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Monday, May 12
Regular Board Meeting
4 p.m. In person
Stone Soup

Thursday, May 22
Member Meeting
Sharon Weaver
5:30 p.m. In person
Stone Soup

Monday, June 16
Regular Board Meeting
4 p.m. In person
Stone Soup

June 17—22
LWVC Convention

JUNE Zoom

QINQ DE MAYO

May 5

MOTHERS DAY

May 11

MEMORIAL DAY

May 26

THE

FRESNO VOTER

Our 86th Year

JOIN US FOR AN INFORMATIVE GATHERING

Stone Soup

Thursday, May 22 5:30 p.m.

Sharon Weaver

Executive Director

San Joaquin Parkway Trust



Sharon has been the Trust's Executive Director since 2015. During her tenure with the Trust since 1999, Sharon has implemented a variety of major projects including the extension of the Lewis S. Eaton Trail to the River Center, habitat enhancement at Jensen River Ranch, several invasive weed removal projects, and the recent acquisition of Sumner Peck Ranch.

Sharon grew up in Fresno as the child of two educators. She is passionate about land conservation and trails and has taken two cross-country road trips that focused on exploring parks and trails throughout the US.



Sharon is a member and past board member of North Fresno Rotary, and in 2017 was recognized by the California Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America as Executive Director of the Year. She holds a degree in political science from UC Davis.

Co-President's Message



Hope isn't an option. It's an obligation."

I am quoting Frank Bruni, opinion columnist for the New York Times, who wrote about his conversation with an anxious, soon-to-graduate college student looking for some hope about her future. So many things that we have taken for granted about our country are now uncertain, and many of us are reeling. At this moment though, it is hope that is required to motivate positive actions.

In April, Dora Rose, the Deputy Director of LWVC testified in opposition to Assembly Bill 25 which would have imposed further ID requirements on California voters.

"The bottom line here is that California's elections are already secure... AB 25, in fact, mirrors a national coordinated campaign led by the Trump administration to restrict voting rights under the false flag of election integrity. Americans have fought long and hard to overcome our sordid history of voter suppression. We cannot go backwards, and we should not - we must not - build policy on a bed of lies.
The bill failed to get out of committee.

After years working at the Elections Office, Fresno League members know first-hand about the commitment and care with which our elections are handled locally. With Dora, we need to defend that safe and accessible process with our continued participation, our voices when people express doubts, and calls to Senators to stop the SAVE Act. That bill would require increased proof of citizenship for any registration or re-registration and leaves it to the states what proof married women would need if they have adopted their spouse's name—a potentially impossible hurdle for many women.

The National League just announced more for us to do.

"It has now been 87 days since the start of the Trump administration. From the flagrant disregard for congressional authority and governmental checks and balances to the latest action of openly defying the Supreme Court orders to bring

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The Voter is a monthly publication of the LWV Fresno

Mailing address: 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno, CA 93710

Volume 66 No. 5 Editor: Francine M. Farber



April 2025

Retirements: Cathy Caples and Patty Campbell were presented with beautiful orchids in honor of their last Board meeting.

Membership: There are 174 members including 5 students. Their names will be listed in the Voter and possible plans for new member contacts will be discussed,

Annual Meeting: The speakers on April 26 will be the host and the producer of the Central Valley Daily Podcast

Letters: With library funding on the cutting board, we are asking members to send letters to their legislative representatives.

Mural: PBS is interested in using one of their walls but needs to discuss it with their Board. With grant money needing to be spent by June there is some further urgency.

State League Convention: Kay and Robin will be delegates. Sue, Faye, Maureen and Marianne will be observers.

Civic Education: The Board voted to send miniature copies of the Constitution to John Minkler to distribute at the Civic Education Center for Constitution Day in September.

Judiciary Study: The process went well and the official report was submitted and accepted at the national League level.

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.

Climate Action

by Carol Ann Meme



The Climate Action Committee chose as its 2024 Project, to assist the City/County of Fresno with the implementation of SB 1383. This requires residential and business customers to recycle food waste into the green bin for composting instead of putting it in the gray bin as trash. This is vitally important as the degradation of food waste in landfills contributes significantly to methane production and air pollution.

During the year we did several different activities to accomplish this goal:

- ♦ We invited the City of Fresno to a meeting at Stone Soup to discuss progress in implementing this new law. They let us know that the city needed a rate increase for garbage services to pass the city council for them to have the funds to carry this project forward.
- ♦ We contacted our city council representatives and encouraged them to support the rate increase. We attended city council meetings and spoke in support of the rate increase. We are pleased to say that the rate increase passed.
- ♦ We visited the Caglia Environmental Recycling Center to understand how things are recycled and how the food waste would be composted.
- ♦ We contacted all the haulers in Fresno County to interview them about how their implementation of SB1383 was going in their area.
- ♦ We sent out our questionnaire to League members to assess their participation in the programs set up by their haulers.

