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The Fresno *VOTER*

Program planning meeting yields recommendations for LWVC, LWVF

by Francine Farber

Members crowded into the meeting room at Stone Soup on January 29 to make decisions about this year's priorities for state and local leagues. First they had an opportunity to meet new council member Clint Olivier, representing District 7 (see story page 3)

After small-group discussion it was decided that two state issues would be priorities: asking LWVC to focus on implementing the initiative process so that the proposed initiatives are vetted properly before going to the ballot; the goal is to prevent corporate takeovers of the process which is really meant to give citizens a voice in legislation. The other recommended state priority is to assure that appropriate resources are available to focus on the interdependent issues of mental health and juvenile justice.

A number of local issues were also selected as priorities. Topics under government, social policy and natural resources were presented by the directors in charge of those areas. Liz Shields, Vice President for Voter Services, talked about the importance of the state redistricting initiative and the Observer Corps for which she is recruiting members. Observers may attend local or regional meetings,

or follow them on their home computers and report on what they see. She



also noted

that in April when the 2010 census results are published, there could also be redistricting of city, county and board of education districts. It was suggested that the League should make these three public entities aware of its interest in having the redistricting process be open for public input and review.

Vice President for Administration Kay Bertken reviewed the numerous areas included in social policy, including pre-K 12 education, community colleges, mental health, juvenile justice and other topics. Most recently there has been a continuing focus on access to high quality pre-K and solutions for the drop-out problem.

The numerous areas under natural resources were explained by Director Mary Savala. She focused on the locally significant areas of water and land use. The League and other agencies are actively involved around the need to adhere to the City's general plan with respect to land development.

Calendar

70th Anniversary Comm.
 Monday March 21
 4 p.m. League Office

Change of Dates for March & April Board Meetings

Regular Board Meeting
 Monday March 21
 5 p.m. League Office

Regular Board Meeting
 Tuesday, April 26

We welcome members and guests to all meetings!

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY

APRIL 2, 2011

LWVF 70th Anniversary

Flyer Inside

President's Message



This year marks the 100th anniversary of California legislating suffrage in the state. That's right – a number of states granted women the right to vote prior to the 19th amendment being passed in 1920. California was the sixth state to give women the vote, passing the amendment by a margin of two percent!

Recently I was directed to a wonderful web site that I would like to share with you. Just Google the Suffragist Oral History Project. (One note of caution – when you get to the web site, you are asked to read a screen that requires you to click “agree” at the bottom before you are allowed to proceed with each of the histories.)

There you will find oral histories from seven activists born between the 1860's and 1890's who recount their personal experiences. They are Helen Barry, Sara Field, Burnit Matthews, Alice Paul, Jeanette Rankin, Rebecca Reyher and Mabel Vernon.. The oral histories resulted from interviews under the auspices of the Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley , Each suffragist is represented by a series of interviews, with a table of contents for each person so you can select only the suffragist sections or other biographical information.

Helen Barry takes you to the thrill of election night in California when the suffrage legislation passed by less than 300 votes. Sara Field was a poet and suffragist who was working on the federal amendment and interviewed William Jennings Bryan. He opposed the amendment and announced that he didn't care if he got women's votes or not, then accused the suffragists of gaining all their money from the Republican Party. In 1910 Alice Paul was at a meeting where President Taft spoke and he said he didn't think much of this women voting thing, and people all around hissed him. She also recalls a day in Independence Square in Philadelphia where there were stands for speakers all over the square and it was filled with people to listen to conversations about women's rights. Burnit Matthews was an attorney and went to visit President Harding in 1921 when the National Women's Party held its last meeting as a suffrage group.

I know you will find it fascinating to browse through this web site.

Francine

Member News

Even though membership rosters were revised and mailed to you recently, there are always more changes. Please make notes in your roster accordingly.

If you have not been receiving our occasional e-mails about important events, please contact Betty Cornelisen at 439-2267 or bcorn12@comcast.net

New addresses

Wilda Moller
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Jeanette Jurkovich
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288-2668

E-mail corrections

Howard Watkins
Howardwatkins@gmail.com

Betty Cornelisen
bcorn12@comcast.net

New Student Member

Jeanette Vazquez
jeanttev@mail.fresnostate.edu

Assistance Needed

Blind member seeking volunteer readers to come to her home for a two-hour session Please call Toni at 224-0544 if you are available.



