



Phone: 559-226-VOTE

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

The *Fresno*  
**VOTER**



Tuesday, June 12  
Regular Board Meeting  
5 p.m.—League office  
Note permanent change of date  
to second Tuesday of each month

Sat. June 16 \* 10 a.m.– 1 p.m.  
Civil Discourse Workshop  
Hosted by LWV Tulare  
St. Paul’s Episcopal Church  
120 N Hall St., Visalia  
RSVP 732-2009 or 732-5061

Monday, June 18  
Regular Board Meeting  
5 p.m. - League Office

Thursday, June 28  
Lunch & Learn  
Climate Change

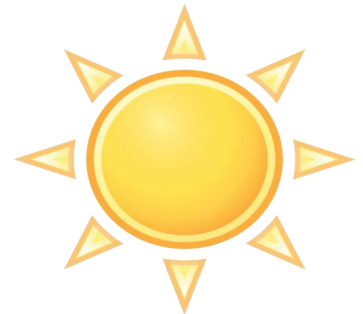
Thurs. June 28—Sun. July 1  
LWVUS Convention  
Chicago

Members and guests are  
invited to all League meetings  
and events



**LUNCH & LEARN**

**CLIMATE  
CHANGE**



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to reduce greenhouse gas emissions  
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**Presented by the Citizens Climate Lobby**

**Don Gaede, M.D.**

Founder, Citizens Climate Lobby Fresno  
Chair, Grassroots Outreach Team  
Editor, Central Valley Physician

**Andrea Farber De Zubiria, P.T.**

Media Chair, Citizens Climate Lobby of Fresno  
Member, League of Women Voters of Fresno

**Thursday, June 28 \* 11:30 a.m. —1:00 p.m.**

The meeting is free and open to the public

**Yosemite Falls Café**

**4020 North Cedar at Dakota, Fresno**

**“no host” lunch available \* \$16 all inclusive**

**More info? 472-3018**

## President's Message



**A**nother mass shooter has terrorized a U. S. high school, this time in Santa Fe, Texas. Again, thoughts and prayers poured into the victims' families. I'm afraid that after a few days of tears, we will too easily move on, decrying Congress' inaction on many issues, not just gun safety.

I'm not sure what the young leaders of the March for Our Lives are doing now. I hope they are pressuring candidates in local elections to commit to gun safety legislation. Their greatest influence could come from the new voters they encouraged to register at hundreds of events last March. About 4 million young Americans are expected to turn 18 years old by the November election, and when added to 46 million eligible 18-29 year olds in the US, the voting power of young people is certainly enough to influence the vote in many jurisdictions. But will they turn out on election day?

While the League has perennially been known for registering voters, it's apparent that our task heading into the future will be turning out the vote rather than registering. As we in California have added DMV as well as election-day registration, and are moving toward 100% vote-by-mail balloting in 2020, getting voters to submit their ballots is paramount.

Later this month, Dolores, Jacquie and I will attend the LWVUS Convention in Chicago. There, at the direction of our Fresno members, we expect to join other local Leagues in a call to add gun safety to the LWVUS 2018-2020 priorities for action. We agreed that the League's national recommended program, "Making Democracy Work" should be continued, but with the addition of advocacy for gun safety legislation. That program directs Leagues to work to engage more voters in the election process and strengthen the laws that govern money in politics, redistricting and voting rights so that it is free, fair and accessible to all. Additional requests from our members to the national body are for infrastructure improvement to mitigate climate change and planning for climate-related emergency services.

We welcome new Board members: Marie Slater, Secretary, and Liz Shields, Vice President for Voter Services.

*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. 6 Editor: Francine M. Farber**

## Member News

*Please edit your roster*



### New Members

Kathi Carrle  
6674 North West  
Fresno, CA 93711  
kcarrle@yahoo.com

Nancy Griesser  
1626 East Salem Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93720  
930-3246  
Nancyg@mail.fresnostate.edu

Eva W. Maiden  
6035 N. Marks #225  
Fresno, CA 93711  
650-906-9062  
evawm@sbcglobal.net

Sandy Williams  
7797 North First St.  
Fresno, CA 93720 #101  
438-3082  
swilliams256@sbcglobal.net

### New Contact Information

Susan Coberly  
3510 Taylor Lane  
Clovis, CA 93619  
coberlysusan88@gmail.com

**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.**

# Join a Priority Committee!

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

We are developing ways to encourage new and existing members of the League to engage with our work. We taped the LWV Tulare County's forum, "Where Do You Get Your News?" for posting on their or our website. We are hoping to get assistance from a Fresno State Mass Communications and Journalism class this fall to produce an introductory video about LWVF. We are encouraging our Board of Directors to plan more frequent membership meetings and we are discussing the type and time of meetings as an encouragement for membership. [www.lwvfresno.org](http://www.lwvfresno.org)

**Chair: Marianne Kast: [fourkasts@gmail.com](mailto:fourkasts@gmail.com)**  
**Next meeting: June 8, 12:30 p.m. Stone Soup**



a first draft of our report of our year-long study of Fresno's charter school, we are extending our research because new issues have emerged. Read more about Kepler on page 6

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

## HOUSING



One of the goals of the committee is to keep informed of the progress the city is making on the implementation of the Rental Housing Improvement Act. Jennifer Clark, head of Development and Resource Management for the city of Fresno, gave us an update.