The questions were:

Are you recycling your food waste into the green bin? (yes or no)

If you are not recycling your food waste, please tell us why.

Housing

by Marianne Kast



Fresno City leaders celebrated the grand opening of Sarah's Court recently. It is an affordable housing development in the Fancher Creek area, near the intersection of Clovis Avenue and Tulare Street in southeast Fresno

Sarah's Court features 119 apartments, 1, 2 and 3-bedroom models, all restricted to residents earning 30-70% of the area median income, which is \$84,300 for 2024. Eligible residents' income could range from approximately \$28,000 to \$58,000.

A second, similar-sized apartment project is planned there in the future, and the site also includes Brandhaven (named for former Fresno mayor, Lee Brand), an occupied, 180-unit residence for seniors.

Mayor Dyer patted the City on the back at this event, noting that in the previous months, Fresno had "supported, facilitated, or subsidized over 1500 affordable housing units."

In an appeal to the Fresno City Council in April, 2023, Lance-Kashian Co, the developers of both Brandhaven and Sarah's Court, asked the City to pay \$2.7 million dollars to cover their costs to connect to Bakman Water District, the water supplier in that area of Fresno. At that time, Brandhaven was completed, ready for occupancy, minus water for drinking and fire-suppression, and Sarah's Court was under construction.

That subsidy was in addition to \$12M the City previously awarded to Sarah's Court as part of the original financing package for the affordable development. The question is how construction of two sizeable housing projects, privately owned, could proceed without completed water infrastructure. That water

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MEMBER NEWS

This column will “catch us up” on members who have joined since 2024. Although previously we used to print new member names and contact information, we stopped doing that when some members felt it was an intrusion on their privacy. But now we have decided to print just names of new members each month. If you need to contact one or more of them, please let Diana Durham, our Membership Chair, know about it and she will help you. She can be reached at Diana.durham@gmail.com.

New Members since 2024

Linea Alexander

Linda Bacon

Gary Barber

Diane Barnes

Lisa Fiorentino

Brooke Frost

Gloria Hernandez

Eve Hudson

Ann Kroeker

Nancy Kyle

Patricia Libby

Stephanie Lynch

Katherine Malcom

Kerry McGuire

Nancy Morgan

Lori Nichols

Mark Scott

Darlyn Swenson

Catalina Ramos

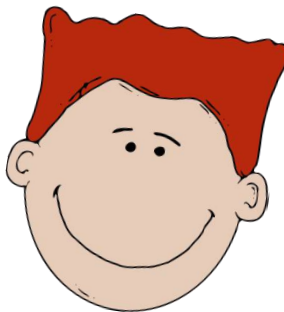
Pamela Runge

Madelyn Snead

Marcia Mason Wilson

Linda Mtamanika

Youngblood



Thanks for joining. We hope to see you at member events. If you'd like to volunteer, contact Diana and she will help point you to the correct contact.

DONATIONS

This month generous donations have been received from
Christine Crossan Boogaert
Bonnie Corcoran
Brooke Frost
Nancy Richardson
Susan Smith
Lenore Yousef

Donations are accepted gratefully. They may be sent for use in the general fund or to a specific program such as voter services or behavioral health.



A donation of \$100 to The Voter will support a business-card size ad for one year in both print and digital forms.

Or you may direct your donation to the RBG Scholarship Fund. This was established after the death of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg by the Farber Family in conjunction with the League. Donations of any size are accepted toward RBG and each \$1,000 provides a one-year scholarship for a worthy student. There have been three annual awards to date.

Donations are also welcomed as part of your estate planning. The League is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization so your contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Climate Action *(continued from page 3)*

Our thought was that if participation was poor, we would continue to work on this project; however, we were very encouraged to see that participation was better than we expected.



Of the ~150 questionnaires that were sent out, 53 were returned. Forty responded that they were recycling their food waste - that's 75.5%! Of the 13 (24.5%) people who responded "No," 5 said they did not have a green bin, 3 said that they compost their own food waste, 2 said they did not know it was a law, 3 said it was too much trouble or that they forget.

Our committee has decided we will support the opposition to the CEMEX proposal for a 100-year lease to do deep pit mining on the San Joaquin River.

