



The Fresno VOTER

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Web site:
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Calendar

Regular Board Meeting
 Tuesday, September 14
 League Office, 5 p.m.

Saturday, September 25
Regional Workshop
 Hosted by LWV Fresno
 Reservation Form Inside

September is Voter Registration Month

October is Voter Education Month

*****SAVE THE DATE*****
SATURDAY
APRIL 2, 2011
LWVF 70th Anniversary

League involved in targeted improvement plan for Fresno children, families, neighborhoods

by Kay Bertken

LWV representatives and other participants in the Building Healthy Communities planning effort met in August to hear a report of the current status of their proposed plan. The Fresno effort is one of 14 in the state organized and funded by the California Endowment to improve the lives of youth in urban neighborhoods characterized by poverty and its attendant problems. “The Place” in Fresno stretches across the city east to west, mostly south of Belmont. Sarah Reyes is the chief executive of the local project.

The ten-year plan, which was developed in a series of community meetings, is in the early stages of funding and implementation. That plan currently encompasses five priority outcomes

- *all children will have health coverage*
- *residents will live in communities with health promoting land use, transportation, and community development*
- *children and their families will be safe from violence in their homes and neighborhoods*
- *communities will support healthy youth development*
- *neighborhood and school environments will support improved health and healthy outcomes.*

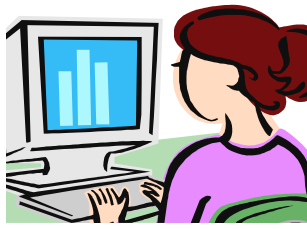
Fresno League’s participation was prompted by the overlap between this last goal and our involvement with the Dropout Summit led by United Way. Already there is work proceeding to develop data sharing with FUSD and to participate with FUSD in the encouragement of parent involvement in the schools through a “Parent University.”

In order to get funds flowing quickly into “The Place,” the California Endowment has funded eight summer grants to keep youth active in the summer: funds to save the City Parks’ free swim lessons; money to the Hinton Center for an arts and crafts program are just two examples.

Another initial grant has been given to five youth groups and Fresno Pacific to work on a project to replace zero tolerance school policies with a restorative justice approach. There is evidence that zero tolerance has increased the risk of dropping out for youth who have no available avenues for returning to school. Allowing youth the opportunity to “make up” for their transgression (restorative justice) would keep high school completion open as an option to some youth.

Their agenda is ambitious, but with their many community partners and substantial California Endowment funding, there is great enthusiasm that Fresno will see some real improvements come from these efforts.
(continued on page 5)

President's Message



Special recognition goes to our in-house decorating team of Dolores O'Neal, Mary Savala and Jane Worsley. The three of them spent four hours in the League office one day recently schlepping cabinets, reorganizing shelves, emptying files and hanging pictures. The office looks respectable now! You should come and visit.

One piece of the office's castoff equipment was put outside in the alleyway in a box. Along came MaiKa Yang, twenty-something executive director of Stone Soup, who saw the box and wondered what was inside. It looked suspicious and she feared it might be a bomb. She called upon Melissa Snider, Stone Soup Program Coordinator, and together they approached cautiously, discussing whether to call the police. By the way, as a cost-saving measure the police sub-station at Stone Soup has been vacated, so this was not an easy decision to make.

Finally Melissa got up the courage to open the box. Inside was an old typewriter, not special enough to be an antique, but definitely not a bomb.

Thanks Dolores, Mary and Jane!

Francine

Gifts in memory of Phyllis Wilson have been received from Francine and Murray Farber, Shirley Valett, Jennifer and Hugh Williamson and Jane Worsley

Gifts in memory of Gina Hill have been received from Joan Lipton, Shirley Valett, Jennifer and Hugh Williamson and Jane Worsley

Member News

At Large Board Member Eileen Bryan has taken a three month leave of absence from the Board for personal reasons. Her leave extends from July 31 through October 31, 2010. At the end of that period Eileen will let us know whether she will resume her Board position and activities.

In Memoriam

—Phyllis S. Wilson—

Phyllis S. Wilson passed away on July 30, 2010. She had been a League member for 32 years and most recently was active on the Education Committee. A graduate of Cornell University and a petite dynamo, her background in early childhood education made her passionate about the issue of increasing opportunities for preschool for all four-year-olds in Fresno County. Phyllis' husband, Red, is also a League member. They moved to Marin County last year to be closer to family.



We gratefully accept celebratory and memorial gifts.

