

Phone: 559-226-VOTE

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www.lwvfresno.org



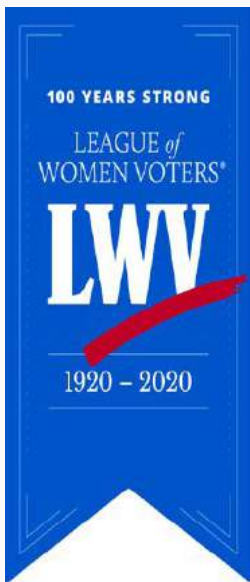
Tuesday, Nov 3  
Election Day

Monday, November 9  
Regular Board Meeting  
4 p.m. on Zoom

Thursday, Nov 12  
Panel Discussion  
Women's Rights  
See page 3

November 17-19  
Web Dialogues; see page 3

November 17-20  
"Elizabeth"  
Suffrage play; See page 3



**The**

**FRESNO**

**VOTER**

**November 12, 4-5 p.m. Women's Rights :**

**Past, Present and Future**

**Panel Discussion:**



**Moderator: (left) Lindsay Callahan**

**Panelists: (1 to r) Alejandra Salazar, Sheriff Margaret Mims,  
Dezie Woods-Jones, Prof. Loretta Kensinger**

**November 17-19 Three day web dialogue to continue  
the discussion. Students and the public can access  
both programs through website [civicedcenter.org](http://civicedcenter.org)**

**Sponsored by the League, The Ethics Center at  
Fresno State, and the Civic Education Center**

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**November 17-20 "Elizabeth Started All the Trouble"**

**A play about Elizabeth Cady Stanton**

**See the premiere Watch Party! Meet the author!**

**November 17, 7 p.m. See page 3 for link information**

**Sponsored by the League and  
the Department of Theatre and Dance, Fresno State**

**Celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment**

## President's Message



WV conventions are great educational experiences. This year's virtual national convention was different from a get-together in person, but still offered opportunities to learn about issues I had not previously considered. Since a new position on the Transfer of Public Lands was to be proposed, I attended a caucus to learn about this topic.

Western states like New Mexico, Utah, Nevada and others have millions of acres of federal lands. Those lands are managed by the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Forest Service, or the Department of Defense.

Efforts continue, initiated by Utah's Transfer of Public Lands Act in 2012, to remove public lands from management by the federal government and put them under state control. States imagine opportunities to obtain revenue, largely recreational, from those lands, but they underestimate the cost of fighting fires, maintaining roads and trails, treating noxious weeds, and conducting habitat restoration. The likely result would be the sale of the lands to the highest bidders, not necessarily those who value America's outdoor heritage.

Varying interpretations of two Constitutional clauses (Article 1, section 8, clause 17, "the enclave clause" and Article 4, section 3, clause 3, "the property clause.") fuel the lands transfer conversation. The Trump administration's move of the land management headquarters from Washington, DC to Grand Junction, Colorado during the past year, signaled support for the public lands transfer idea.

The League of Women Voters of New Mexico and of Utah both conducted studies on this issue. LWVNM proposed that the LWVUS national convention adopt their state position by concurrence. Delegates agreed, and so the League position on the transfer of public lands is this: Public lands should remain under the jurisdiction of the federal government and be managed under established multiple-use-sustained-yield policy. Further, transfer can be considered only if it is in the public interest, and after thorough analysis. Finally, LWVUS is opposed to the sale of public lands to private entities and the transfer of subsurface mineral rights to states or private entities (with a few exceptions). Read more about this position and its background at LWVNew Mexico, and scroll down to Transfer of Public Lands.

*Marianne*

## MEMBER NEWS



### FRIANT LAWSUIT UPDATE

The Fifth District Court of Appeal will hear oral arguments in the Friant Ranch Case on November 18 at 9 a.m. to determine whether Fresno County must **set aside all, some or none of the project approvals granted by the County in 2011 as a condition for amending and recirculating the project's environmental impact report.**

In 2011, the League of Women Voters of Fresno joined with the Sierra Club in filing a lawsuit against the County of Fresno challenging the County's approval of a 2,500-unit residential development adjacent to the community of Friant.

