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Monday, September 12, 4 p.m.  
Regular Board Meeting  
ZOOM

To join our ZOOM meeting,  
please request the link at  
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Monday, October 10, 4 p.m.  
Regular Board Meeting  
LWVF Stone Soup Office



Members and guests are  
welcome at all League  
meetings and events.

# The FRESNO VOTER

*Our 81st Year!*

## Local measures, too:

### State and County propositions fill ballot

by Sue Goldman

Voter Services is gearing up for the November election. We will be sending out a request for volunteers to staff the phone bank and ballot opening. In addition, we are preparing presentations on the various ballot measures. There are seven state-wide measures, two county-wide measures and a number of city specific measures.

#### State-wide measures include:

**Proposition 1 - SCA10 (Resolution Chapter 97, Statutes of 2022. Reproductive freedom:** This is a constitutional amendment which enshrines the right to choose in the California Constitution. It has already passed the Senate and Assembly. It states, “The state shall not deny or interfere with an individual's reproductive freedom in their most intimate decisions, which includes their fundamental right to choose to have an abortion and their fundamental right to choose or refuse contraceptives.”

**Proposition 26 – Authorizes New Types of Gambling Initiative. Constitutional and Statutory Amendment:** Allows federally recognized Native American tribes to operate roulette dice games, and sports wagering on tribal lands, subject to compacts negotiated by the Governor and ratified by the Legislature. Beginning in 2022, allows on-site sports wagering at privately operated horse-racing tracks in four specified counties for persons 21 years or older.

**Proposition 27 – Allows Online and Mobile Sports Wagering. Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute:** Legalizes online and mobile sports wagering, which currently is prohibited, for persons 21 years and older. Such wagering may be offered only by federally recognized Indian tribes and eligible businesses that contract with them. Individuals placing bets must be in California and not located on Indian lands.

**Proposition 28 – Provides Additional Funding for Arts and Music Education in Public Schools. Initiative Statute.** Provides additional funding for arts and music education all K-12 public schools (including charter schools) annually allocating from the state General Fund an amount equaling 1% of required state and local funding for public schools.



**Proposition 29 – Requires On-Site Licensed Medical Professional at Kidney Dialysis Clinics and Establishes Other State Requirements. Initiative Statute:** Requires physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, with six months’ relevant experience, on site during treatment at outpatient kidney dialysis clinics; authorizes exemption for staffing shortage if qualified medical professional is available through telehealth.

*(continued on page 3)*

## Co-President's Message



**So** what exactly does your League president do? Well, now that there are two of us – the first time since 1975 when Mary Savala and Anne Kaufher worked together 20 years ago -- the truth can be told: in our case, at least, it really doesn't cut the work in half, as you might think.

Kay and I easily agreed that we would alternate running the Board meetings, and alternate writing this column. But mostly it works out that one of us takes the lead in an issue and the other one then follows along wholeheartedly. This past month there were many such issues:

A message from the Fresno VA asked for a speaker for Women's Equality Day. Kay and I discussed possible candidates. I communicated with the most likely person but it took two emails and two phone calls to find out she wasn't available. Then we discussed another choice. At first we planned to email the membership to see who might be interested but time was not on our side. I contacted attorney Patience Milrod, a League member for almost a quarter century, thinking she would find this an interesting topic for her forensic skills. Sure enough, she said yes. Thank you, Patience.

With Mary Savala's involvement, we were contacted by the Fresno Leadership Council. They are going to mount a campaign titled "No on Measure C," not because they don't like Measure C, but because they can't support **THIS** Measure C. They believe the process was flawed because of insufficient public input, and the contents are equally flawed because the Measure denied needed support for rural residents and lacks guarantees that local workers would be hired for ensuing jobs. This situation involved discussions back and forth between Kay and me, Mary and Marianne Kast.

And then, of course, another important matter garnered our mutual attention when Kay contacted the Fresno State professors who had been suggested as possible heirs to the Student Unit sponsorship and one of them expressed interest. We met virtually with Dr. Dheeshana Jayasundara who is a professor in the Social Work Department at Fresno State. and her enthusiasm and experience with advocacy with her social work students sounds very promising. We are hopeful that the Unit will rise from the ashes.

There are lots more instances of working together, not just this month but every month. We depend on each other for contacts with the "right" people, new ideas, and most of all in making decisions that may have far-reaching effects.

