



Phone: 559-226-VOTE

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

# The *Fresno* **VOTER**



**Monday, May 21**  
**Regular Board Meeting**  
**5 p.m.—League Office**

**Saturday, June 16**  
**Regional Meeting**  
**Civil Discourse Workshop**  
**Hosted by LWV Tulare**  
**Led by LWV San Luis Obisp-**  
**More information to follow**

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

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

Members and guests are invited to all League meetings and events



## Water storage projects to be evaluated

by Diane Merrill

The California Water Commission is tasked with evaluating and awarding funding for proposals competing for \$2.7 billion in Proposition 1 water storage funding approved by the voters in 2014. The goal of the program is to provide funding for water storage projects that provide the best return on the public investment and result in more reliable water supplies and more sustainable management of the water resources system.

In working with stakeholders from 2015 through 2017, the Commission developed a competitive process for allocating the funding. Two of the eleven proposals competing for funding, the Temperance Flat Reservoir Project and the Tulare Lake Storage and Floodwater Protection Project, are located in the Central San Joaquin Valley.

The public benefit ratio is a key factor in project ranking. The ratio is structured so that at least 50 % of each proposal’s funding must be devoted to ecosystem benefits, and up to 50 % may be devoted to four other public benefits - water quality improvement, flood control, emergency response, and recreation. At meetings this month the Commission will scrutinize each project with reviewers, stakeholders and the public, and is expected to make its final decision and to release preliminary scores on three other technical categories used to rank projects. By the end of June the Commission plans to determine final project scores and ranking. Later in the summer, the Commission will use the rankings to determine each project’s maximum conditional eligibility for funding.

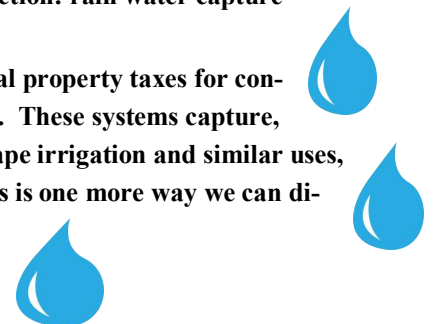
LWVC is following the process closely and may comment at appropriate times.

For more information, visit the California Water Commission website at [cwc.ca.gov](http://cwc.ca.gov).

*There is a fifth proposition on the June 2018 ballot on which LWVC has taken a position.*

**Vote Yes on Prop 72 - Property taxation: new construction: rain water capture system**

**This measure would allow an exclusion from additional property taxes for construction or installation of rain water capture systems. These systems capture, store, and use otherwise wasted rain water for landscape irrigation and similar uses, saving more conventional water for personal use. This is one more way we can diversify sources of usable water.**



## President's Message



I've been thinking a lot lately about how to get more people actively involved with the League. Our work seems unapproachable from the outside, as if we have secret passwords to the nooks and crannies of government.

Really, though, most of us have followed an interest to become active in one aspect or another of the League's work. Once there, we've collected some knowledge, introduced ourselves to a few officials, attended related meetings and, "Voila!" we've become a representative for the League in that area.

The great part of the League is that members before us have worked in more than 60 areas of public policy. There is always a League position that gives direction to, but does not limit, our ability to take action on local, statewide and national issues.

I'm excited to invite our new, curious, and potential LWV members to an informal get-together this month. I want to demystify the League, and get you started on what has become a fabulously rewarding journey for me as a League member. There'll be hors d'oeuvres and chit-chat, and you'll connect to some of our active members who will guide your involvement with our favorite organization. Details on page 6 and via e-mail.

**Fresno Parks Initiative:** We have partnered with the Central Valley Community Foundation and other local organizations to place an initiative on the November ballot to fund the upkeep of parks in Fresno, create a Fresno Parks and Arts Commission, and support several other recreation-related benefits for the city. If you can help collect signatures in May only, call Mary Savala at 250-1350, or Marianne Kast at 270-7937.