Oral arguments will be by videoconference. You can observe the hearing by going to the Fifth District Court of Appeal website and clicking on **Oral Argument Webcast**. —R. Reep

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

**Please remember us in your estate planning.** Help us continue the fight to defend and build participation in the democratic process. You can designate a gift amount now, or state a gift as a percentage, which will automatically adjust no matter what the future may bring.

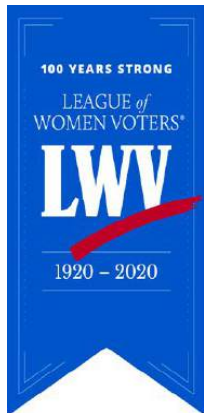


The Voter is a monthly publication of the League of Women Voters of Fresno

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# WOMEN'S RIGHTS: *PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE*



Two community dialogues featuring *Women's Rights: Past, Present and Future*, will be held this month sponsored by the Civic Education Center, the Ethics Center at Fresno State University, and the League of Women Voters of Fresno. Both events celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution which guarantees women the right to vote

The first community dialogue is a livestreaming event on November 12 from 4 to 5 p.m. It will feature four panelists moderated by Lindsay Callahan, Executive Director, United Way Fresno and Madera Counties. The panelists are Dr. Loretta Kensinger, Professor of Women's Studies at Fresno State; Fresno County Sheriff Margaret Mims; Alejandra Salazar, Roosevelt High graduate and student at Stanford University; and Dezie Woods-Jones, president of Black Women Organized for Political Action. The speakers will discuss two topics: the historical and current importance of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment; and in what ways women and girls still are challenged to secure equal rights. The audience will be encouraged to ask questions.

The second event will continue to explore the two topics in a three-day web dialogue that will be available 24 hours a day from November 17-19. The dialogue will provide middle, high school and college students an opportunity to participate in online dialogues with experts and interact with diverse students from across the Central Valley. Adult participation is welcomed.

Local public schools and colleges have been asked to encourage their students and staffs to become involved in both events. The sponsoring organizations have long-standing commitments to education and informed participation. For the past five years, the Civic Education Center has consulted with school districts to train teachers to guide students to appreciate the rights and freedoms we have today, and the responsibilities of service and civic engagement to preserve our constitutional republic. The Ethics Center at Fresno State has partnered with CEC to host Constitution Day dialogues. Our own organization encourages participation in public policy and supports voter education.

Both events are free and open to the public. **In order to participate in the three-day web dialogue, please register in advance at [www.civicedcenter.org](http://www.civicedcenter.org).**

—Francine Farber  
[fmfarber@hotmail.com](mailto:fmfarber@hotmail.com)

## *The Troublemaker:*

**Elizabeth Cady Stanton**

"Elizabeth Started All the Trouble" is a play adapted by Dr. Gina Sandi-Diaz from the book of the same name by prize-winning children's author Doreen Rappaport. Dr Sandi-Diaz is a professor in Fresno State's Department of Theatre and Dance.

As part of the Suffrage Centennial celebration the play, a drama for all ages, will be performed from November 17-20 on YouTube. The "watch party" for the premiere will take place at 7 p.m. on November 17. After that it will be available 24/7 through midnight on November 20.



**To directly access the play on YouTube, including the premiere, send an email to [gsandidiaz@mail.fresnostate.edu](mailto:gsandidiaz@mail.fresnostate.edu), and she will send a link to you personally.**

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was one of the prime movers in the suffrage movement along with Susan B. Anthony and a number of others. She couldn't go to college. She couldn't become a politician. She couldn't even vote. But she didn't let that stop her. She was the main force behind the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention which called on women across the nation to stand together and demand to be treated as equal to men, and that included the right to vote.

Doreen Rappaport is an award-winning children's author who brings attention to not-yet-celebrated Americans, along with well-known figures. Her subjects include Theodore Roosevelt, Jackie Robinson, Abraham Lincoln, Dr. Martin Luther King, the Sacco-Vanzetti trial and others. She is a former teacher of music and reading.