We are researching videos showing successful affordable housing projects as part of a presentation to groups and individuals who are interested in finding ways to provide clean, safe and healthy affordable housing for Fresno's large population of low income residents. It is estimated that the city needs 40,000 more units to accommodate this large population.

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

## EDUCATION



The committee has been following the non-renewal process for the Kepler Neighborhood School. Although we have

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## County General Plan ignores some policies, procedures

by Radley Reep

On May 8 the Fresno County Board of Supervisors approved an Annual Progress Report (APR) that discussed the County's progress toward implementing its General Plan for calendar year 2017. The County will file the APR with the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR).

At that Board hearing, League members asked that the report disclose the fact that the County was having serious difficulty implementing its General Plan. The League called attention to several missing components of the APR, namely, discussions about whether the County was



(1) achieving General Plan goals, (2) executing General Plan programs as prescribed and (3) implementing policies designed to protect the environment.

The League also pointed out that the APR did not satisfy a state law requiring an analysis of the degree to which the County's General Plan complied with OPR's General Plan Guidelines. Importantly, the APR also failed to report that the Board undertook several actions in 2017 that contravened General Plan policies.

Despite the League's plea that the County produce a quality report, the Board went ahead and approved an APR with the faults described above.

On a closely related matter, the County is now working on an environmental impact report for what will become a new 2020-2040 General Plan. The League is greatly concerned that the County apparently has decided not to fully engage the community in that process.



## *Behavioral Health*

by Carolyn Evans  
Chair, Behavioral Health Board



The Board of Supervisors issued a proclamation noting May as Mental Health Awareness Month. The goal is to increase prevention and early intervention efforts and to call upon all community residents and agencies to increase awareness and understanding of mental illness and the need for appropriate and accessible services for all.

Department of Behavioral Health Director Dawan Utecht gave the monthly update. In response to stakeholders' concerns about the effects of traumatic events on individuals' future mental health, a new pilot program, Fresno FOCUS Team, will provide triage services to children and families experiencing traumatic or significantly stressful life events. Referrals will come from first responders, families, and schools, with a goal of decreasing the effects of those traumatic events through a coordinated response system. Extensive training is planned for the referral population.

The Director also provided the outcomes report from West Care Inpatient Substance Use Disorders Treatment Program, which provides individuals with substance use disorders and co-occurring mental health disorders an opportunity for wellness and recovery. The Department contracts for 48 beds for its clients, with approximately 38% completing the program. It was noted that this completion rate is unfortunately typical for this type of program. Board members visited that facility last month and learned that the men and women in the program have their young children on site. There are 14 infants and toddlers at this time.

Due to several resignations, the Board is encouraging applications from county residents who are interested in behavioral health services. If you are a county resident over 18 years of age, and neither you nor your spouse is employed by the Department or its contracted providers, you are eligible to apply. Applications are found on the web site of the Board of Supervisors

The Board will host a community forum from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the Betty Rodriguez Library on June 14 in order to receive input from Fresno County residents. League members are invited to attend.

## *Voter Services*

by Liz Shields



### **Election work**

We received a continuing contract from the Election Department to provide assistance with unfolding ballots and staffing the phone banks at election time. This takes effect immediately so volunteers started unfolding ballots on May 21 and will continue through June 11 if necessary. Unfolding the ballots will take place at the Election Warehouse, 4525 E. Hamilton, south of Butler, between Cedar and Maple, with morning and afternoon shifts. This year we will be working inside the Warehouse in a secure area. The Election Department is preparing for increased scrutiny by candidates and observers during this primary.

### **Phone bank training**

I will be discussing the staffing needs for the phone bank with the Election Department. We will be setting up training sessions for volunteers as several new policies and procedures have been enacted since the last election.

### **Easy Voter Guides**

Easy Voter Guides are still available at the League office. Please call me if you want me to deliver copies, especially to groups. Voter registration cards and Easy Voter Guides were provided to several retirement homes in Fresno.

My thanks to Marianne for hosting a get together for new members where I was able to describe our work and recruit new volunteers. If you have not been contacted about unfolding ballots or staffing the phone bank, please contact me and offer to help. This is our main fundraiser, which means no bake sales, no raffles, no silent auctions or other money raising ventures to harass you throughout the year.

**Liz Shields 559-578-5670 or [elizs44@yahoo.com](mailto:elizs44@yahoo.com)**

***PRIMARY ELECTION DAY IS JUNE 5***



## 77th Annual Meeting features candidate discussion, awards

Members and guests heard a “conversation” among the three candidates for Fresno City Council District 7 at our Annual Meeting on April 28. Nelson Esparza, Viva Islas and Brian Whelan responded to questions by moderator Lanny Larson regarding public safety, homelessness and affordable housing.

Mary Savala was presented with a commemorative book for her many years of service on the Board and to the League. She has left her position as Vice President of Natural Resources but will continue to work for the League.

