



The Fresno VOTER

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Calendar

70th Anniversary Comm.
 Tuesday, February 22
 4 p.m. League Office
 All Welcome

Regular Board Meeting
 Tuesday, February 22
 5 p.m. League Office

Education Committee
 Wednesday, February 23
 7:00 p.m.
 752 E. Buckingham, Fresno

70th Anniversary Comm.
 Tuesday, March 15
 4 p.m. League Office

Regular Board Meeting
 Tuesday, March 15
 5 p.m. League Office

We welcome members and guests to all meetings!

Panel set for anniversary celebration

A panel discussion on “The Impact of New Media on Government” will be one of the highlights of our 70th anniversary celebration on Saturday, April 2. A distinguished group of outstanding local journalists will be participating from a wide range of media.

The panel will be led by moderator Jim Tucker, a 19-year veteran of Valley Public Television and a retired journalism professor at CSUF. Appearing as speakers will be Jim Boren, editor of the Fresno Bee and the senior Bee employee after 41 years; Joe Moore, Director of Program Content at Valley Public Radio; Dr. Tamyra Pierce, chair of the department of Mass Communication and Journalism at CSUF; Sarah Reyes, now a program manager at the California Endowment and previously a member of the State Assembly and a television anchor; and Richard Rodriguez, newscaster at television station KMPH.



Dr. Tamyra Pierce



Sarah Reyes

Another highlight of the event will be the recognition of 16 living past presidents of our League, dating back to 1958. In addition, we will also honor three women who have achieved 50 years or more membership in LWVF, and our Lipton Award winner.



Joe Moore

The day will begin with our Annual Meeting breakfast and registration at 9 a.m. at Stone Soup. Election of Officers and Directors, year-end review by Directors and adoption of our budget and local program priorities will complete the program.

Those who are staying for the Anniversary celebration (and we hope that is everyone) are invited to a wine and cheese social before our luncheon at noon. The panel discussion will follow, with opportunities for questions.

Members and friends may want to honor family and friends with a congratulatory ad described on page 6. Invitations and reservation forms will be mailed in February.

President's Message



This month I would like to turn "My Space" over to the president of LWVUS because of her important message.

Francine

Statement from Elisabeth MacNamara, President, LWVUS

The League of Women Voters joins with all Americans in expressing our shock and dismay at the tragic shootings in Tucson last weekend. We express our deep sorrow to the families of the victims, and offer our sincere hopes for the recovery of Representative Giffords and the other survivors. We applaud the courage of the individuals, thinking they were just out for a Saturday conversation, who took immediate action to help the injured and end the rampage.

What can we make of this madness, this senseless act of violence? And terrible though this event was for all of us now, what might the long term effects be? Will it make public figures - politicians, media figures, celebrities - more mindful of the potentially harmful impact of their angry words - or will everyone continue to put their own agendas first, without regard to the climate they create? Will it make the public more trusting of the patriotic motivations of their elected leaders - or will respect for them be further diminished? Will it make our elected leaders more willing to reach out to meet and hear from their constituents directly - or will it reinforce the growing gap between voters and those they put in office? Will it allow Americans to feel comfortable and welcome in the public space - or will they conclude that it is safer to stay home and drop out of the conversation? It is clearly time for each of us to consider these issues, individually and as a community.

For 90 years, the League has worked to facilitate the civil exchange of different points of view, to bridge the gap between the voters and the elected, and to help improve the functioning of government. We hope that moving forward our nation will come together to foster and strengthen the very essence of our representative democracy: government of the people, by the people, for the people.

Member News

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If you make out your check to LWVF Fed Fund, it will be tax deductible.

Please send to Jane Worsley, Treasurer, LWVF, 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno, CA 93710



Education News

by Kay Bertken



In the first Fresno Unified School District Board meeting following the winter vacation, the major agenda item was Governor Brown's budget proposal. This calls for major cuts in state programs but keeps K-12 budgets at last year's level. The Governor proposes an election to approve extending temporary tax increases to help balance the budget. Assuming that the extensions are put to a vote and that the voters approve them, the impact on FUSD's coming year budget will still involve a cut of \$30 million (about 5% of the budget)—the remainder of the \$115 million reductions in State funding that have been phased in over the last few years. If the tax extensions are not approved, the District may have to absorb a cut of as much as \$80 million next year.

These local discussions exist against a background of financial hardship around the country. All states have experienced challenges to their finances and to their education budgets. The recent Nation's Educational Report Card reports on the adaptations that States have made and the flow of federal stimulus dollars into the states to help them avoid major layoffs in the schools for the last two years. Those federal fund allocations ended in September, and there is no promise that another round will be coming.