**Schools and Communities First Initiative:** The LWVC has made the reform of Prop 13 a top priority. This initiative would reform property taxation in California to assess commercial and industrial real estate at fair market value (rather than, under current law, the purchase price with limited inflation). It is estimated that 6 to 11 billion dollars could be generated annually for schools and local governments. The campaign has decided to qualify this initiative for the 2020 ballot rather than 2018. Signatures are being gathered through June. To help with this effort, contact Jacquie Canfield at 352-9731, or Marianne Kast at 270-7937.

*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. 5 Editor: Francine M. Farber**

## Member News

*Please edit your roster*



### New Members

**Cathy Brass**

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**Giselle Gasca**

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**Mary Scully**

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**Elizabeth Luckett**

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**Barbara Swan**

Box 1863

Clovis, CA 93613

908-7156

**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**



**Thank You!**

# Join a Priority Committee!

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Our new website has been launched and a number of League members have been trained to write for it.



[www.lwvfresno.org](http://www.lwvfresno.org)

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

neighborhoods, tax incentives to encourage property owners to upgrade older housing; citizen participation in planning housing developments.

Co-Chairs: Nyla Zender: [Nylajz@comcast.net](mailto:Nylajz@comcast.net)  
Marianne Kast: [fourkasts@gmail.com](mailto:fourkasts@gmail.com)

## HOUSING



The Housing Position includes creating additional low-income housing; disseminating information about housing practices; considering neighborhood aesthetics and practical needs; wider choices of living accommodations in all

## EDUCATION

The committee has compiled a draft report on its study of charter schools in Fresno. More information will be added on finances and remaining issues are being discussed. The intended audience for the report will include parents and the general public, local boards of education, and charter schools and associations.



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

**Election Day is June 5, 2018! Get informed before you vote! Go to [www.votersedge.org/ca](http://www.votersedge.org/ca)**

Did you know there are 34 races with 169 candidates, five state measures, one county measure and, depending upon where you live in Fresno County, three local measures and one school bond measure that will appear on Fresno County voters' ballots this June?. How can you get informed? **Voter's Edge California!**

**Voter's Edge** is your one-time source to find information on candidates and ballot measures—from the League and other nonpartisan sources. Key in your address and zip code and get your entire ballot and polling place.

Make sure to spread the word—help others be more informed when they vote!



**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  
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# Behavioral Health

by Carolyn Evans  
Chair, Behavioral Health Board



The April meeting of the Fresno County Behavioral Health Board began with the haunting heartbeat of the Music Wellness Group. This group of clients and Department of Behavioral Health staff meet weekly to enjoy drumming while improving their mental health. One drummer described how creating music lessens his depression and suicidal thoughts. The drumming group is one of many that the Department provides for its clients to learn to express feelings, interact with others, and learn coping skills to improve their behavioral health.

The musical presentation was a fitting beginning for a meeting that was devoted to alternative practices for maintaining a well-balanced life in mind, body, and spirit. The Holistic Cultural Education and Wellness Center began five years ago as an Innovations program. Its goals were to teach holistic healing practices, increase mental health awareness, reduce stigma/discrimination, and link clients both to holistic healers and to traditional behavioral health services. Cultural brokers from diverse backgrounds build trust and assist clients with culturally and linguistically appropriate services. Activities include dancing, meditation, gardening, cooking, and many more, always with an emphasis on mental health. Additionally, the Holistic Center provides educational programs on different cultures for professionals working with diverse populations and for the community as a whole.

On June 14, the Board will host a forum to hear community concerns about behavioral health needs and services at the Betty Rodriguez Library from 5:30-7:00 p.m. We invite you to attend!

Our Board always is in need of active members. The Board of Supervisors has been encouraged to appoint new members, but they need enthusiastic applicants. If you, or anyone you know, is interested in improving behavioral health services in Fresno County by serving on the board, please attend a meeting and let members know of your interest, so that we can guide you through the process.

