



Phone: 559-226-VOTE

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

The *Fresno* **VOTER**



December Board Meeting
CANCELLED

Tuesday, January 26
Regular Board Meeting
5 p.m. League Office

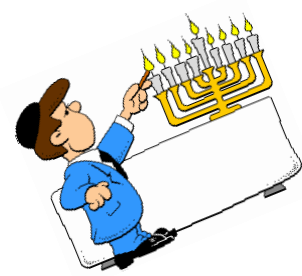
Tuesday, February 23
Regular Board Meeting
5 p.m., League Office

Saturday, February 27
Program Planning
9 a.m., Site to be announced

**APRIL 18 WAS PAUL
REVERE'S RIDE. WHAT
ELSE WILL WE
CELEBRATE THAT DAY?**
Watch for your
Save the Date card
in the mail!

Let's All Get Together

Holiday Party



Sunday, December 13 * 2:00 — 4:00 p.m.

At the home of Chris and Howard Watkins
1785 West Dovewood, Fresno

Directions: North on West Avenue to Browning. Right on Browning,
Right on Channing, Right on Dovewood

Members and Guests Welcome
Our Student Unit is collecting unwrapped new toys
Please contribute!

For more info call 472-3018

President's Message



As we have celebrated Thanksgiving and now look forward to the upcoming holiday season, we are reminded of what we have to be thankful for and to celebrate. However, I must say that as League President, I celebrate on a daily basis all of the amazing, talented dedicated people who generously donate their time and talents to the challenging issues that our League as well as the National and State Leagues address.

I would like to reflect on particular activities the League can celebrate.

The National League's sponsorship of studies that focus on the basics of American Democracy: One study focuses on amending the Constitution, another addresses redistricting and a third, updating the campaign finance position. All three studies can prepare the League to be more effective in the on-going struggle to make democracy work. We are also thankful for those Leagues who are participating in this noble effort.

The State League's interest in addressing the state water crisis via their Water Committee made up of some very knowledgeable, experienced members who, after receiving a letter from our League outlining our concerns and urging the updating of positions re water issues, invited our water director, Diane Merrill, to join the Committee. We are thankful for their efforts as they study this very serious, complex issue.

The local league members who are working on so many fronts to help the underserved in our area: Some members are working with a coalition of outstanding organizations dedicated to providing a more equitable distribution of accessible parks, green spaces and affordable housing. Others are working on transportation issues, including a fair distribution of funds to poor areas of Fresno and surrounding small cities and towns. Many are working to ensure that the Fresno County and City General Plans will serve everyone and will provide for safe, healthy communities for all. We also have excellent representatives addressing Mental Health, Education and Voter Service issues.

We can all be so thankful for these on-going efforts to make our area a place everyone can be proud to call home.

Nyla

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

Mailing Address: 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno, CA 93710

Volume 74, No. 12 * Editor: Francine Farber

Member News

(Please adjust your roster accordingly)

New Member

Julianne Tuggle
2252 East Branden Lane
Fresno, CA 93720
760-3882
tuggle13@yahoo.com

Address corrections

Marilyn Mann
6605 North Dover Ct
Fresno, CA 93711

Suzanne Meek
P.O. Box 25866
Fresno, CA 93729

Patricia R. Pickford
5555 North Fresno, #234
Fresno, CA 93710

The League is now a 501 c (3) non-profit organization so your dues payments and all donations are tax deductible and gratefully accepted.

A League donation is a great birthday or holiday gift or as a memorial.

**Make checks out to LWVF
1345 Bulldog Lane
Fresno, CA 93710**

LWVF comments on city development code

by Mary Savala

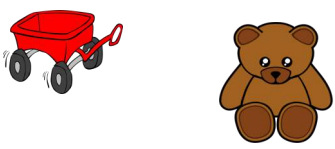
The revised draft of the City Development Code sent to the Council in November contains League's recommendations for a rewrite of language regarding the hierarchy of land use plans. The language requires developers for areas which they seek to annex to the City to conform to the General, then the Community, and finally the specifications of specific land use plans.

League also commented on murky language regarding Concept Plans drafted by developers for areas which they seek to annex) Pre-Zoning and Annexations asking for more clarity. League asked that the City place more options in the code for higher residential density in large areas of North Fresno and growth areas which could accommodate more affordable housing throughout the city. And League joined with other community advocates asking for more time to analyze a long and complex development code draft revision.

The City Council began hearing the draft proposal November 12. At the hearing continuation on November 19, LWVF's comments included support of the revised draft language reaffirming land use plan hierarchy; support of a development code mandate for sidewalks on each side of all but major arterial streets; more expansive public notice on a city website at least 10 days before the hearing on all projects requiring public notice; and public notice for industrial and business park zone site plans where warehouses, wholesale distribution centers, and stockyards are now granted development rights by industrial/ business zoning without public notice.