The report did not find major policy or finance changes in the states in re-

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7:30 p.m.

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More Info? 226-2720

sponse to the recession. California has merged funds from numerous categorical programs into general district allocations. Ten states have removed state-level restrictions on the length of the school year, week and/or day.

Against the background of reduced funding and financial stresses, the Report Card on our Nation's Schools was not encouraging. Although there has been some progress in initiating important educational reforms, the overall national grade was a C, about the same as last year. California had an overall score of C, 30th out of the states.

The report card graded the states in 6 major categories:

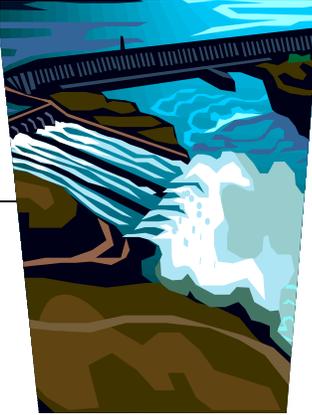
- ◆ **Chance for Success**—an evaluation of 13 indicators spanning early childhood to adulthood including preschool opportunity, school performance and educational and workforce attainment
- ◆ **K-12 Achievement**, which evaluates multiple testing results
- ◆ **School Finance**
- ◆ **Standards, Assessment, Accountability**
- ◆ **Transition and Alignment** assesses state progress in implementing state policies and regulations
- ◆ **The Teaching Profession.**

Each of these is broken down into sub-categories. California's scores follow:

Chance for Success	C
Early Foundations	C-
School Years	C-
Adult Outcomes	B-
K-12 Achievement	D-
Status	F
Change	D+
Equity*	C-
*disparity between poor and non poor	
School Finance	C
Equity	B+
Spending	D-
Standards, Assessment, Accountability	A-
Standards	A
Assessments	C+
School Accountability	A
Transition & Alignment	B-
Early childhood Ed	B-
College Readiness	C-
Economic & Workforce	A
The Teaching Profession	C
Accountability for Quality	C
Incentives & Allocation	B+
Building & Supporting Capacity	D+

Natural Resources

by Mary Savala



LWVF has worked diligently over the last six months in concert with League positions on good planning principles, water resources, and ag land preservation while addressing the Friant Community Plan, Lost Lake Master Plan, and Friant Ranch specific Plan.

LWVF joined other environmental interests in January to lobby the Board of Supervisors for modifications in the policies of the proposed Friant Community Plan to allow the Lost Lake Master Plan to proceed as independently as possible. Member Radley Reep has gathered over 6000 pages of information relating to planning documents, environmental reviews and comments for the Friant Area. This has been invaluable in working with County staff and speaking to Supervisors. Member Bob Merrill has been a strong voice for water issues concerning the siting of the waste water treatment plant for Friant Ranch and water

resources for the development.

The county of Fresno's General Plan calls for preparing a regional plan for the Friant area. League urged the completion of that regional plan in order to evaluate the development now approved on both sides of the San Joaquin River as well as planning for river restoration and the Parkway before approval of any other development in the region.

The Friant Ranch Specific Plan's January 2011 draft Environmental Impact Report said that the loss of agricultural land to development could not be mitigated; but League pointed out that the County can require the developer to place like ag land in permanent ag land easements for ag land displaced by Friant Ranch.

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Mailing Address:

1345 Bulldog Lane

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Saturday, April 2

Annual Business Meeting &
LWVF's 70th Anniversary Party

1941-2011

40 years advocating good government in Fresno

Here's Your Chance to Sponsor an Ad in the Anniversary Program

****Honor your children, grandchildren, family and friends****

\$300 table of 8 for lunch & full page b&w ad in the program_____ (value \$380)

\$200 for 2 places for lunch and full page color ad_____ (value \$270)

\$100 for 1 place for lunch and a full page b&w ad _____ (value \$135)

\$ 50 for half page b&w ad _____

\$ 25 business card size ad _____

Need help with your ad? Call 226-5455

Name: _____ Telephone _____

Please tear off and mail with check by February 15 to:

Treasurer * LWVF * 1345 Bulldog Lane * Fresno, CA 93710

(Invitations to Luncheon and Panel will be mailed soon!

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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 .

NONPARTISANSHIP: 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.

TO PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS: For more information, please leave your name and phone number on the League message phone, 226-8683, or contact our **Membership Chair, Dolores O’Neal at 435-1185**. Prospective members receive one issue of *The Fresno Voter* free.

JOIN US! Members receive newsletters from national, state and local Leagues, may access local, state and national League websites and list-serves, and may participate in League studies of issues.

Yearly Dues Individual - \$60 ~ Family - \$90 (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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