# Voter Services

by Liz Shields



Here is the updated list with the LWVC positions plus the local measures on the June ballot:

**Prop 68 - California Drought, Water, Parks, Climate, Coastal Protection, and Outdoor Access for All Act**  
**SUPPORT**

**Prop 69 - Motor Vehicle Fees and Taxes** **SUPPORT**

**Prop 70 - Greenhouse Gas Reduction Reserve Fund**  
**OPPOSE**

**Prop 71 - Effective Date of Initiatives** **SUPPORT**

**Prop 72 (new) - Property taxation: new construction: rain water capture system** **SUPPORT**

This measure would allow **an exclusion** from additional property taxes for construction or installation of rain water capture systems. These systems capture, store, and use otherwise wasted rain water for landscape irrigation and similar uses, saving more conventional water for personal use.

**Local Measures:** Amendment to Fresno County Charter Section 16

This measure would repeal the provision making the Director of Public Works the “ex officio County Surveyor” and would require the Director of Public Works to appoint a separate qualified county surveyor if the Director of Public Works lacks the professional certification necessary to practice as a licensed surveyor in California.

if you belong to a group that would like a discussion on the pros and cons of the state propositions contact the League Office at 559-226-VOTE or go to <https://my.lwv.org/california/fresno> to arrange for a speaker.

If you have changed your name, address or party affiliation you need to reregister by May 21 or you can “conditionally” register and vote at your county elections office after the 15-day voter registration deadline.

**Personally delivered ballots:** Must be delivered close of polls on June 5

**Mailed ballots:** Must be postmarked on or before June 5 and received by your county elections office no later than June 8.

**REMEMBER TO VOTE ON JUNE 5**

## Health Care

by Richard Bertken, M.D.



There is a mighty flood of biomedical knowledge that is defeating our widely diffused efforts to define medical school and residency curricula. At every level of education and training, doctors are being asked to absorb more basic and clinical science than is relevant to their ultimate careers. This cannot continue, and ultimately the curricular requirements will have to be individualized and streamlined, along with the fostering of long-term mentoring relationships that celebrate the basic skills of being a doctor.

Meanwhile, mitigating forces have emerged. One is the growth of on-line, continuously revised, searchable textbooks. These complement the ready access to scientific articles via the National Library of Medicine and the expansion of legitimate, disease-specific websites. These resources are so readily available that clinicians can access them during patient care, on the same screen on which they are recording a clinic visit.

Additional mitigating forces are continuing medical education (CME) and its close relative, Maintenance of Certification (MOC). Conceptually they are incentives or requirements for physicians to engage in career-long learning in their field. Most states require 20-25 hours of certified CME yearly for physicians to maintain their licenses. Most specialty boards require diplomates to regularly submit evidence of continuing education and to pass tests in their specialty every decade in order to maintain their active board certification.

CME is heavily influenced by Pharma and the medical device industry. The expert specialists creating the programs are often financially connected to pharmaceutical companies, as evidenced by their disclosure statements. Newer, more expensive treatments are advocated more often and emphatically than justified, given comparative and cost-benefit studies done independently around the world.

This exemplifies the lack of parity between the public interest (cheaper and equally effective health care) and our overweening pharmaceutical industry. Our FDA gets 75% of its funding from Pharma and still operates based

*(continued on page 6)*

## Transportation

by Mary Savala



Several local transportation programs have funding that has not been allocated or spent. The Council of Governments is required to report to the state the status of its state funded projects and programs and has found itself with \$1.5 million in excess of what is locally obligated for spending. The Council is urging local agencies to submit plans by June 1, or Fresno County will lose the funds, and money will revert back to the state for allocation elsewhere.

