack as well as lunches during school days plus to-go meals during vacations. The district provides five million meals annually under strict federal and state guidelines. A number of initiatives have been piloted to provide more food options and to reduce food waste. Happily, the nutrition center has shifted to biodegradable packaging.

Behavioral Health

by Carolyn Evans



The Behavioral Health Board began the new year with a virtual meeting. The State Emergency Order regarding Covid ends on February 28 so beginning in March, board meetings will be held in-person at the Health and Wellness Center at 1925 E. Dakota Avenue, Fresno, CA 93726.

During its meeting the Board conducted a Public Hearing on the request of the Department of Behavioral Health for an extension of the Innovation Project—The Lodge. The Mental Health Services Act sets aside a percentage of its monies for Innovation Projects, which are learning programs. These projects are funded for three years, with a possible extension up to five years, which is what the Department is requesting.

The Lodge is a low barrier, come-as-you-are housing project designed for individuals with serious mental illness, who are not interested in services or treatment. While clients are in residence, peers work to engage them in the system of care. After two years, 25% (97) individuals were linked to services. The significance is that these were persons not in care and initially not interested in services.

Due to the first year of hiring, training, and setting up, and the delays associated with Covid, the Department needs more time to evaluate the effectiveness of The Lodge. The numbers are too small to evaluate the effectiveness of this program, thus the request for an extension.

The Board agreed to support the request, which now must go to the state Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission, before final approval from Fresno County Board of Supervisors.

The Department has added two Deputy Directors, for a total of four, to its executive leadership team. The Department is in the process of determining the role of each Deputy Director.

The Board held its annual workshop on January 28 to select priorities for the coming year. Members were excited at the in-person meeting since it was the first time that some members actually met each other.

Health Care

by Richard Bertken, MD



A recent NFL games report lists the televised football game between the Buffalo Bills and the Cincinnati Bengals on January 2 as “canceled.”

In the first quarter, Damar Hamlin, a safety for the Bills, fell unconscious to the turf after a routine tackle. He remained motionless as players gathered around him. Some time passed before the Bills medical staff was able to establish his cardiac arrest status (no carotid pulse!) and initiate external cardiac compressions. Later, an automatic external defibrillator (AED) was attached to his chest. It detected the “short” in Damar’s cardiac wiring and administered an exactly timed and calibrated shock to the heart through the chest wall. Order was restored. Normal heartbeat with normal circulation. Cardiac emergency over.

Except that restoring order was not fast enough. A brain starved for oxygen and glucose for even a few seconds loses consciousness and maintenance of motor activity. Irregular breathing or gasping can continue for up to four minutes, sometimes leading to a delay in starting CPR. Any delay in the restoration of blood circulation greater than five minutes leads to lasting damage to brain cells or death.

Damar woke from a coma the day after the event. This was great news, given that his initial unconscious state was attributable to at least two or three minutes of inadequate cerebral circulation. Data from cardiac resuscitation survivors show that

Predictably, the media reacted by lamenting the short and long-term damage incurred by football players. To physicians and healthcare advocates, the Damar Hamlin story should not be about football. It speaks to emergent healthcare need in unlikely places.

Never before has an NFL football player suffered cardiac arrest independent of severe injury. But if January 2 was a typical day, one thousand Americans suffered an “out of hospital” cardiac arrest along with Damar. Most happen at their home. Most victims ultimately die as a result. Most do not receive timely and effective chest compressions and AED shocks. Most, unlike Damar, have pre-existing or emerging heart disease that complicates resuscitation.

However, cardiac arrest is not limited to the sick and elderly. The American Academy of Pediatrics and the Centers for Disease Control record 150 to 200 sudden cardiac deaths yearly among school-age athletes. Few of these victims have structurally and electrically normal hearts, but their defects are not apparent or easily detected in advance.

