LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS* OF FRESNO

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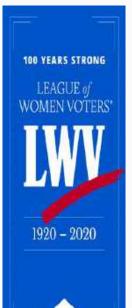
Web site: www.lwvfresno.org



Monday, October 12 Regular Board Meeting 4 p.m. via ZOOM

Member Meeting Fresno Police Reform Commission More info later

Members and Guests invited to all League meetings and events



The

FRESNO

VOTER

Suffrage Centennial events are continuing ...

A booklet featuring **100 Notable Women from Fresno**, and a second booklet with a **Chronology of Events Related to the 19th Amendment**, have been sent to League members and others. Photos of the women are available on our website . Thanks to the Centennial Committee: Angelica Carpenter, Terri Figgs, Micheline Golden, Sue Goldman, Marie Slater, Nyla Zender and Chair Francine Farber. Special thanks to Howard Watkins and Marianne Kast.





The History of Women in the Military is featured on the CVMD website. Go to www.clovisveteransmemorialdistrict and scroll down to Women in the Military. Each photo that you click on opens up into a historical vignette. Thanks to CEO and PBS chief Lorenzo Rios and his staff.

"Elizabeth Started All the Trouble" is an adaptation of a children's book by Doreen Rappaport into a play for all ages by Fresno State Theater Department, diected by Gina Sandi-Davis. It will be shown on-line November 17-20. The author is expected to speak about her book. Specific information will be sent to you soon.





The world premiere of an original chorale work by Korean composer Joungmin Sur and directed by Dr. Anna Hamre of the Fresno Community Chorus will be performed by Coro Solare and Quintus, accompanied by a string quintet and with a poem by Glady Ruiz, a Fresno poet. Titled **"A Hundred Years of a Thousand Tries,"** this work will be performed live, if possible, at a later date. Sponsored by the League Centennial Fund, the Foundation at FCOE and the Fresno Arts Council.

Celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment

President's Message



hen the Creek Fire broke out on September 4, The Fresno Bee dropped its paywall for non-subscribers and began providing frequent updates on the progress of the fire and the disposition of communities and neighborhoods in the nearby mountains. Yet, in this digital age, more timely information came from the CalFire website, the Mountain Mouth Facebook page, live video casts by Supervisor Nathan Magsig, Twitter feeds and other free sources.

There was a time when we relied exclusively on local news outlets like The Bee to keep us informed during disasters. But two decades of shrinking newsrooms have changed how we get our news. And unfortunately, it has also affected what news we get.

Advertising revenues for print journalism are a sliver of what they once were, shifting the burden of support for newspapers to subscribers. Readily accessible free sources of news have eliminated all but the most ardent newspaper subscribers. As a result, there are fewer reporters and editors, and fewer aspects of our community that can be covered.

The League's work is inextricably tied to local news. We cannot attend every public meeting in our county, so we rely on reporting to help us keep track of local decisions. The lack of media presence means less scrutiny of decisions made and less meaningful oversight for public officials.

One way The Fresno Bee has sought to fill in this missing coverage is by creating non-profit news groups within their organization that solicit grants and private donations to fund local reporting. The *fresnoland* Lab, which focuses on housing, water, neighborhoods and inequality in the Central Valley, and the Education Lab, which reports on K-12 as well as higher education in the Central Valley, are examples of this type of partnership.



Throughout the state and nation we see numerous examples of non-profit news organizations. CalMatters, Zocolo Public Square, Voice of San Diego are non-profit newsrooms which supplement shrinking regional news coverage.

One way we can support local and regional news is to maintain our subscriptions to local news sources. In addition, donations to these collaborative reporting efforts are critical to making democracy work.



The Voter is a monthly publication of the League of Women Voters of Fresno Mailing address: 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno, CA 939710 Volune 79, No. 10 Editor: Francine M. Farber

MEMBER NEWS



KAREN GOODMAN

Long-time member Karen Goodman passed away on September 8. Karen joined the League in 1971 and would have become a Life member in a few months. She served as Program Planning Director on the League Board for many years and also served as Finance Director. Karen worked in support of the San Joaquin River Parkway and made long-term efforts to help the homeless. She is fondly remembered for her good humor and optimism and her volunteer work, including a stint for the Peace Corps in Bulgaria along with her husband.