Among our other interests, we have a member who is on the FCOG transportation committee and others who attend the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Board meetings. We also attend Fresno County Board of Supervisors Meetings, City Council meetings and other community meetings when climate issues are on the agenda.

memecarolann3@gmail.com

Co-President's Message *(continued from page 2)*

*Kilmar Abrego Garcia back home, one thing is abundantly clear: **our country is in a constitutional crisis.***

*"We the people must fight back. That is why the League of Women Voters is launching a powerful new initiative, **Unite and Rise 8.5**. **Unite and Rise 8.5** will engage and mobilize 8.5 million voters between now and November 2026 to protect and preserve our democratic institutions."*

Follow the evolution of this initiative and other alerts at LWV.org and LWVC.org for more on how to realize our hopes with action

Kay

HOUSING *(continued from page 3)*

system doesn't only benefit the housing projects; it provides water for the Fancher Creek Town Center, a commercial area currently being built out. One wonders how Fresno taxpayers became responsible for a developer's infrastructure costs.

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Voter Services

by Sue Goldman



In searching for activities other organizations are conducting around voter services and voter engagement, I discovered a recent Forbes magazine article that listed non-partisan organizations engaged in these activities. I thought it would be informative for people to know about some of them.

Rock the Vote has long been a leader in using popular culture and media to engage young voters in the political process. They partner with name brand companies to make registration easier.

When We All Vote: Founded by Michelle Obama, it aims to change the culture around voting by making it a positive, community-focused activity. The nonprofit has partnered with household brands like Lyft which will offer discounted rides to the polls during primaries, early voting, and on Election Day across the country.

Vote.org: Vote.org is known for its innovative, digital-first approach to voter registration and turnout, making it easier than ever for people to participate in elections.

HeadCount: It is a nonprofit that merges music and voter engagement, making it a powerful force for increasing voter registration among younger audiences.

Power the Polls is a nonprofit organization dedicated to recruiting a new generation of poll workers to ensure that elections run smoothly and fairly across the U.S.

Voto Latino: Voto Latino is a powerhouse in mobilizing the Latinx community, encouraging civic engagement and voter participation through creative campaigns and brand partnerships

wldtr1951@gmail.com

Education

by Kay Bertken



The Fresno Unified trustees have been occupied with their selection of a new superintendent. By the time you read this, the selection will have been made and announced at the April 23rd board meeting.

Candidates were filtered by the search firm hired by the board, and the finalists were selected and interviewed at a special meeting. The parties to the interview process signed a non-disclosure agreement, pledging to keep the meeting and discussions confidential.

In spite of that, GV Wire did publish a couple of articles soon after the interviews, exposing the candidates and the purported selection. The articles emphasized the dissatisfaction of the Fresno Teachers Association leadership with what they contended was a questionable and possibly “fixed” selection.

Leading up to the selection, the Trustees have been undergoing a process of establishing “goals and guardrails” as I have written about in previous Voters. In addition to focusing the board on its own ambitions and accountability for improved student outcomes, these activities were meant to guide the superintendent selection, to find a candidate capable and committed to reach these targets.

Besides the ambitious student outcome focus and a new administration, Fresno Unified, as well as school districts nationally, are being challenged by the school-focused actions of the federal government: threats to Title I funding for TK-12 districts that might be making any special efforts to serve minority or LGBTQ students; withdrawal of funding for fresh local produce in school meals; efforts to make changes to history curricula and limit libraries; and support for funding private school tuition that could divert resources from public schools.

The imminent closure of the Education Department will, among other things, potentially eliminate its educational research functions, the primary source of data about how our schools and students are faring across the country. It is not the simplest of environments for our schools to navigate.

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Behavioral Health

by Sherri Gibson



The Public Guardian Office manages probate conservatorships and LPS (Lanterman-Petria Short) conservatorships. A conservatorship is when an adult is appointed by the court to manage another adult's needs who cannot manage their own care or financial affairs.



An LPS conservatorship is provided to an individual who is gravely disabled due to mental illness or chronic alcoholism and who is unable to provide for their own

basic needs of food, clothing or shelter. It can also provide treatment for individuals unwilling or incapable of accepting treatment voluntarily. There were sixty individuals under LPS conservatorship in 2024 in Fresno County.

Probate conservatorships are for other individuals who are not mentally or physically capable of meeting their own needs. Often this may be an individual with major neurological disorders such as dementia. When a private conservator is not appointed by the court a public guardian will fulfill that role.

Given the drastic federal cuts currently happening, there is concern over how mental health services will be affected. The federal government is sunsetting some current waivers of Medicaid. States, counties and agencies are evaluating potential implications. Possible Medicaid funding cuts will diminish mental health services

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NEW MEMBERSHIP DUES AS SET BY LWVUS

\$75 RECOMMENDED PER PERSON

Minimum of \$20 per person, including second person at same address and students.

Please renew promptly when requested.

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Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy

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 - \$75 is the recommended amount. However you can choose an amount, with \$20 being the least you can pay. Renew online at <https://portal.lwv.org/>

Please make your check payable to the US League of Women Voters, Fresno, and send to our local office at LWVF, 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno, CA 93710. with registration form below

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