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

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

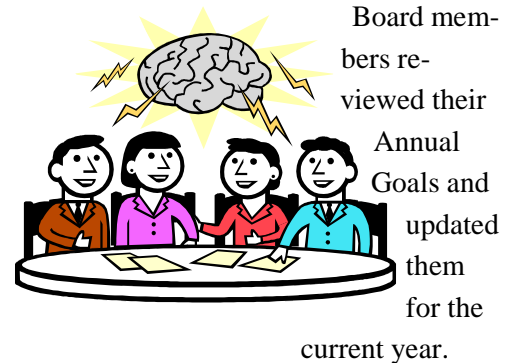


*From the Keynote Presentation
to the League of Women Voters
Convention Banquet, Atlanta, 2010*
by Robert Cooney, Jr.

**Board and others meet
for Annual Retreat**

Current Board members, some past League presidents and a sprinkling of old and new members gathered for the Board's Annual Retreat at the home of President Francine Farber on July 31.

The group held a minute of silence for past president Gina Hill, who had died on July 10, and long-time member Phyllis Wilson, whose death occurred the day before the Retreat.



Extended discussion revolved around plans for our 70th Anniversary celebration which is tentatively set for April 2, 2011. Exciting guest panelists have been approached and will be announced when appearances are definite. It is likely that the celebration will center around a luncheon at Stone Soup that will incorporate our Annual Meeting

Another extended discussion centered on fundraising. A huge percentage (almost 90 percent) of our dues goes to per member payments (PMP) to the state and national leagues. Coupled with fixed expenses such as rent and utilities, there is only a miniscule amount left for discretionary expenses such as meeting arrangements, recruitment and printing. Various fundraising efforts were discussed including a theater party, dues increase, sale of League logo items and voluntary contribu-

(Continued on page 4)

The League of Women Voters has deep roots in the American woman suffrage movement. Ninety years ago, suffragists created the League just as they were winning passage of the 19th Amendment. That effort was led by Carrie Chapman Catt. To get the vote nationally, suffragists had to win statewide elections where only men could vote. And there was always strong opposition. Suffragists waged 54 of these state campaigns, mostly in the early 20th century.

They lost most of them, but over time each state victory brought them closer to their ultimate goal of a new Constitutional amendment that would enfranchise women in every state. They realized that an amendment had no hope of passing if it didn't have tangible support in the states. When suffrage pioneers like Elizabeth Cady Stanton called on Congress in the 1870s to approve a woman suffrage amendment, they were invariably told to "go win more states." So that's where suffragists put most of their energy over the next 50 years. During these state drives for equal suffrage, local women gained valuable experience. Many rose to leadership positions and helped shape the national movement. Some of these women later became leaders in the League of Women Voters, so their collective history strongly influenced the League's direction. The foremost example is Carrie Chapman Catt.

Carrie Lane, as she was born, was a teacher and school superintendent in Iowa. She joined her state suffrage association around 1887 when she was 28 and later wrote: "I have given my life to the suffrage work. I have opened the doors of churches and halls and lighted the kerosene lamps; attended to the babies while the meeting was in progress; made the speech; held all the offices imaginable from club president up and down and side-wise." During the 1890s Catt campaigned in the western states, often in the company of Susan B. Anthony. Catt had her first taste of success as an organizer in Colorado in 1893, when male voters approved dual suffrage at the polls for the very first time. In 1900 she was elected to succeed Susan B. Anthony as head of the national American Woman Suffrage Association. Catt led the Association for four years, putting it on a firmer foundation with better organization and more state participation.

(The above is excerpted from Cooney's full speech, which may be accessed on the LWVUS web site.)

LWVC takes stand on propositions

The LWVC has recommendations on seven of the ten measures on the statewide ballot in November. (Note: It is possible that Proposition 18, the water bond measure, will be removed from the ballot by legislative action.)

Water Bond (Proposition 18): The LWVC opposes the water bond act. While it contains some funding for water management options that the League favors, such as water conservation, recycling and watershed protection, the overall effect of the measure is to encourage continued reliance on structural water supply solutions such as dams and conveyances that divert more in-stream flows from fish and wildlife.

Redistricting (Propositions 20 & 27)

The League opposes Proposition 20. California is in the midst of a major re-

form of our redistricting process, with a new independent Citizens Redistricting Commission drawing the lines for state Senate and Assembly districts. Proposition 20 would significantly increase the commission's workload by adding Congressional redistricting and shortening the time it would have to do its work. We believe the commission should draw Congressional district lines in the future, but the new process should be fully implemented before the commission's responsibilities are expanded so dramatically.

