



The Fresno VOTER

Phone: 559-226-VOTE

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

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Calendar

Tuesday, Nov. 4 Election Day

Wednesday, Nov. 7 Film on
Jessie Morrow Mountain at
Cineculture, CSUF

Wednesday, Nov. 19 Regular
board meeting 5 p.m.

Saturday, December 6 Holiday
Party ---See flyer inside, page
10.

League

of

Women Voters
Fresno

IS ON THE WEB

[http://Fresno.ca.](http://Fresno.ca.lwvnet.org)

[lwvnet.org](http://Fresno.ca.lwvnet.org)

PRESCHOOL ACCESSIBILITY PLAN TO BE MADE PUBLIC

By Francine Farber 226-5455

SOMETIMES DREAMS DO COME TRUE

More than three years ago the Education Committee of LWVF began to dream about voluntary preschool for all Fresno County children. Jane Worsley, Phyllis Wilson, Shirley Valett, Bernice Shields and Francine Farber formed the original committee that selected increased accessibility to preschool as their project.

In a few weeks, that dream will be realized when a written plan for Voluntary Preschool for all four-year-olds in Fresno County is presented to the public. Written by a nationally recognized consultant and with input from over 100 professional and lay participants, the plan is a realistic road-map for the implementation of preschool in the County over a seven-year period.

The long path that led to this success is a tribute to the commitment of LWVF members and to the hard work and dedicated support from a variety of sources including law enforcement, civic groups, providers and educators from early care through college.

This is the story of the path that was followed.

In March of 2005 the LWVF Education Committee sponsored a Community Conversation on the future of preschool education in Fresno. With small grants from the LWVC, the First Five Commission of Fresno County and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the committee was able to invite over 100 participants to a dinner and hands-on workshop. Input from the participants was collected and compiled into a document that was sent to all of those who had participated plus other



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a written plan for Voluntary
Preschool for all four-year-olds
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interested citizens, community leaders and local educational, municipal and civic organizations. Enough evidence was gathered to indicate that the community had a strong interest in moving forward with the concept of voluntary preschool for Fresno four-year-olds. With only a little more than one third of County four year olds in preschool programs, Fresno County equaled the lowest enrollment of any California county. Further, because of Fresno's unique economic and cultural conditions, it was of vital importance to provide all children in Fresno County with an equal opportunity to succeed in school by laying a strong foundation for future formal education.

Continued on page 3

President's Message



It's satisfying to meet someone who appears to be great, and then find out that they really are! That's the case with one of our newer members, Dr. Diane Blair. In November 2007 she was leading a table discussion at a College of Arts and Humanities event at Fresno State, and I was assigned to her table. I was impressed with her intelligence and charm, and when I learned that her area of expertise was presidential wives, I knew I had to recruit her for the League. She joined in a heartbeat, further endearing her to me, and her promise has already been fulfilled in less than a year.

Diane has a wonderful background. A native of Ohio, she earned her bachelor's degree in Communication at Mount Union College and a master's in Communication from Ohio State University. Subsequently she received a Ph.D. in Communication from the University of Maryland as well as a graduate certificate in Women's Studies. She and her husband, an instructor at Fresno City College, live in Fresno with two dogs and two cats.

I can't take credit for informing Diane about the League, however. When she was doing research for her dissertation on Eleanor Roosevelt, she learned that Mrs. FDR was an active member of the New York State League from its early beginnings in 1920. She has published several articles and book chapters on the role of the first lady in U.S. Presidential politics, including articles on the civil rights rhetoric of Eleanor Roosevelt and the communication strategies of Rosalyn Carter. Her latest research features the rhetorical campaigns of women who have run for the U.S. Presidency, including that of Hillary Clinton.

All this is certainly impressive, but what has she done for the League? When Diane heard that we were interested in starting a student chapter at Fresno State, she jumped right in and began planning and developing this project. With some initial assistance from Board members Diane Woody and Sue Sheragy, Diane has recruited about 30 students who have expressed an interest in joining the student chapter, which would be an affiliate of LWVF. Officers have been selected and a constitution has been cobbled together as required by Fresno State student activities regulations. Application has been made for status as a new organization. This should be forthcoming within a few weeks. The students are already involved in organizing for the upcoming election, registering other students and distributing Easy Voters on campus.

When the student chapter becomes official the student members, who will pay reduced dues, will be invited to participate in all LWVF activities. Our hope is that their interest in good government will be permanently whetted, and they will continue with our League or another league after they are graduated from college. We also hope to increase our organization's visibility through the energy and innovation of the next generation of members.

We are also working on a special event for February, which will mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln. Diane has consented to present a Lunch & Learn program on Mary Todd Lincoln if we can work out mutually acceptable dates.

Francine

WOMEN SPEAK OUT

The community listening sessions on "Women Speak Out: Changing the Way Californians Age," brought together over 350 women and their allies to discuss priorities and assets with policy makers in the Bay Area, Fresno and Los Angeles. I attended the sessions in Fresno on September 26 with about 80 others.