*Francine*

**From August 2022**

**New Directors:** The Board voted to include Robin Chiero and Angela Presto as its newest directors. Angela will focus on Program Planning while Robin is most interested in Voters Services. All Board members support each other's portfolios as needed.

**Special Events:** Plans were finalized for Women's Equality Day. Our next event in September may feature either the County Director for Air Quality or the Director of Parks and Recreation.

**Forum:** The Board agreed to work with the Climate Change Committee on planning a congressional candidates' forum in October. We will assist in recruiting the candidates to speak and in developing questions for them, especially about the environment and climate change.

**Transportation:** Moses Stites, the Director of the Fresno County Rural Transportation Authority, will be invited to speak to the Board in September. He will explain his project to electrify all of his vehicles. This proposal may be supported by donated funds from our members.

**CMAC:** We voted to rejoin the Community Media Access Collaborative which provides training and loans equipment to its members for video production.

**Voters Edge:** Marianne, Kay, Robin and Terri volunteered to do the work involved in maintaining this comprehensive, nonpartisan online guide to elections covering federal, state, and local races in California.

**Student Unit:** Kay and Francine will be meeting with a Fresno State professor who has shown interest in reviving our dormant Student Unit, a victim of the pandemic because students were not available.

**Mural Project:** We are awaiting word from Fresno County Clerk James Kus as to whether an outside wall on a county building will be available for us to sponsor a mural about voting rights, using donated funds.

***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. Donations for RBG should note RBG in the memo line. Your estate planning is encouraged to consider LWVF. Please make out checks to LWVF and send to Treasurer, LWVF 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno 93710.***

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**Mailing address: 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno, CA 93710**

**Volume 81 No. 9 Editor: Francine M. Farber**

# Propositions *(continued from page 1)*

**Proposition 30 – Provides Funding for Programs to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Increasing Tax on Personal Income Over \$2 Million. Initiative Statute:** Increases tax on personal income over \$2 million by 1.75% for individuals and married couples and allocates new tax revenues. The money is to be allocated to rebates for zero emission cars, money for charging stations and money for wildfires prevention and suppression programs.

**Proposition 31 – Referendum Challenging a 2020 Law Prohibiting retail Sale of Certain Flavored Tobacco Products:**



This is a referendum to challenge the 2020 law which prohibits the sale of

certain flavored tobacco products and tobacco flavored enhancers.

**County measures include:**

**Measure C – Fresno County Road Repair/Transportation Improvement Measure:** Without raising taxes, this measure would extend the current ½ cent sales tax for 30 years for road repair; structural upgrades to declining bridges/overpasses; improve highway safety, 911 emergency vehicle access, air quality, public transit services; protect low-cost senior transportation options;



and create local jobs. This measure requires a 2/3 approval by voters.

**Measure E – Fresno County – California State University, Fresno – Sales Tax –** This measure would add a 0.2 cent sales tax for 20 years (with the exception of Reedley where it would add a 0.025 sales tax). It would support academic programs (nursing, agriculture, criminology, engineering/STEM programs) and facilities as well as athletic facilities, with the majority going to academics. It would also include funds for safe drinking water and provide scholarships for local, low-income students and veterans. *This requires a majority vote.*

**“No” on Measure C underway**

*The Leadership Council is rallying support to start a “No on Measure C” campaign on the November ballot. These are excerpts from the Council’s letter to prospective partners.*

“... the rushed renewal process has resulted in a deeply flawed, grossly inequitable \$7 billion plan crafted behind closed doors.

- Extends Measure C’s sunset clause from 20 to 30 years
- Slashes public transit investments
- Allocates only 1% for safe routes to school, trails, bike lanes
- Allocates only 2% for environmental sustainability despite our poor air quality and worsening impacts of the climate crisis

- Fails to require local job creation and workforce development standards
  - Prohibits cities and counties from using the largest funding category (51% of total measure) to fund sidewalks, bike lanes, curb and gutter, cross walks, streetlights, and tree canopy in existing neighborhoods
- (continued on page 4)*



**Members of Citizens Climate Lobby honor Lipton Awardee Devin Carroll (top row second from left) at Women’s Equality Day celebration**



**Women’s Equality Day honoree Ashley Swearengen, CEO of CV Community Foundation**

**Photos by  
Howard  
Watkins**

# Healthcare

by Richard Bertken M.D.