Proposition 27 would completely eliminate the redistricting commission and return the authority for redistricting to the backrooms of the Legislature, resulting in more gerrymandered districts that serve primarily to help incumbents get reelected. The League strongly opposes this measure.

Board Retreat

(Continued from page 3)

.tions at public League events. More discussions will be held and shared with membership.

Plans for the Regional Workshop on September 25 are well underway and were shared with the group. A flyer including a reservation form is included on Page 6 in this issue.


Suspension of Clean Energy and Air Pollution Standards

(Proposition 23): The LWVC opposes this "Dirty Energy Proposition", funded by out-of-state oil companies, because it would virtually kill AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. It would result in more air pollution and increased health risks and would jeopardize hundreds of thousands of clean-energy jobs. (continued on page 5)

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Propositions

(continued from page 4)

Tax Fairness Act (Proposition 24): Proposition 24 would repeal the corporate tax cuts that were passed in the closed-door budget deals of 2008-09. Those tax

breaks cost approximately \$1.3 billion per year in revenue to the state and benefit only two percent of California's businesses. The League supports this measure, because we believe that the budget crisis cannot be solved by expenditure cuts alone, let alone expenditure cuts combined with tax cuts.

Simple Majority Vote for Budget (Proposition 25): The

LWVC supports this measure, which would change the vote required for the Legislature to pass a budget from the current two-thirds to a simple majority. The majority should set priorities for spending and take responsibility for them. This measure will change the negotiations over the budget and give the minority less of a stranglehold on the process.

"Polluter Protection" (Proposition 26): This measure would make new definitions of taxes and therefore require a two-thirds vote on many more government revenue decisions at both the state and local levels. Regulatory fees paid by those who harm the environment or public health would become much harder to enact. The League opposes this measure, because we

believe that decisions on revenue measures should be made by a simple majority vote.



Neighborhood improvement plan

(continued from page 1)

Other activities in the planning stages include work on gang interventions with the police to provide youth with support and alternatives to gang involvement; assembling various non-profits to influence the community development plan for "The Place;" the establishment of a "health navigator" program to help residents interact with the health care system plus work with the Fresno Department of Health on the local implementation of the federal health care reforms; bringing California Rural Legal Assistance together with the Concerned Citizens of West Fresno to confront the problems posed by the Darling Rendering Plant in West Fresno; and a continuing effort by a steering committee (the HUB group) to oversee the BHC planning and work.

The BHC is also administering three state grant programs in Fresno including work with men and boys of color; a project to expand the voice of youth in the media; and work with the Probation Department to support successful reentry of released prisoners into productive community membership.



Do You



Our Valley? Then Learn More About It
at the LWV Regional Workshop (*hosted by LWV Fresno*)

Saturday, September 25***9:30 a.m.—2:30 p.m.
Stone Soup***1345 Bulldog Lane***Fresno

Program

- 9:30 Registration and coffee
- 10:00 Welcome and introductions
- 10:15 **Water: Deeper Than You Think (panel)**
Featuring Dr. Robert Merrill, Geologist; Dr. David Cehrs, Hydrologist;
Roberta Borgonovo, LWVC Program Director for Water
- 11:15 **Advocacy: How Does League Do It?**
November ballot measures: Helen Hutchison, VP, LWVC
- 12:00 Catered lunch
- 12:45 **Redistricting: Keeping it on track**
- 1:40 **Planning Our Future: Valley Blueprint**
Tony Boren, Executive Director, COG of Fresno County
- 2:20 Wrap-up

Register and pay by credit card at the LWVC website by Sept 17, or write check to LWVC and send it and reservation form to: Treasurer, LWVF, 1345 Bulldog Lane, Fresno, CA 93710

Questions: Call Kay Bertken 226-2720 or email kayb@csufresno.edu

_____ I will attend & buy lunch \$25 (\$30 after 9/10) _____ I will attend & bring lunch \$15

Name _____ League _____

Phone and/or e-mail _____


Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ Reservations held at door

We are grateful to our sponsors for their support in "Making Democracy Work."
 League members who wish to be sponsors or to secure sponsorship for us, may contact Francine Farber at 226-5455

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 of service
 to our community



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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.

.....

Name: _____ Ph. _____ E-mail _____

Address: _____