• To protect member privacy,

information about new members and changes in contact information for current members will no longer appear in the Voter.

- Members will receive an e-mail periodically with updates that can be added to your roster.
- We will continue to print brief obituaries on our members.

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 de-

fend 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.



Climate Change



by Andrea Farber De Zubiria

One of the best things we can do to start to fix our climate problems is to actually talk about our climate problems. And it seems like the amount of talk is finally increasing. Referring to California's huge August and September fires (occurring even before our typical fire season), Governor Newsom called it "a climate damn emergency".

Climate change looks like it's going to become a bigger campaign issue in the last few weeks before the November election. In a recent statement, Joe Biden said the Western wildfires may be the beginning of an "unending barrage of tragedies" should the world not curb climate-warming emissions. He called for the power sector to eliminate carbon pollution over the next 15 years. In contrast, President Trump and many Republican leaders have blamed the fires solely on forest management.

Most fire experts say we need to address both problems to try to prevent more megafires. It is true that a history of suppressing natural fires has led to overcrowded forests. But the hotter climate, with its longer warm and dry season, has caused soils to dry out, and many trees have been damaged by the bark beetle proliferation. The week before this past round of fires saw some of the hottest temperatures ever recorded in California. Once fires start from things like equipment error, campfires left unattended, cigarettes, arson and lightning (which some sources say is increasing due to a warming climate), the weather conditions combine with the forest conditions to create the kind of devastating fire situation we have been experiencing.

As we move into the election season, you may have the opportunity to speak with political candidates in online forums. If so, please ask them what actions and legislation they will support that address both forest management *and* climate change.

Find out what climate-related legislation the California League of Women Voters is supporting at the LWV Climate Change Task Force website. Sign up for a monthly text on the day of your choice to remind you to call your member of Congress and ask for legislation to address climate change at www.cclcalls.org.

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Water News



by Diane Merrill

The San Joaquin River is a major source

of surface water for human use and groundwater recharge for Central Valley Project water users on the east side of the San Joaquin Valley from Madera County to Kern County. In Fresno County, this includes the cities of Fresno and Orange Cove, the Fresno Irrigation District, and several smaller irrigation districts. The San Joaquin River system also provides local water supplies for mountain and foothill communities, flood control, recreation, hydropower generation, and a home for aquatic species.

The Creek Fire is a high intensity fire burning in the headwater forest of the San Joaquin River. Major fires can influence the magnitude and timing of snowmelt runoff, which influence the filling of lakes and reservoirs. There is the potential for major debris and sediment flows from burned areas into the San Joaquin and its tributary streams.



With climate change modeling predicting periods of drought followed by high intensity storms, Shaver Lake, Huntington Lake, Mammoth Pool, and other upstream reservoirs will likely trap quantities of sediment and debris from storm runoff, decreasing reservoir life and increasing maintenance costs. The larger Millerton Lake reservoir, located at the base of the foothills, may be somewhat insulated from debris and sediment build-up.

The United States Geological Survey monitors water quality and sediment characteristics in rivers and reservoirs impacted by fires. This data helps scientists and water managers evaluate the cumulative effects of fire and the potential water quality issues. Per the USGS, water treatment and sludge removal costs could increase in order to deal with turbidity from suspended material, or with heightened iron and manganese concentrations in drinking water.

Voter Services

by Liz Shields

We are geared up for many activities in this busy election s eason. In keeping with National Voter Registration Day on September 22, voter registration forms were delivered to retirement homes in the area. Information on online registration and the county plea for election workers were sent to high school teachers in Fresno County.

In addition, voter information material was placed in the newsletters for Fresno Unified and Clovis Unified teachers. Posters and stickers publicizing the day with information on registering to vote online were distributed to area locations such as cultural centers, ethnic restaurants and grocery stores by Marianne Kast, Judi Steele, Pat Duncan and myself.

Marianne, Sue Goldman and Janet Baker are working hard to set up candidate interviews. The team will focus on the local school district races and has assembled questions dealing with current issues. All the races will be posted on Voters Edge with a link from Voters Edge to YouTube.

For voter information, to register online, to check your registration status and to track your mail-in ballot, go to the Fresno County Clerk website and scroll down to "For Elections." Many options will be available to you.