In my column for June 2022, I asked readers to play the role of constituents asking their congressman to vote for a provision in the Build Back Better legislation. The provision: let Medicare run an auction for the pricing of drugs it buys for its beneficiaries.

My arguments: First, Pharma is spending more for product promotion than for research and development. Second, while a healthy budget for basic and applied research in medical therapeutics must be sustained, “it is illogical to tax Americans in pursuit of lower prices for the rest of the developed world. Research should be supported by an international consortium research and development agencies.”

Nearly dead as a key component of Build Back Better, Medicare bargaining for drugs has been included in the now-adopted, obliquely renamed Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022. Like many components of the wide-ranging IRA, Medicare’s pharmaceutical auctions have been downsized and delayed. They will begin in 2026 and include only the 10 most expensive drugs.

Other cost-saving provisions include capping seniors’ out-of-pocket drug costs at \$2,000 a year, beginning in 2025. The price of insulin will be limited to \$35 per month. Medicare beneficiaries will get rebates from

Pharma for drug price increases beyond the rate of inflation. And beneficiaries will get all their covered vaccines for free.

On another healthcare front, subsidies to low-income buyers of Affordable Care Act plans, due to expire, have been retained. This is vital to maintaining health insurance for 11.3 million people.

The passage of IRA has been widely lauded by political pundits as a breakthrough. Certainly, given Congressional inaction on vital issues over the last decade, IRA provides some light



at the end of a long tunnel. But the most noticeable aspect of IRA is the vote count: 50-51. Not one Democrat voted

against it. Not one Republican voted for it.

I find it difficult to imagine a way to fight this extent of polarization. As I type this, I see two relevant aphorisms in my collection (I tape these gems on the wall next to me). They are Flannery O’Connor’s “The truth does not change according to our ability to stomach it” and Lauren Morrill’s “I don’t know how to explain to you that you should care about other people” (later attributed to Anthony Fauci). These are guardrail concepts that direct our attention to the future, to long-term goals of sustaining the health of our society and of our planet.

## “NO” on Measure C *(continued from page 3)*

where this infrastructure doesn’t exist.

- Expands roads and highways to facilitate sprawl on the fringes of the urban areas and industrial development near low income communities and communities of color.

We know we can and do deserve better. We deserve a local transportation tax that invests in people and our Neighborhoods, helps clean our air, creates local jobs, and gets us to where we need to go.

... We are looking beyond 2022 to an equitable process and proposal in 2004. This effort begins that dialogue now.” **Leadership Council**

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## Water News

by Diane Merrill



The Public Policy Institute of California recently released its 2022 PPIC Statewide Survey: Californians and the Environment. The survey was conducted in July 2022. It is a wide-ranging survey that includes chapters on water and drought, climate change perceptions and policies, wildfires, environment economy and energy, and much more. Here are some important findings from the survey.

Californians are most likely to name water supply and drought as the most important environmental issue facing the state today.

Sixty-eight percent of Californians say that the supply of water is a big problem in their part of California. Strong majorities also feel that neither the state and local government nor people in their part of California are doing enough in response to the drought. Forty-five percent say they have done a lot to reduce water use recently in response to the drought.



When it comes to the pollution of drinking water, about half of adults say it is not too serious a threat to them and their family in their part of California

(52%), compared to about 47% who say it is a very serious (16%) or a somewhat serious threat (31%). African Americans (33%) and Latinos (24%) are most likely to say this is a very serious threat.

There is strong support (72%) for building desalinization plants on the California coast.

Seventy-seven percent say climate change has contributed to the current drought and sixty-nine percent of Californians say that the effects of climate change have already begun. Eight in ten Californians say that climate change is a very or somewhat serious threat to California's future economy and quality of life.

## Climate Change

by Andrea Farber De Zubiria



August brought an end to what many have called the Reconciliation Roller Coaster. After months of twists and turns, high hopes and fallen spirits, Democrats in Congress used the once a year option of the reconciliation process; at the last minute before Congressional recess, they agreed on some compromises and passed the Inflation Reduction Act on August 12.

President Biden signed it into law on August 16. While it is not perfect and won't solve everything related to our climate issues, multiple agencies that model energy report that the provisions in the Inflation Reduction Act will lower our greenhouse gas emissions to about 40% of the 2005 levels. This is still 10% shy of the U.S. goal, but will be a major step in the right direction and show the leadership many of us expect of our country.