Curt Thornton received the 2018 Lipton Award for his volunteer work over several decades, especially in the field of behavioral health. It is given annually to an outstanding community volunteer who is not a member of the League.

The candidates’ discussion followed a business meeting at which officers and directors were elected for 2018-19, with Marianne Kast continuing as president. They are listed on the last page of the Voter.

Recommendations to local and national leagues were ratified. Locally they are to continue our priorities of housing, education and civic engagement. Nationally members endorsed the LWVUS program “Making Democracy Work”, and requested gun safety legislative priority during this biennial.

*Natural Resources*  
by Mary Savala



Last year the LWVF hired a San Francisco law firm specializing in California Environmental Quality Act law to write a letter to the City of Fresno cautioning them against any amendments that would weaken the city’s General Plan policy.

The policy requires one acre of mitigation for one acre of farm land developed for urban use in the city’s sphere of influence. Councilman Steve Brandau has been persistent in introducing proposals to change this mitigation requirement.

An item on the April 19 City Council agenda to pass this amendment was picked up by our League. Our attorneys wrote letters to object to the lack of notice when the Plan amendment proposal was going to be re-introduced, as had been promised. The Council had also directed the city attorney to vet any plan amendment and the Planning Department was directed to analyze the environmental impacts of an amendment to the General Plan.

It was not clear whether those directions had been followed. Council president Esmeralda Soria pulled the agenda item to be continued at a later date. They promise to do better.

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**LEAGUE 101**



**What you can do—  
how to get involved**

Hors d’oeuvres & conversation  
Thursday, June 21  
5:00 — 6:30 p.m.  
741 West Sierra Madre Avenue  
Fresno 93705

RSVP Marianne \* 270-7937 \* fourkasts@gmail.com

# Education

by Kay Bertken



dent Academic Acceleration plans. A number of community members attended the board meeting and encouraged support for the budget augmentations contained in the item.

## More resources needed

Last year, the Board hired Wendy McCully as executive director of the AAAA office. That office has been staffed by her and an assistant. She outlined two initiatives: resource counselor assistants at seven targeted schools and academic advisors at the middle and high schools.

In addition to requests for funding for those programs, McCully proposed several other initiatives. First, she proposed a pilot program for African American first grade readiness in August. Her second request was for funding of iReady assessments to provide specific individual diagnostics of areas of needed growth.

## Three positions requested

She also proposed a tutoring program for suspended students so that instructional time was not lost, and a program for training academic mentors for African American boys. Her final two proposals were for a partnership with community groups to support students from high school through their first year in college and a summer literacy program. Her proposals would add three new positions for her office.

## New southeast school named

Other issues of note from the Board meetings included the naming of a new southeast elementary school. Among the names proposed were Juan Felipe Herrera, Murray and Francine Farber, and Judge Armando Rodriguez. The Board elected to name the school after

the two-time poet laureate of the United States, Dr. Herrera.

## Kepler charter non-renewed

The most controversial item of the evening was the Board's 5-2 vote for non-renewal of The Kepler Neighborhood School's charter. The district's review team faulted the school for not fulfilling the required elements of its petition—the team indicated it had reviewed and made recommendation for fixes to Kepler's staff, but that the changes were not made.

It also called out the relative academic failures of Kepler. The school had lower percentages of students meeting or exceeding expectations on both English Language Arts and Math sections of the state tests than neighboring schools, than the district at large, but most especially the relatively high achieving district schools with similar demographics.

## Leadership and training at issue

The team also was not convinced that the school was poised to improve those outcomes given that it had not secured full-time instructional leadership, not demonstrated grade-level instruction during site visits, nor trained its staff in the use of grade level curriculum materials and standards.

Kepler parents and staff in the audience were clearly disturbed by the outcome. Trustees Mills and Ashjian voted against the staff recommendations. They had wanted some sort of conditional approval that staff indicated was not an enforceable option

**Last meeting of the year**

**Wednesday, June 13**

**5:30 p.m., streaming &**

**AT&T channel 99**

The Fresno Unified School Board continues to hear budget recommendations from staff at the same time the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) draft has been assembled and placed on the District's website for public comment.

The LCAP is a requirement of the new state plan that allocates additional concentration funding for districts with "at risk" students—foster and homeless youth, English learners and students of poverty. The plan requires public input on how to target those funds. Fresno Unified's plan draft has been developed after numerous public meetings with parents, community members, staff and students. An online survey captured additional input.

## Criticisms of previous funding

Last year FUSD was criticized by the ACLU and the state for some of its funding choices. The ACLU contended that spending funds on bathroom renovations, resource officers and a contribution to the Fresno Police Department's shot spotter program were not appropriately targeting at risk youth. The state concurred.

Even given the fact that the vast majority of FUSD students meet the at risk definitions, the state advised FUSD to include explanations for how services are "principally directed" to those who need it in future LCAP's. This year's draft includes lengthy discussions of how the funds target those students.

The most interesting of the budget discussions revolved around the plans and funding of the African American Stu-

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**\* Alice Powell**

**Member since 1982**

**\*Frank Powell**

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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.

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

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