**A generous donation
has been received this
month from Toni
Eames.**

We gratefully accept celebratory and memorial gifts.

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

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



Can California be saved?

by Kay Bertken

“Can California Be Saved?” was the topic of a meeting sponsored by California Forward in February. California Forward was founded in 2007 by five foundations — The California Endowment, the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation — to lead a bipartisan effort to improve California's fiscal and governing systems. **California Forward was created by four respected civic organizations** — California Common Cause, Center for Governmental Studies, New California Network and The Commonwealth Club of California's Voices of Reform Project — in response to an invitation by the five foundations.

In an effort to represent “stewardship of the whole of California” rather than a particular interest, California Forward has developed a reform agenda for the State that it is intending to pursue through legislation or, if necessary, through the initiative process. It is seeking broad public support for an agenda that includes political, fiscal and operational reforms. The political reforms include

Olivier shares views with members

Only six weeks into his tenure as the new Fresno City Council member for District 7, Clint Olivier grinned as he showed LWVF members the Fresno Bee's cartoon featuring him in a dumpster along with the three other council members who voted against privatizing commercial solid waste services for the City.



The guest speaker at the Program Planning meeting on January 29, Olivier said he voted against the measure, even though he has faith in Mayor Ashley Swearingen who put forth the proposal, because he didn't think it was proper to divide up the waste services between only two private firms. The proposal would have had one firm picking up solid waste on a north Fresno route, and the other in the south. He felt there was something “a little bit fishy” about the proposal, which would have required the private contractors to purchase the city's obsolete trucks.

“Even if we had voted for it, we would still have to make deep cuts in the budget,” he said. He predicted that City Hall “will be a ghost town” in 30 days.

redistricting and open primaries, which have already become law, and loosening term limits restrictions, for which they have a proposition ready for the next ballot. They are currently debating the advantages of a bicameral legislature for California.

On the fiscal side they are backing eight reforms.

The first two have been enacted; a simple majority vote on the budget and a halt to the switch from taxes to fees. The proposition that enacted the latter requires a 2/3 vote for fees, which the group does not support. Up next is the requirement for a rainy day fund, one time use of one time revenues, performance-based budgeting, improved budget oversight, multiyear fiscal planning and a “pay as you go” mechanism. There is some possibility this last will be on the June ballot with the Governor's extension of the temporary tax measures. that give locals more responsibility and discretion but with “sustainable revenue sources.”



They want tax revenue to be aligned with service delivery. They support a focus on regional prosperity, state and local accountability, a modernized initiative process (the current process has become a tool of special interests and allows measures to be voted on without any vetting), and a reduced state pension obligation. **California Forward is sponsoring “Speak Up California”, discussions around the state.** They have been collecting data on best practices. They are soliciting public input for solutions and are building a coalition of support. Their goal is to recruit one million people to support and move their initiatives. They want to prepare communities for a role in the implementation of these reforms.

Speak up California –Fresno is scheduled for March 30 at the Spiked Rail Steak House in Selma. More information can be had at their website Cafwd.org.

Student Unit

by Diane Blair



The Student Unit is planning for two upcoming events in March.

As a part of Women's History Month activities at Fresno State, the Student Unit will be showing the film *Iron Jawed Angels* and hosting a discussion on Tuesday, March 22, at 4:30 pm in McClain 229 on campus. *Iron-Jawed Angels* takes a contemporary look at a pivotal moment in American history and tells the true story of how a new generation of young activists, led by Alice Paul and Lucy Burns, took the women's suffrage movement to the next level by picketing the White House and putting their lives at risk to get American women the right to vote. The film stars Hillary Swank as Alice Paul.

On Saturday, March 26, the Student Unit will also be participating in Fresno State's Preview Day. Preview Day is designed to give prospective high school and community college transfer students a closer look at the university facilities, academic programs, and student services. The student unit will be showcasing the organization in an information fair and seeking to recruit new members for Fall 2011.