Student Unit

by Lisa Bryant



In December students will collect unwrapped toys for children ages infant to teenager at the LWV holiday party and at the Fresno State University Student Union or Henry Madden Library to donate to the Valley Children's Hospital for Christmas. The students also discussed issues to focus on for the spring, including member recruitment, the state's higher education study, and hosting an information session on primary elections in the late spring, to prepare students for the 2016 Presidential Primary Election. The Student Unit will also host several voter registration drives in the spring semester.



Behavioral Health

by Francine Farber



Lavish praise for Dialectical Behavior Therapy was heard in November at a Behavioral Health Board forum to receive community input on Behavioral Health Department services and needs. Several clients gave long and emotional testimony that DBT had actually saved their lives. It is used widely to treat a number of different conditions and includes training in specific behavioral skills.

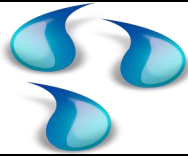
Department Director Dawan Utecht reported that the California Behavioral Health Directors Association has established priorities for the coming year:

- ◆ Increase the capacity to service mental health individuals undergoing a crisis
- ◆ Increase the capacity to serve individuals with substance use disorder
- ◆ Expand efforts to secure safe and affordable housing for the above
- ◆ Integrate public health and Medi-Cal managed care through a holistic approach

Utecht also provided an update on the Holistic Cultural Center. Objective goals that were originally set for the Center, such as reducing hospital admissions, were determined not be relevant. Evaluation of the Center is dependent on client surveys, before and after surveys, and other subjective measures. A board member wanted more objective data but Utecht explained the difficulty in determining measurements of events that don't happen.

Water News

by Diane Merrill



California legislators introduced dozens of water-related bills in 2015. LWVC was most interested in bills expected to have statewide impacts in water conservation, availability and quality, especially for low-income water users and disadvantaged communities; environmental protection; and sustainable management of groundwater.

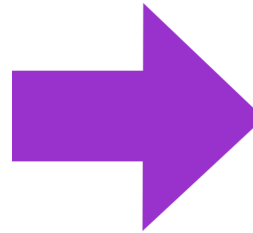
LWVC **supported** the following bills that passed both houses of the California legislature and were sent to the Governor:

- ◆ **AB 88 (Gomez) Exemption of energy or water efficient home appliances from sales and use taxes – Vetoed by the Governor because of uncertainties with the state budget.**
- ◆ **AB 401(Dodd) Low-Income Water rate Assistance Program – signed by the Governor and chaptered into law.**

LWVC took a position on the following bills that are now two-year bills:

- ◆ **AB 311 (Gallagher) Changes to environmental impact reporting for some water storage projects funded by the 2014 Proposition 1 Water Bond – Oppose**
- ◆ **AB 356 (Williams) Groundwater monitoring of oil and gas facilities – Support**
- ◆ **SB 7 (Wolk) Water metering in multi-family residential rental buildings – Support**
- ◆ **SB 127 (Vidak) The Senate version of AB 311 above – Oppose**
- ◆ **SB 248 (Pavley) Inspections and reporting relating to oil and gas operations – Support**
- ◆ **SB 454 (Allen) Tightens conditions governing proposals by the California Division of Oil, Gas, and Geotherm Resources to exempt aquifers from EPA water quality requirements – Support**
- ◆ **SB 552 (Wolk) Provision of water to specified disadvantaged communities – Support**

Groundwater adjudications in California have sometimes taken decades to resolve. This legislation aims to improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary delays, provide due process, and be consistent with achievement of groundwater sustainability within the timeframes of the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).



Next FUSD Board Meeting

December 9

5:30 p.m.

AT&T Channel 98

Or streaming

Education

by Kay Bertken



The investigation of Fresno Unified's lease leaseback controversy and investigation continues with the Board's determination not to fund independent legal counsel for Deputy Superintendent Quinto and a decision to hire an outside firm to help the district gather the extensive documentation being requested by the grand jury investigation. The District is negotiating with the U.S. Attorney's office to extend the deadline for that effort.

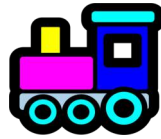
As that news continues to unfold, the business of the district continues. Good news includes the fact that the Caesar Chavez Adult School was among five organizations recognized by the White House as a national model for the integration of new American citizens. In addition, the district's Equity and Access Team's work was recognized as a measurement model by Michelle Obama's Reach Higher Initiative at an event at the University of Florida.