Presentations on the propositions began with a Zoom program for the Clovis Democratic Club by Sue Goldman and myself. League members heard a Zoom presentation on September 30. Easy Voter Guides were shipped in September and distribution sites are similar to those for NVRD posters. If you would like copies for organizations please contact me at 559-298-5183 and I'll be happy to deliver.

Fresno County Office of Education was reminded about High School Voter Education Weeks last month and about the statewide Student Mock Elections scheduled for October 6⁻ Fresno State and the State Center Community College system were contacted about compliance with the new Student Civic and Voter Empowerment Act and designation of a Coordinator for it.

Thank you to the many volunteers who responded to alerts for ballot unfolding and phone bank staffing. The Ware-*(continued on page 8)*

Behavioral Health



by Carolyn Evans

At its September meeting the Behavioral Health Board heard a presentation on racism and the resulting trauma in the African American community. Judge LaDoris Cordell, retired from the Superior Court for the County of Santa Clara, gave a historical perspective leading to the alarming circumstances in our country today.

In response, the Department of Behavioral Health told of its efforts to recruit diverse professionals to better serve our diverse community, its development of relationships with African American communities through faith-based partnerships, its support and education on diversity for all of its staff members, and its efforts to reduce stigma associated with behavioral health treatment services, especially in diverse and underserved communities. Our Board is committed to advocating for improved services for our entire community, with emphasis on the African American community.

Judge Cordell also served as Independent Police Auditor for the City of San Jose, so was interested in Fresno County's training of law enforcement officers. The Department briefly discussed our Crisis Intervention Team that includes mental health clinicians who accompany officers on behavioral health-related calls. Unfortunately, the Fresno Police Reform Commission does not include anyone from the behavioral health community; however, members have held conversations with Department representatives.

Under the revised (as of 2019) Substance Use Disorders System of Care clients are to receive enhanced outpatient and/or intensive outpatient services. Along with residential treatment programs, clients are to receive recovery services, including case management. The number of clients and of services have declined during the pandemic, though telehealth services have increased. There is some concern about the care being provided to individuals with substance use disorders.

September was Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month. The annual Sober Stock Celebration of Recovery was virtual this year. September also was Suicide Prevention and Recovery month.

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by Kay Bertken

It has been an extraordinary time for school districts around the state as they deal with the opening of a school year radically different from the usual face-to face interactions between teachers and their new classrooms of students. Recent declines in local Covid cases signal that there may be some possibility soon of waivers that would allow the return of elementary aged students to their schools. In the meantime. Fresno Unified has been dealing with the current reality of virtual learning.

Attendance monitored

At its last meeting in September, the FUSD Board discussed programs that the district has initiated to connect with students and parents. To ensure that all students are present and capable of participating in distance learning, a new coding system flags students who have not logged in to their online classroom and initiates follow-up including home visits.

A report from principals and teachers expressed special enthusiasm for the designated daily family connection time each morning and afternoon that allowed for timely supports for students and parents.

The district is maintaining two call centers: a tech support center that has been handling thousands of calls a day to provide or replace equipment and instruct parents and students on using the equipment; another is a COVID call center manned by Parent University that is also getting thousands of calls.

Food distribution continues

The district has also been sponsoring town hall gatherings and livestream information sessions and is still providing a massive food distribution program.

The State of California has replaced its annual Local Control Accountability Plan with a required Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan that addresses this year's altered education program and how budgets are aligned to those programs. Trustees voted to approve the FUSD plan with the provision that the district continue to connect and solicit feedback from all sectors of the community. A copy of the plan is available on the district website.



Cultural Proficiency Training

At a special Board workshop, trustees participated in some of the activities that are part of the cultural proficiency training that is being provided to all district staff. The Board has committed the district to the program that aims to reduce the unconscious bias that students of color have testified they face in classrooms. The training adds to

Next Board Meetings: Oct. 7 & 21

Special Board Meetings: Oct. 14 & 28

other efforts the district has initiated to address the learning and discipline gaps that impact those students.

New community school

The district has broken ground on the Juan Felipe Herrera Elementary School in southeast Fresno. The school will be one of the schools in the district providing a bilingual program. It is being planned as a community school, providing one of the district's health clinics and accessible soccer fields.