—Francine Farber

## Climate Change

by Radley Reep



Local governments have a role to play in helping California achieve its climate goals. California's *Climate Change Scoping Plan* encourages local governments to adopt goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 80% of 1990 levels by 2050.

Unfortunately, local governments are not required by law to have such plans. In our area, the cities of Reedley and Fresno have climate action plans, but most other jurisdictions do not, including the County of Fresno.

### General plan update

The County of Fresno is in the process of updating its 2000-2020 General Plan Policy Document to extend the life of the plan to 2040. In 2017, as part of that process, the County prepared a General Plan Background Report that contains a chapter on climate change. The 2017 report includes a projection that the temperature in Fresno County is likely to rise between 4.3°F and 7.4°F by 2090. The report also states that for each 1.8°F increase in earth's average temperature, the Sierra snowpack is expected to retreat 500 feet in elevation and that thirty years from now, the Sierra snowpack will be 25% to 40% less than what it is today.

### Climate action plan for Fresno County

In 2012, the County's planning staff recommended that a climate action plan be added to the General Plan. The new policy would read: "The County shall develop and maintain a Climate Action Plan..." This policy would have required the County to regularly monitor greenhouse gas emissions to focus on meeting the state's goals and to ensure that all land use decisions were consistent with the County's climate action plan.

But in 2014, the County's planning staff replaced the word "shall" with the word "should", and in 2017 the planning staff withdrew its recommendation for a climate action plan altogether.

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Water News

by Diane Merrill



October 21 was the sixth annual 'Imagine a Day Without Water.' This national education campaign brings together diverse stakeholders from public agencies, utilities, private business, non-profit and environmental organizations to remind Americans how essential safe and available water is to residents, businesses, and the environment. As our nation struggles with the coronavirus, access to clean water for drinking and sanitation is more important than ever.



A recent economic study by the American Society of Civil Engineers and the Value of Water Campaign found that water infrastructure in the U.S. is aging and in need of repair or replacement. Pipe breaks increased by 27 percent between 2012 and 2018 and are expected to increase by 600 percent in 20 years. At the current level of infrastructure investment, it is estimated that the cumulative capital investment gap will grow to \$2.2 trillion by 2039. By covering half of the capital investment needs, it is estimated that over 700,000 jobs would be created, and the gross domestic product would increase by \$3.5 trillion above baseline projections.

In our region, there are a number of failing water systems in rural communities that lack the means to pay for the maintenance, repairs and upgrades necessary to have a reliable supply of clean water. The 2019 Safe and Affordable Funding for Equity and Resilience program was created to provide ongoing funding to address these issues in low income communities throughout the state. California's Cap and Trade program was identified as the source of \$130 million in annual funding for the program. With the onset of the coronavirus, revenues from this program fell from raising up to \$850 million a quarter to \$25 million in May. Discussions are underway to identify new or additional sources of funding for the program.



## “Notorious RBG” Scholarship

A scholarship at San Joaquin College of Law in memory of Ruth Bader Ginsburg is being established as a partnership between Francine and Murray Farber and the League. The Farbers have donated \$10,000 in order to establish a “Notorious RBG” scholarship, with



**Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg**

League eventually contributing to the scholarship through a fund from donations from members and friends. No money from the League’s budget will be used toward the fund.

The Farbers decided to make a “living bequest” rather than wait for money to pass through their estate. “We wanted to have the pleasure of seeing our efforts help someone who needs support after accumulating college debts,” they said. “When Ruth Bader Ginsburg died, it gave us motivation to develop a scholarship for someone who upholds her ideals.”

Marianne Kast, LWVF president, said “Establishing this scholarship fund gives League members an opportunity to support a cause we are invested in: education that will improve our community. We were honored to award the Bette Peterson scholarships for several years, and similarly, this new venture will connect local students with the League.”