In pursuit of its goals to engage more students in activities and athletics, the district received kits sponsored by the NFL children's wellness program and provided 60 coaches training in flag football—part of an effort to provide children with nutrition information and increased levels of exercise. Two hundred thousand dollars worth of new musical instruments arrived this month, adding to the investments the district has been making in expanding music programs in the middle and high schools, allowing middle school bands to join the high school bands at football games for the first time.

This month the Board approved bringing in a national expert to train head counselors in data-based intentional counseling. The training will allow these counselors to pass on that instruction and coordinate the work of all the counselors at their schools.

Transportation

by Stephenie Frederick



Measure C was adopted by voters in Fresno County in 1981 and renewed in 2006 as the “Measure C Extension”. The law adds one-half cent to existing sales taxes to be used exclusively for transportation purposes. We are expecting to collect more than \$66 million by June 30, 2016, the end of the Measure C fiscal year.

The proceeds are used for many different facets of transportation in Fresno County. Among them are local bus transit, airport improvement, street maintenance, signal synchronization, farmworker vanpools, bicycle lanes, and trails.

Measure C Extension requires that a thirteen-member committee, representing the various populations in the Fresno County region, keep an eye on how Measure C funds are spent. The Fresno COG appoints each member, who is expected to serve at least four but not more than eight years. Mary Savala represented the League on the Citizen Oversight Committee (COC) for Measure C for eight years. When Mary recently “termed out,” Stephenie Frederick succeeded her as the League’s representative.

The COC is reviewing projects that cities, county, and COG plan to carry out in the current fiscal year with their funding allocations to verify that the projects are eligible for Measure C.

The committee members must keep up with changes in the Measure C law.

Two amendments have been made so far, and a third is in the works. The first amendment allowed \$25 million from the rail-consolidation reserve fund to be used on Downtown Fresno’s prospective high-speed rail station. An as-yet-unadopted third amendment would allow \$750,000 of the \$25 million to support a land-acquisition effort for the high-speed rail’s heavy-maintenance facility.

It is the second amendment that will affect the committee’s analysis of prospective projects for pedestrians and cyclists. Measure C Extension funded trail construction but not trail maintenance; because local agencies could not find maintenance money, they didn’t use their Measure C trail money to build trails. To get around this no-build problem, the second amendment allows Measure C funds to be used for trail maintenance if the trail in question was not constructed with Measure C funds.

Measure C was approved by voters because it was supposed to solve transportation problems. But what, exactly, is transportation? Does a little county-park nature trail, intended for leisurely strolls, provide a transportation function? Legal counsel rendered the opinion that a little nowhere trail is a form of transportation and therefore eligible for Measure C funding.

Friant field trip attracts members

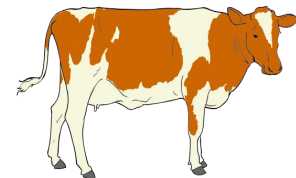
Three carloads of enthusiastic members experienced a field trip to the Friant Ranch and Millerton areas recently thanks to planning and organizing by

Board members Stephenie Frederick and Mary Perich.

Visitors gazed over the Parkway area with hawks flying overhead, saw cattle on grazing land and foothills that should remain undisturbed to



give open space near our cities.



League members Radley Reep, Diane and Bob Merrill and others shared their knowledge of geology, local history, and planning.

Members will be invited to participate in future trips to local areas that are often written about but which may be unfamiliar to them.

- Terry Johnson

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and the Voter*



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NOTE: "HKW Photo Archive Fund"

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Elizabeth Peterson
(559)299-4639
E-mail: Bette1234@aol.com
Fax: (559) 299-4639
www.poppylane.com

POST OFFICE BOX 5136
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93755

Law Office of
Sara Hedgpeth-Harris
Attorney at Law

5445 E. Lane Avenue
Fresno, CA 93727
(559) 233-0907
sara.hedgpethharris@shh-law.com
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Democracy is not a spectator sport

JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS!

Men and Women of Voting Age Making Democracy Work

MISSION: The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens 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 - \$30

Please send your check payable to the League of Women Voters, Fresno, with registration form (below), to: LWVF, 1345 Bulldog Lane, Suite 4, Fresno, CA 93710.

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 Name: _____ Ph. _____ E-mail _____

Address: _____

In honor of our League's up-coming 75th anniversary, the following have made generous gifts.

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Betty Cornelisen
Francine and Murray Farber
Alberta Ferrer
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Stone Soup

thank
you!

Save the Date

Monday, April 18, 2016

Our 75th anniversary

supporting good government in Fresno

Tickets go on sale in February

See you at Roger Rocka's for Dinner!~

Speaker: Karen Humphrey, first woman mayor of Fresno