PRESCHOOL UPDATE

Members of our Education Committee met with the head of early learning from Fresno Unified to find out how early learning looked this year. A partnership with PBS provides early morning preschool and kindergarten programming presented by FUSD teachers. That programming starts at 7:30 a.m. and involves visual arts and social emotional learning.

The district virtual preschool day starts at 9:00 and is split between morning and afternoon sessions. Each session runs for two and onr half hours, with no more than 30 minutes at a time online. Each session provides time after the class for family connection with the teacher.

(continued on page 7)

Health Care



by Richard Bertken, M.D.

ust as I decided to write on this subject, the Central California Faculty Medical Group and Community Hospitals of Central California (CHCC) reached an agreement to extend funding, temporarily, for 28 faculty members of the UCSF-Fresno postgraduate training program.

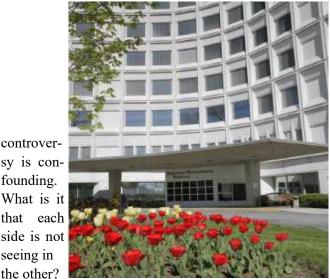
Prior to this, both sides had staked out extremely contentious positions in a collective bargaining process. CHCC declared a deadline for the Medical Group to sign a contract that did not provide for specific salary targets nor for the usual academic activities and independence necessary for a productive medical faculty. The Group ignored the deadline and instead went to the press, proclaiming that their panel of neurosurgeons (six of the 28 affected faculty members) was striking, potentially closing the only Level 1 trauma center between Los Angeles and Sacramento.

That type of hardball is shocking for two public service organizations that are, in biological terms, symbiotic. Each depends on the other for healthy survival.

Three partners in local health care

And there is a third dependent partner: the Fresno VA Hospital, staffed under the aegis of UCSF-Fresno. The future of health care in Fresno would be severely wounded by a prolonged wrangling of this sort. In initiating what would become UCSF-Fresno in 1973, Congress (Public Law 92-541) recognized the need for shoring up primary care resources in Central California. By attracting hundreds of trainees to our city who staved on to practice here, the vision of Congress has proven enlightened.

Recently our state legislature allocated funds to UCSF-Fresno for expanding existing training programs and to provide formal clinical education to medical students from UCSF and UC Merced. In that context, this new



controversy is confounding. What is it that each side is not seeing in

Value of hosting Community Hospital

I worry that the attorneys, accountants, and other community scions who are voting members of Community's Board of Directors may not grasp the full value of the imprimatur of UCSF, one of the great medical schools in the world. It is possible that they may not even appreciate the value of being a teaching hospital. These benefits come at a cost that can be computed. Teaching and learning physicians are less productive in strict monetary terms because of their academic responsibilities. But the value of being a teaching hospital, and especially a teaching hospital that is part of the UCSF campus, does not lend itself to cost-benefit analysis.

The Board and all of Fresno should know that affiliation of the Fresno VA and CHCC with UCSF facilitates the recruitment of high-quality physicians who would otherwise choose another location to complete their training or start or continue their careers. UCSF-Fresno also provides an ongoing source of health education for the community and its practicing physicians, many of whom are graduates of the program.

CHCC is a large health care enterprise with major components not linked to its relationship to UCSF-Fresno. Like most US hospitals, it has a complex and precarious budget. It has complex relationships with its business partners that have resulted in copious lawyering. CHCC management, like we stakeholders in UCSF-Fresno, probably would

(continued on page 7)



Four women in law enforcement who have risen to the top of their professions are all honored in the League's "100 Notable Women" project. (left to right) Judge Hilary Chittick, Elizabeth Egan, Sheriff Margaret Mims, Linda Penner.

Photo by Howard K. Watkins

HEALTH CARE

(continued from page 6)

like to see more resources flowing from UCSF, itself chronically coping with budgetary problems. It is inviting to say that the tiff is attributable to management just being stressed out (what with Covid and all). Unfortunately, this latest and nastiest negotiation has been preceded by progressively contentious ones over the last decade. We should ask our local state legislators to join up in a sustained effort to assess the issues and provide the needed healing. After all, they have envisioned and funded growth of this invaluable asset to their districts. *rbertken@comcast.net*

New Local Policy for LWVF on Member Privacy

The League Board of Directors periodically updates its Local Policies. In the most recent review on September 14, 2020, a section on Member Privacy Protection was added. The section is re-printed below.