The scholarship will make a \$1,000 award annually to a woman student at SJCL who demonstrates academic achievement, has financial need, and has demonstrated through community service or other involvement a commitment to social justice in gender equity, women’s rights and/or civil rights. The awardee must also demonstrate a desire to use her legal education to advance one or more of these areas.

The college has its own scholarship committee which solicits scholarship applicants and selects winners. Donors are not allowed to participate to avoid conflicts of

## Climate change



*(continued from page 4)*

All is not lost. The Board of Supervisors will not adopt a 2020-2040 General Plan until the spring or summer of 2021. There is ample time for county residents to convince the County’s planning staff and the Board of Supervisors that climate change is a local health and safety issue and that the policies **as originally drafted in 2012**, will reduce the risks of climate change impacts to people, places and resources.

The General Plan Background Report is available on the County’s website. See Chapter 9 for the discussion on climate change. You can make your desire for a Climate Action Plan known to supervisors and to County staff by sending an email to the Board of Supervisors at [BOSScomments@fresnocountyca.gov](mailto:BOSScomments@fresnocountyca.gov) and to Planning Director Steven White at [stwhite@fresnocountyca.gov](mailto:stwhite@fresnocountyca.gov). You can copy League Climate Action Committee member Andrea Farber de Zubiria at [afarberdezub@gmail.com](mailto:afarberdezub@gmail.com).

[radleyreep@netzero.com](mailto:radleyreep@netzero.com)

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interest, but are invited to the awards ceremony each spring.

**If you are interested in making a donation now, you can do so by writing a check to LWVF with RBG Fund in the memo line and sending it to LWVF, 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno CA 93710; it will be forwarded to the college to be placed in the RBG Scholarship Fund.**

San Joaquin College of Law is located in the renovated original Clovis High School building. More than half of its students are first generation college students, and more than half of its students are women. The New Americans Clinic which assists legal immigrants on the path to citizenship and the Family Law Mediation Center are services at the college available without charge.

## Voter Services

by Liz Shields



Thanks to the many volunteers who responded to my alerts for ballot unfolding and phone bank staffing in spite of the corona virus threat.

Ballot unfolding began on October 12 at the Warehouse. Safety precautions for staff and volunteers are in force. Anyone entering the building has to answer some health related questions or have the GoFRESNO app on their phone showing that they have a clean bill of health. Temperatures are taken before entering. Masks are mandatory. Gloves are available. Volunteers at the tables are separated by large plastic sheets hanging between the workers.

Our volunteers were so efficient that over 40,000 ballots were unfolded in two days. The initial deluge of ballots is slowed and a short lull was expected until close to Election Day.

Phone bank work started on October 12 due to the large volume of callers. This continued the following week as voters had been advised to call if their ballots had not been delivered by that date. Initially we were at the Elections Office as in previous years but we were moved to the 600 Club Room at Chukchansi Park on October 21.

Sue Goldman and I finished our four presentations on the propositions to the groups who requested them. People were pleased with our presentations and one member was especially grateful. This person had heard Sue's presentation on the rent control proposition and realized that her landlord had increased her rent by more than the allowed amount. She sent a letter to her landlord and had her rent increase reduced!

Marianne, Sue and Janet Baker completed candidate interviews for the three local school districts' board positions. All the races are posted on Voters Edge with a link from Voters Edge to YouTube.

We are still recruiting volunteers for ballot unfolding which will continue for at least a week after the election. The phone bank also needs recruits until Election Day. Please call or email to offer your help.

[elizs44@yahoo.com](mailto:elizs44@yahoo.com); 559-298-5183

## Behavioral Health

by Carolyn Evans



Staff members who provided support to victims of the Creek Fire were honored by the Department of Behavioral Health. Staff members spent many days in the area, serving evacuees who were experiencing uncertainty about their futures and the resulting trauma, and even accompanied residents back to their burned-out homes to offer empathy and support.

### County purchases property for Department

The county has sold the Kings Canyon/Cedar Avenue campus where many Department of Behavioral Health services are located. The Department will move its programs to other locations over a three-year period. The Director reported that the County has purchased new property at 5555 E. Olive Avenue to house its Adult Mental Health Services. In addition, the existing buildings on Olive Avenue are spacious enough to house Children's Services that are currently located at Millbrook and Shields, where the County rents space.