The Measure C Transit Oriented Development Program was unable to allocate almost one half of its \$1.9 million budget this cycle. The criteria for funding was extended in 2017 from exclusive allocation to the City of Fresno to include smaller cities in the county. The three applications which were funded were Fresno's Blackstone/McKinley multifamily housing project; Clovis' improvements in the bike and pedestrian trail adjacent to Old Town Clovis and site improvements and infrastructure for the Clovis Transit Hub; and the Downtown Kingsburg Strategic Plan. Unlike state transportation funds, this year's unspent funding will roll over into next year's pot for allocations. The smaller cities' applications were either inappropriate or incomplete. In the future, the Council will offer an education program for the smaller cities' application process.

The Draft Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Community Strategy and environmental impact report have been released for public comment. The documents can be reviewed at [www.fresnocog.org](http://www.fresnocog.org). Two public hearings are scheduled before the June 1 deadline to submit comments; details are on the Council's web site. There was controversy in the plan development process over policies addressing environmental justice and social equity.

Clovis has announced the installation of two bike and pedestrian counters on Dry Creek and Sugarpine Trails to monitor daily traffic and identify incentives and obstacles to trail use. The daily counts can be checked at Clovis City Home web page. Hopefully other agencies such as the City of Fresno and the Parkway will install similar counters.

# Education

by Kay Bertken



Fresno Unified Trustees continue to consider budget recommendations from the staff. The combined requests for additional funds were substantial.

## Tablets for students

The Information Technology Department is proposing piloting a program to provide low cost tablets to 9<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> graders and pre-K and kindergarten students for “go home” use. The pilot will begin in May through this summer, with each student in these grades receiving one of 24,000 tablets by fall. The IT department is also requesting a number of full time technical staff to support teachers in the use of technology.

The Equity and Access Division is proposing to merge with the Research and Evaluation Department to more effectively coordinate the student data demands of the district. They requested a couple of new staff to supplement their work as they withdraw from a contract with UC Merced, which has been helping with software development and implementation

## More music, special ed

The District music coordinator is requesting five new music instructors so that all 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders will have access to music instruction, while the Special Education Department is requesting 21.5 full time equivalent positions. The special education request is the result of the collective bargaining agreement that was reached with the Fresno Teachers Association calling for a joint special education committee to agree on priority investments for workload and safety issues.

## Added pupil personnel staff

The new positions would include 10 new registered nurses, and 4.5 speech and language therapists to bring the total to 80 in the District. Of the more than 8,000 special education

students, 23% of them have an identified speech/language impairment.

The request also included five additional school psychologists to bring the total to 70. They also proposed expanding the Moderate to Severe



Adult Transition Program which serves students up to 22 years of age. This last

program expansion represents a determination to end the contract with the County Office of Education, a prospect that not all the Board members appreciated.

The Board approved the change of the Phillip Patino School of Entrepreneurship from a 10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade program to a 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade program beginning in fall 2018.

## Inclusionary social studies

It also approved the proposed adoption of new textbook materials for 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade history and social science. These greatly expand the attention given to women and minority contributions, publish weekly updates of current events, and provide suggestions for civic engagement activities.

*You're Invited*

**League 101**

**What we do**

**How to get involved**

**Hors d'oeuvres & conversation**

**Thursday, May 17**

**5—6:30 p.m.**



**741 W. Sierra Madre Avenue**

**Fresno 93705**

**RSVP Marianne \* 270-7939**

## HEALTH CARE

*(continued from page 5)*

in the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act of 1938, which does not allow for comparisons among drugs used for similar purposes or for cost-effective analyses. A long-term goal for a better health care system would be to totally fund the FDA with tax dollars and provide sufficient government support for its efforts to become a grantor for best-practices research. Downstream from these changes, we would see dramatically improved CME and better doctors.

*(Dr. Bertken can be contacted at [drbertken@comcast.net](mailto:drbertken@comcast.net))*

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**\* Alice Powell**

**Member since 1982**

**\*Frank Powell**

**Member since 1999**

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**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.

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