The science and application of cardiac resuscitation started over 200 years ago, but its most important advances have been continuously

such early recovery from coma predicts little or no durable neurological defects.

refined and proven effective in the last four decades. On-line CPR and AED instruction (usually about \$20 for a certificate) can empower the average citizen to save a life. The course should be repeated every two or three years to refresh one’s skills and adopt any new modifications.

All 50 states require regular CPR-AED certification for healthcare personnel, police, and other helping professions. All 50 states require AEDs for gyms, theaters, auditoriums, and other gathering places.

Mobile phone apps are popping up that automatically call 911 with



cardiac arrest notification and location data and show maps of nearby AEDs. These would enable a faster initiation of CPR and more sustained chest compressions. Apps are in evolution that would allow a lone rescuator to call nearby CPR-skilled assistants to an arrest scene.

While futurists are imagining drone delivery of AEDs to isolated cardiac arrest sites, a practical action plan would be to broaden CPR training, including the use of mobile phone assistance, starting with secondary schools.

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Climate Change

by Terri Figgs



Water News

by Diane Merrill



After a commissioner of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission recently suggested that his agency might move to regulate gas stoves, a brief controversy erupted in Washington.

The agency later issued a statement saying there was no intention to regulate but that it's important to understand and mitigate the dangers of gas stoves, which are used in about 40 million homes nationwide.

When you use a gas stove, it emits poisonous gases called nitrogen oxides, including nitrogen dioxide, a respiratory irritant thought to trigger asthma; cars, boats, anything burning fuel also release these gases. A study published last year found that families who use gas stoves in homes with poor ventilation, or without range hoods, can exceed the national standard for safe hourly outdoor exposure to nitrogen oxides within just a few minutes, although there are no agreed upon standards for nitrogen oxides in indoor air.

Children and adults with chronic respiratory conditions are most at risk of negative health effects linked to gas stoves. In addition to asthma, there are other health dangers associated with gas stoves: Researchers who collected 234 samples of unburned natural gas from homes around Boston found 21 toxic pollutants in the gas, including benzene, a known carcinogen.

Here are a few simple ways to mitigate potential health risks:

- ◆ **Ventilate!** Open a window, crack open a door, put on a fan
- ◆ **Use the exhaust hood** every time you use your stove.
- ◆ **Use the stove less often.** There are other heat sources including microwaves and toaster ovens
- ◆ **Consider adding an air purifier.** Be sure it has a HEPA filter



Go to the website RewiringAmerica.org and click on the IRA calculator button to see what rebates and tax credits are offered to purchase an induction stove and other electric appliances and updates for your home or rental. Weatherize, solarize and electrify to clean the air and stabilize the climate.

tfiggs@comcast.net

The LWVC recently submitted comments to the California Department of Water Resources on the **Draft Environmental Impact Report for Delta Conveyance Project**. If approved, this project would construct a tunnel to convey water under the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta for transport south to State Water Project contractors. The following are highlights from the letter, which is located in the California Water Resources section of LWVC's Natural Resources page.




“The League has long-standing policies supporting reduced reliance on water exported through and around the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta in favor of local reuse, wastewater recycling, and stormwater capture. In the Delta Reform Act of 2009, the California Legislature declared its intent to achieve two co-equal goals for the Delta: providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem, which goals include reducing reliance on the Delta in meeting California's future water requirements. However, it is clear from the draft report that protection of—and even increase in—water project deliveries is the overriding objective of this plan.

“The State Water Project and federal Central Valley Project were developed and hold water rights based on precipitation conditions in the 20th century, which we now know were atypical in terms of 21st century surface water availability. Development of water infrastructure should follow, not precede, review of longstanding water project rights by the State Water Resources Control Board, making this project's consideration premature.

“Given the National Research Council's finding that in some basins, including those of the Bay-Delta, available supply is over-allocated by more than 800 percent (measuring supply as average annual runoff). It is alarming that all of the alternatives in the draft report increase water exports from the Delta.”

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