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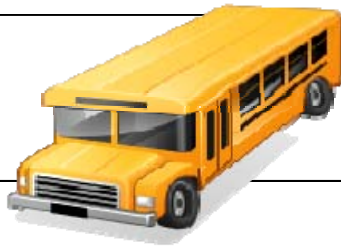
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Education News

by Kay Bertken



The California Endowment is processing grant applications to meet the priority ambitions of their Building Healthy Communities (BHC) effort in Fresno. “The Neighborhood” in Fresno, which stretches across the city south of the 180 freeway, is one of 14 California poor neighborhoods selected for a ten-year funded intervention effort. **The League participated in the early planning meetings for this project, and is tracking the work that is being done.**

Projects Focus on Minorities

Two funded projects focus on boys and men of color: 1) a data and policy initiative at the CSUF Children’s Institute to document the effects of poverty, safety and health deprivation on Fresno’s African-American, Latino and Hmong boys and 2) a project run by the Fresno West Coalition that is targeting African-American men and boys from age 6 to 35. The latter will include establishing a leadership institute that will prepare young males to be leaders in their community, to engage young children before they are negatively influenced, and to increase trust between the neighborhood and the justice system.

Another funded project is a free family exercise and nutrition program that has been meeting on Saturday mornings at parks in “The Neighborhood.”

The Endowment also sponsored a mural project designed and created by teens on the wall of a market on the corner of Tulare and B, documenting it with a video. The Endowment supports a Youth Engagement Team which is training youth to improve the safety and engagement of youth in schools and area service projects.



Fresno Unified Considers Charters

Fresno Unified Board meeting news includes the consideration of two new charter school applications: The Tower Home School Charter that would organize and oversee students who would be homeschooled; and New

Spirit Charter, a K-3 program which would grow to a K-8 school for students in central Fresno in program improvement schools who may be struggling with reading and language skills.

After District review, recommendations will be presented to the Board and the Board will determine whether to grant the charter.

Controversy About Uniforms

The most controversial action in the mid February meeting was the board’s final vote to reject the administration’s proposed dress code policy change in favor of keeping the current policy. Current FUSD policy gives schools discretion to develop their own plans within general District and State guidelines, including the adoption of school uniforms and a procedure for parents who choose to opt out of a uniform requirement for their child. Vocal Bullard parents lobbied hard to control the opt out policy and make the procedures fairly strict before a child could avoid wearing a uniform.



The administration proposal recognized lawsuits that have been filed against schools for making requirements too stringent. The planned uniform proposals for Bullard and Tenaya were then presented to the Board and adopted. The schools will now begin the six month notification of their communities to allow for uniforms to begin with the 2011/2012 school year.

**Watch for The Call
To the Annual Meeting
and**

70th Anniversary Celebration

On April 2

In your mail box by March 12

Voter Services

by Liz Shields



Redistricting – Statewide

During January the Redistricting Commission met in Sacramento and was primarily involved in planning. In February the commissioners met to gain a general understanding of the redistricting education and outreach done by citizen-based organizations and groups statewide and the plans of those entities for additional outreach in the future”.

Groups and organizations are invited to provide input to the commission. If you would like to have input you can email the commission staff at votersfirstact@crc.ca.gov .

I will be informed of future meetings as they are scheduled.

Redistricting – Local

New district lines may be drawn after the census figures are released on April 1 and the Elections Department is planning on looking at district boundaries for Board of Supervisors, the City Council and Fresno Unified School District. They will contact me regarding when and where the meetings will be held.

Accessibility Committee

The Elections Department has asked for a League representative to participate in VAAC meetings to be held in the near future. Consensus among Board members was positive.

Tioga Micro Society

Tioga Middle School runs a Micro Society program on Monday and Friday afternoons. The students are divided into three

groups with two of the groups either producing and/or selling goods and services for the third who are free that day,

They trade in Tioga Bucks and run a snack bar, make jewelry, run a beauty shop, and other services. They have an elected mayor and council, and a court system. In talks with the faculty coordinator of the program it was decided that we could initially help make their election system more open and assist with by-laws formulation.



State Budget Forum

We have been asked to moderate an open town hall meeting called the Fresno Budget Coalition Meeting coordinated by Health Access and co-sponsored by several local groups including Metro Ministries, Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries (FIRM), and SEIU Local 521. The forum will be held on March 12 from 10:30 to 12:30 at either FIRM offices or a new low income dental facility in South-West Fresno. It is anticipated that Henry T. Perea and Mark Rubio or their senior staffers will be there. The draft format includes an explanation of the current budget situation and the proposed fixes, statements from the legislators on their positions, testimonies of the effect of these proposals on the lives of affected individuals, and guidance to participants on how to urge for extension of the current temporary tax increases.