The quarterly housing report to the Board included information on The Lodge, which will be opening this month. It is a 30 bed, short-term housing facility targeting adults with severe mental illness, facing homelessness, and currently not engaged in behavioral health services. Referrals will come from emergency rooms, psychiatric hospitals, and the Crisis Intervention Team. Hopefully, individuals will be linked to services and housing within 45 days.

### New supportive housing opens

As for permanent supportive housing, the first project built with No Place Like Home funding is schedule to open in December, and will provide 27 apartment units. The Department is in negotiations with a contractor to provide supportive services to these units, as well as to existing Supportive Housing programs.

The Board is awaiting the completion of the Mental Health Services Act 3-Year Plan that will describe new and existing programs provided with MHSA funding. There have been some delays due to the pandemic, but the Plan is expected to be released before the end of the year. After the 30-day posting period, the Board will hold a public hearing where county residents will have an opportunity for input.

[evansalca@comcast.net](mailto:evansalca@comcast.net)

## DIFFICULT ELECTIONS ARE THE NORM

by Francine M. Farber

**S**o you think it is unique to allow people to vote for president during an entire month?

In George Washington's Day there was no single Election Day. Instead, our first presidential election took place from December 15 through January 10, 1789, when Washington ran unopposed. Although his inauguration was supposed to be held on March 4, it was postponed until April to give him time to travel from Virginia to New York. Washington ran again four years later, also unopposed, and again the election was held over a month-long period.

Inauguration Day remained on March 4 for more than a century unless it was a Sunday, in which case it was postponed until March 5. In 1933 Congress authorized January 20 as Election Day. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was the first president to be inaugurated on that day in 1937.

It wasn't until 1796 that the presidential election was contested. John Adams won on the Federalist Party platform while Thomas Jefferson was the candidate from the Democratic-Republican Party. Four years later, the two men had become enemies and both ran again. The campaign was a bitter one, with Federalists attempting to identify the Democratic-Republicans with the violence of the French Revolution and the Democratic-Republicans accusing the Federalists of favoring monarchism and aristocracy. This time Jefferson won. **But each state had been allowed to choose its own election day so the election continued for seven months, from April until October.**

James Madison and James Monroe were each elected during a month-long period. Then John Quincy Adams, son of the second president, was opposed by Andrew Jackson. Adams was supported by the Federalist Party while Jackson was nominated by the Democratic-Republicans. Elections in this period were vastly different from modern day presidential elections. The actual candidates were rarely mentioned on tickets and voters were voting for specific electors who were pledged to a particular candidate. With two other candidates also in the running, neither man received a ma-

jority of electoral votes. As authorized by the 12<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution, the vote was sent to the House of Representatives, which elected Adams. Contention erupted as some electors insisted that the balloting took place when Indiana was still a territory and not a state. Next election, Jackson succeeded to the presidency.

In 1848 William Henry Harrison was elected as the oldest president at age 67, until the election of President Trump four years ago at the age of 70. Unfortunately, Harrison died exactly one month into his term and was replaced by his vice president, John Tyler. Tyler served out the term, did not get elected on his own, and thus became the first vice president who succeeded his president because of death.

In addition to election battles, the executive offices of many of our presidents were stained by serious charges. Andrew Johnson was impeached under the Tenure of Office Act, but acquitted by one vote. Ronald Reagan's administration saw the Iran Contra affair. America sold arms to Iran and then used the money from the sale to help overthrow the Nicaraguan government. Under President Nixon the Democratic Committee's National Headquarters at the Watergate Hotel was broken into by government operatives. Nixon resigned in August 1974 rather than face impeachment. President Clinton is still haunted by accusations of sexual affairs and inappropriate behavior which led to his impeachment and subsequent acquittal. And then of course there was the impeachment and acquittal of President Trump for alleged solicitation of foreign interference in the 2020 election.