The bill contains tax credits for businesses and rebates for energy efficient appliances and electric vehicles. Fees and grants for companies that leak methane will motivate better efficiency. There is funding for nature-based solutions that may be helpful in our area: \$5 billion for forestry measures, including \$2 billion for wildfire prevention, \$1.5 billion for urban and community forestry grants, and \$1 billion for forest conservation. Another \$20 billion is slated for programs that can fund climate-smart agricultural methods. There is \$60 billion to invest in historically disadvantaged communities, funding for domestic clean energy manufacturing, funding to create a national "green" bank and more. The funds will mainly be sourced from 15% minimum taxes on billion dollar corporations, better enforcement of current taxes, and drug pricing negotiations for Medicare.

It is tempting to relax and think that this will take care of our global warming woes, but we need to build on this legislation and protect it. You can help. Please plan to attend the Congressional Candidate forum on environmental issues that we are co-sponsoring with LWVF and the Youth Action Team of Citizens' Climate Lobby in early October. The team includes students from Fresno State and Buchanan High School. Keep your eye out for details and registration information in the weekly LWVF emails and the October Voter

## Education

by Kay Bertken



School is back in session and the Board of Trustees has had its first meeting of the new school year. Summer school –called summer academies this year—was held at nearly every school in June, and the July district-sponsored summer camps accommodated more than 6,000 students at camps around the city.

While many districts have been concerned about staffing shortages, Superintendent Nelson reported that Fresno Unified was still looking for just 32 hard to fill vacancies out of a teaching staff of more than 4,000, a staffing rate above 99%. The district has negotiated a new pay rate for substitute teachers at \$200 a day, what he thought was the highest in the Valley. An additional safety assistant has also been hired for each high school, and a contract with the Fresno Police Department will be bringing officers back to middle schools.



There are now four Family and Support Centers at Tioga, Homan, Burroughs and a new one in temporary quarters at Edison. These centers provide tech help for families dealing with their own and students' computers.

There has been news around the country that the anti-vaccination sentiment that grew around the Covid vaccine is affecting parental decisions about routine childhood vaccinations. Any requirement for Covid vaccination has been postponed in California till at least 2023-2024, but California does require polio, DPT, MMR, and Hep B vaccination for entry into kindergarten. Students who are in an independent study program do not have to meet this requirement. It will be interesting to see if our schools see vaccination refusals affecting kindergarten enrollments. FUSD has held vaccination events at several schools.

The new Fresno Unified School District Foundation will launch at the State of Education event at Chafee Zoo on October 6<sup>th</sup>. The Foundation will be raising money primarily for the district's scholarship program for graduating seniors. The Foundation has already registered with the AmazonSmile program as a potential designation for one percent of every purchase.

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## Behavioral Health

by Carolyn Evans



The Fresno County Behavioral Health Board was happy to learn at its August meeting that power had been restored to most of the buildings of the Department of Behavioral Health at the King Canyon Campus. As previously reported, the Crisis Stabilization Centers and the Psychiatric Health Facilities had been working with power from generators since a local power outage last month. Construction has begun at the Heritage Center (Shields and Millbrook) for the eventual move of the crises facilities to that location.

As a result of that construction, Children's Services and the Transitional Age Youth Program will be moving to a new location at 2719 N. Air Fresno Drive. This will be a smaller facility, so the programs will be more community-based with staff meeting children and families in homes, schools, or other convenient locations. There will be adequate office space for meetings with those families who prefer that option.

The Board's monthly virtual site visit was with the Department's Older Adult Program. The Older Adult Team serves seniors over 60 years old with serious mental impairments. Any mental health diagnosis is acceptable if it is covered by Medi-Cal and causes a serious impairment. Examples for eligibility include hospitalization in the last year, homelessness in the last year, trouble organizing themselves, trouble remembering, or managing moods or emotions, and other similar issues. There are currently about 300 people in the voluntary program.


The program can provide case management or therapy to individuals or can be as simple as seeing a psychiatrist for medications only. There are approximately 130 people currently being seen for case management and another 200-250 for medication only. Since many were unfamiliar with the technology, it was a struggle to work with seniors virtually during Covid. Now that clients are comfortable with the technology, many are reluctant to come back into the office.

The next meeting of the Board will be on September 21, at 3:30 pm. The Board continues to meet virtually, so if interested, you may tune in. For the meeting link contact [dominja@fresnocountyca.gov](mailto:dominja@fresnocountyca.gov).

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