Free Showing

Iron-Jawed Angels

March 22, 4:30 p.m.

Rm. 229 McLane

CSUF Campus

Friant planning controversy continues

by Radley Reep



The Fresno County Board of Supervisors voted 3 to 1 on February 1 to adopt the Friant Community Plan Update, the Friant Ranch Specific Plan, a Rezoning Application, and the accompanying Environmental Impact Report. Supervisor Anderson was the “no” vote. Supervisor Case had to leave the meeting early and could not cast a vote.

The hearing was well attended by the public, developers, and Friant residents. The public tried very hard to convince the Board of the need for proper planning and for protection of the San Joaquin River. Once the public hearing was closed, the Board moved quickly to approve the project. There was no discussion among Board members as to the project’s benefits or detriments.

For many people, approval of the project underscored the power of development interests, the subordination of public interests, and the unwillingness or inability of the Board to act responsibly.

The only concession to public concerns was the Board’s requirement that no treated wastewater go directly into the river. But still, according to plans adopted by the Board, the treatment plant will be built near Lost Lake Park with effluent spread on the 120 acres adjacent to the park. Even the geology expert for the developers testified that the treated wastewater will enter the groundwater aquifer and will leave the site, but they do not know where it will go. **That treated waste still contains pharmaceuticals and hormones harmful to life in the river.**

The five policy changes proposed by the Friends of Lost Lake Park were designed to lend support to the Parkway Master Plan and strengthen planning for Lost Lake Park. Policy 5.4 would have read, “Support additional recreational opportunities at the

Lost Lake Recreational area that are consistent with the Parkway and Master Plan and planning for Lost Lake Park”. And Policy 10.2 would have read, Support the San Joaquin River Parkway Master Plan and recreational uses within parklands west of Friant Road that are consistent with the natural, cultural and aesthetic resources of the San Joaquin River.” Perea said that the recommended change to Policy 5.4 might prevent people from enjoying Lost Lake Park as they do now, and Poochigian feared that the addition of Policy 10.2 might prevent the



County from being able to approve uses within parks along the river near Friant that might clash with the objectives of the Parkway Plan. The three other policy modification survived.

Neither the project applicant nor County staff opposed any of the recommended policy changes. The San Joaquin River Conservancy and the Trust supported them. Supervisors Perea and Poochigian, with the help of Larsen’s yes vote, eliminated the two policy modifications.

The San Joaquin River Parkway Trust had asked the County to site the wastewater

treatment plant out of the river bottom. The Trust noted the absence of an analysis for a treatment facility at that site. **The Trust also asked the County to evaluate the impact on the parklands from thousands of new residents linked to the Parkway by connecting trails. The Board did not discuss these requests.**

A wide-array of individuals and organizations warned the Board of the consequences of bad planning, especially sanctions by the state for ignoring air quality standards and the requirement for reducing green house gas emissions. The Board made no comment.

The approved project will face dozens of hurdles before it can be fully realized. There are additional assessments and reviews to be completed and there may be legal challenges as well. League will remain involved with the other organizations to consider what might be required

A negative declaration of the environmental impacts of the five year review and draft changes in the County’s general plan was filed on February 11, to go to the Board of Supervisors in June. Changes in the Plan foreshadow retreat from County land use and ag land protection policies, leading to fewer restrictions on County urban development. Growth appears to be directed to “where infrastructure and services are planned,” rather than to existing communities where infrastructure and services already exist. M. Savala

Saturday, April 2

Annual Business Meeting & 70th Anniversary Party
1941-2011



Jim Boren



Joe Moore



Tamyra Pierce

**** Annual Business Meeting****

****70th Anniversary Party****

11:30 a.m. - wine and cheese

Noon—Luncheon

1:00 p.m. Panel Discussion

“The Impact of New Media on Government”

Moderator, Jim Tucker

Jim Boren, The Fresno Bee

Joe Moore, KVPR

Dr. Tamyra Pierce, CSUF

Sarah Reyes, The California Endowment

Rich Rodriguez

\$35 per person - Wine & Cheese, Luncheon & Panel

Your tickets will be waiting at the door.

More information? Call 226-8683



Sarah Reyes



Jim Tucker



Rich Rodriguez

Reservation Form (or use card sent previously)

Your Name _____ Telephone _____

Number Attending @\$35 _____ Total Enclosed _____

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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

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