**Scandals too numerous to mention have unfortunately been the hallmark of government politics throughout the ages. Remember, Nero was accused of fiddling while Rome burned.**



## LWVC RECOMMENDS PROPOSITIONS

The following recommendations have been published by the League of Women Voters of California. A great deal of information on each proposition is available in the State's Voter Information Guide which includes arguments and rebuttals for each of the propositions. The authors of each proposition are also listed as is background information and legislative analysis.

- ◆ **Yes** on prop 15 Increases funding for public schools, community colleges and local government services by changing tax assessment of commercial and industrial property
- ◆ **Yes** on prop 16 Allows diversity as a factor in public employment education and contracting decisions
- ◆ **Yes** on prop 17 Restores voting rights after completion of prison term
- ◆ **Yes** on prop 18 Permits 17 year olds to vote in primary and special elections if they will turn 18 by the next general election
- ◆ **No** on prop 19 Changes certain property tax rules
- ◆ **No** on prop 20 Restricts parole for certain non-violent offenses
- ◆ **No** on prop 24 Amends consumer privacy laws
- ◆ **Yes** on prop 25 Referendum on replacing bail with system based on public safety and flight risk
- ◆ The State League makes no recommendation on propositions 14, 21, 22, 23

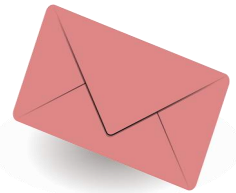


**YOU  
REALLY  
HAVEN'T  
VOTED  
YET?**



**YOU  
STILL HAVE  
A FEW DAYS**

**MAIL IT**



**DROP IT  
IN A BOX**

**VOTE  
IN PERSON**



**JUST  
DO  
IT!**







Education news is primarily about plans to return to face-to-face instruction in a time of rising COVID cases in the country, including in some schools that have been open.

Fresno Unified and other area districts had previously opened to small cohorts of special needs students—self-contained groups of special education, second language learners and students with connectivity issues, including homeless and foster youth. Many districts had also applied for waivers to open their elementary schools.

Because of a lower positivity rate and number of cases that were sustained for two weeks as of September 29, Fresno County moved from a purple to a red tier that allows slightly more flexibility. After a further required waiting period, on October 14 schools were allowed to submit plans to reopen schools to preschool-twelfth grade. Schools still must abide by all mitigation provisions—six-foot distancing, group size limitations, masking requirements, surveillance testing and contact tracing.

### Small cohorts have returned

Those provisions seriously limit what might occur in county districts. Fresno Unified has cohorts of special needs students back in the schools. They also have small cohorts of athletes back for physical conditioning along with students coming to schools for special education assessments. For the remainder of students, the District has adopted a go-slow approach and will phase in any return to in-classroom learning. Superintendent Nelson said that FUSD class

rooms are simply not big enough to meet the six-foot distancing requirements that will pertain even if the county moves to the orange and yellow tiers.

### Working on student return

The district is currently working with its labor partners to negotiate what any return will look like. Current planning imagines starting with the lowest grades first, possibly in a hybrid model providing part-time in-class and part-time online learning, possibly on staggered days. Superintendent Nelson indicated that most students will not be back this semester. Secondary students, who would be much more difficult to keep from socializing, will be the last to return. Nelson and Jim Yovino, Fresno County Superintendent, have said that families will continue to have the option to maintain virtual learning.

Yovino has assured the community that once schools do reopen, they will not shut down broadly again. Any outbreaks will be targeted specifically by the schools in coordination with the Health Department.

This month the Board saw the Strategic Plan that the staff has developed on the basis of communications with 66,000 students, parents, community and staff constituents. The plan includes vision, mission statements and goals. In February the Board and public will hear more as the goals are populated with specific objectives and general and equity metrics.

The Board has been very busy in the virtual world. The District commitment to enhanced student voice has

resulted in a collaborative with multiple student groups working on issues they have identified. Those groups reported to the Board on their meetings. A discussion of the district transfer process elicited board member concerns about a lack of diversity in some programs and a need to prioritize district students.