Member Privacy Protection

- A. The League shall respect the privacy of its members, including their membership status and their contact information.
- B. The League's annual publication of the Roster shall be mailed in hard copy form to members only. The Roster shall not be sent to anyone other than members, nor posted on our web site. Members shall not share this information with other individuals or organizations.

C. New member information and changes for current members shall be sent via email to Board members by the treasurer and/or membership director as it occurs. It shall no longer be published in the Voter, except for death notices.

D. A running list of new member information and changes shall be maintained by the membership director. At the completion of every quarter beginning as of September 30,2020 (July – September, October-December, January-March, April – June) the membership director, after verifying this information, shall email it to members only.

Preschool Update

(continued from page 5)

Of concern to the district is that our state has been slow to provide guidelines for the preschool programs. While districts have been "held harmless," there are no standards that the providers need to be held accountable for. The standards are evidently still in development. The preschool and kindergarten enrollments are down by about a half this year. Parents in our area need day care for their children, and an online program is inadequate to that need. The district is looking for ways to connect with family and friend caregivers of their students in order to provide their programs at those day care provider sites. Contact with the Fresno County Department of Education Early Learning Department indicated that while some day care providers in the county have closed, 165 out of the 241 center-based providers are open and 92% of family providers are still operating. The county office partners with the Central Valley Children's Services Network to help direct families to a provider. *kayb@csufresno.edu*

7

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 ٠ 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 ٠ term
- Yes on prop 18 Permits 17 year olds to vote in primary and spe-٠ cial elections if they will turn 18 by the next general election
- No on prop 19 Changes certain property tax rules ٠
- No on prop 20 Restricts parole for certain non-violent offenses
- No on prop 24 Amends consumer privacy laws
- ٠ 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, Due to Covid 19, oral arguments are likely to be ٠ 22, 23

Voter Services

(continued from page 4)

The Warehouse where we unfold the ballots has been remodeled to comply with Covid-19 regulations and ensure the safety of staff and volunteers. It has also had air conditioning installed. Safety precautions have been instituted for staff and volunteers including taking temperatures and social distancing. Phone bank volunteers will be located in the Club Room of Grizzly Stadium with plenty of room for social distancing. As soon as I hear from the Elections Department I will start scheduling times. Please contact me if you have not heard from me and would like to help with either of these important services for the Elections Department.

Ballot unfolding may start as early as October 12 and continue for at least two weeks after the election. The phone bank may start on October 26 and continue until 8 p.m. on Election Day.

Friant Ranch Update

by Radley Reep

The Fresno League's protracted court case against Fresno County for the approval of a 2,500-unit residential development near the town of Friant may be coming to a close. Oral arguments before the Fifth District Court of Appeal will take place this fall probably in November.

In December 2018, the California Supreme Court ruled in favor of the League and Sierra Club. As a result, the Fresno County Superior Court mandated that the County vacate its approval of the Friant Ranch project and not reapprove it without first revising the environmental impact report (EIR) to adequately evaluate potential health problems arising from the production of air pollutants associated with the project's development.

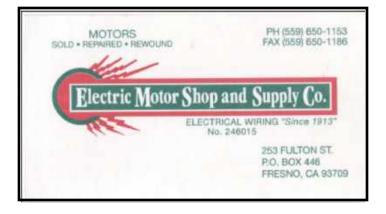
Displeased with the superior court's action, Friant Ranch filed an appeal in September 2019 with the Fifth District Court of Appeal, claiming that the superior court overstepped its bounds by requiring the County to set aside all project approvals as part of the process of revising the EIR.

conducted through videoconferencing, in which case, they will be live streamed.

Fresno County General Plan

Each year state law requires the County to prepare a report on its progress in implementing its General Plan. The report for calendar year 2019 was presented to the Planning Commission last month.

The Planning Commission was so displeased with the content of the report that it voted to forward it to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation that it not be accepted as written. The report is inaccurate, and it lacks critically important information required by law. The Board of Supervisors will consider the matter at a public hearing in October or November.





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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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