An anti-racist proclamation prompted vigorous pushback to Trustee Slatic's "no" vote. His vote rested on his contention that the district personnel were "color blind." The Board delayed any discussion of the controversial contracts for police and sheriff officers on the campuses until the



District has had more conversations with constituents.

A career technical education update described district investments in facilities and equipment and the extensive working relationships with local business/industry partners that have enhanced the programs. Facilities staff presented opportunities for new projects to attract state grant funds that might demand some reprioritizing of bond fund expenditures. A subsequent board meeting will allow trustees to consider any impact on other bond projects.

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## Health Care

by Richard Bertken, M.D.



Piecemeal, stopgap, expedient—words that describe the unique history of American healthcare.

State-based workers' compensation health programs emerged in the first half of the 1900's and were in place in all states by 1950. Individual and employer-based insurance and the VA healthcare system experienced steady growth from the mid-1940's to the present time. The Indian Health Service emerged in 1955. The Great Society gave us Medicaid and Medicare in 1965. A military careerist insurance plan was set up in 1966 (now known as Tricare). To fill in the vast remaining gaps, the Federally Qualified Health Centers started as a few rural clinics in 1969 and grew to 14,000 sites by 2020; and the Affordable Care Act insured about 30 million people.

Yet this year about 28 million US residents have no insurance. The operation of all these agencies invites redundancy, which explains why the U.S. spends four times as much on healthcare administration as any other advanced country.

### Presidents advocated national healthcare

None of this duplication was advocated by our presidents. On the contrary, Teddy Roosevelt forcefully endorsed national healthcare for everyone. So did FDR, and had he survived he would have advanced a universal healthcare bill already formulated as part of Social Security. Harry Truman sponsored a government-financed healthcare bill but ran up against a Republican Congress and a new meme of the time: "socialized medicine." In fall of 1952, President Dwight Eisenhower advocated government subsidies for citizens unable to afford their health care—channeling Obamacare without results.

In the spring of 1962, President John F. Kennedy gave a grand speech from Madison Square Garden, televised on all three networks, to attract support for a federal program to provide healthcare to the elderly. It had no impact, probably due to the context of a space race with Russia. Lyndon Johnson led us to our Great Society programs, Medicare and Medicaid, which we take for granted today. Nixon proposed cost and quality controls in

government-sponsored healthcare, including HMO's, capitated payments, and quality review boards—all ideas far ahead of their time. These all died with Watergate but saw healthy resurrection in government medicine in the last two decades.

All subsequent presidents until Obama were overshadowed by two healthcare stalwarts: Teddy Kennedy in the 80's and Hillary Clinton in 1994-95. They were thwarted by the perceived excessive ambition and complexity of their plans. In the background were many Americans who believed—largely on faith—that their existing health plans were quite good and well-earned.

### Other countries get more for their money

Because of the enormous inflation in the costs of Medicare and Medicaid since their inception, there was legitimate concern about containing costs of universal care plans. This consideration has always been complicated by the difficulty of costing out the *dollar value* of effective healthcare in the whole population. We are certainly not getting our money's worth now, as judged by comparison with other developed countries, which get generally equal or better results but pay on average *half* of our current rate per patient.

We are currently watching our healthcare spending balloon toward 3.8 trillion dollars yearly. We pay more for every aspect of our healthcare—physician services, lab and imaging fees, hospital and clinic room charges, medications, medical devices, administration—than any other developed country.

### Universal healthcare is possible here

Moving to a budget-based universal healthcare plan will be difficult, but there is no option for a healthy society. It will require major capital investment. But there is a silver lining in the current accounting of our healthcare costs. Once we are up and running at, say, 2 trillion dollars annually—more like other modern liberal democracies—we will be discovering 1.8 trillion dollars in our general economy every year. This would recoup our capital startup costs. We might even start finding money to help pay for mitigation of carbon dioxide pollution, adaptation to global warming, expansion of infrastructure and housing projects, and developing a healthier, more egalitarian economy.

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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 - \$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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