The local session brought together women from a diverse range of ages, ethnicity and sexual orientation. Council member Cynthia Sterling welcomed the group, followed by youth advocates who presented touching videos and essays in praise of the importance of elder women in their lives, especially their grandmothers.

Many participants spoke briefly about their needs, problems and concerns. Roundtable discussions focusing on health care and other significant issues occupied the afternoon sessions.

Over the next few months the Women's Foundation of California will be synthesizing the priorities and recommendations from the workshops into a report that will be ready for dissemination in early 2009. An overview of key themes will be added to the State of California Commission on the Status of Women Public Policy Agenda for 2009-2010. A media briefing will be scheduled to heighten awareness of the need to work across all sectors to ensure that all of us age with vitality and longevity.

PRESCHOOL, continued from page 1

The Packard Foundation was so impressed by the outcome of the first Community Conversation that it awarded the League an additional \$18,000 to continue planning to make preschool accessible throughout the County. **This led to the formation of the Preschool Leadership Coalition, a select group of 26 educators, businesspeople, faith-based groups, government and social services representatives, and other professionals interested in early education from throughout the area.** This group met regularly and spent about six months researching, educating the public, and spreading the word about the importance of preschool.

The PLC was greatly assisted by the excellent facilitation work of consultant Jackie Ryle. Their efforts culminated in a second Community Conversation in January 2006, with yet another publication documenting the research and activities that had been accomplished in only eight months since the previous Conversation.

Six months later, in **June 2006, California's Proposition 82 went down to defeat by a vote of 40 percent to 60 percent. Prop 82 called for a complicated universal preschool package that would have provided free preschool for all four year olds in the state, paid for by a new tax on the highest wage earners.** Backed by actor Rob Reiner, the proposition was defeated because of a combination of factors influencing opposition to its funding source, multiple misunderstandings about the place of small providers and faith-based providers in the plan and hostility toward Reiner himself.

Despite this setback the Preschool Leadership Coalition continued to meet and persist in education and advocacy in behalf of increasing accessibility to preschool through the County. During this process more than half the boards of education and half of the city councils in the county heard presentations about the importance of preschool and signed statements in support of the concept.

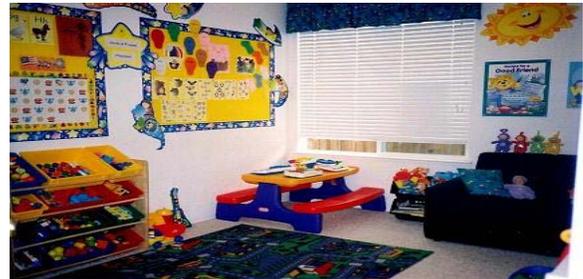
About that time Larry Powell and Larry Wilder decided to run for the office of Superintendent of the Fresno County Office of Education that was vacated by retiring superintendent Pete Mehas. Both men appeared at a PLC meeting and pledged their support for preschool. After Larry Powell won the election, he kept his commitment and designated his Deputy Superintendent, Jim Yovino, to meet with a contingent of three members from the PLC who wanted to further the cause of preschool education in the county.

Marilyn Moore of Fresno City College, Wilma Hashimoto, then of the Clovis Education Department and Francine Farber met with Deputy Superintendent Yovino, who had many years of experience in public school administration but was not yet informed about preschool. He proved to be an

eager learner and absorbed all the material we provided for him. He became committed to the concept of voluntary preschool for all.

We all knew that we had to have a written plan that would describe the details of quality preschool education, how it would be administered, and how it would be implemented in our County. But we needed funds to support the writing of the plan. Because of the League's successful work with Packard Foundation funds and Packard's intense interest in furthering preschool in Fresno, **Jim Yovino was able to secure a grant of \$150,000 from Packard. He also persuaded the First Five Commission to join forces to contribute \$50,000. This led to the employment of consultant Karen Hill-Scott who wrote the plan for preschool for Fresno County.**

Using the published reports on the Community Con-



versations from the League as the basis for beginning her work here, Ms. Hill-Scott gathered input from the PLC and many other interested parties in the County at a series of meetings and workshops. She brought to the local group her experience working with other California counties, including Los Angeles, that already had initiated preschool programs to the group.

Meanwhile, FCOE has made a \$275,000 commitment by setting up an Early Education Department for the first time. Supt. Powell and Deputy Supt. Yovino have hired two administrators and an assistant to staff the office whose job it will be to lead the implementation of the preschool accessibility plan throughout the County.

And the Packard Foundation continues to amaze with its generous support for Fresno County based on its faith in our accomplishments. They have just donated another \$100,000 with which to begin the implementation of the preschool plan, which will be phased in over seven years based on making accessibility available first in the most needy school district areas in our County.

The written plan itself will be released to the committee on November 19, and then released publicly at a press conference on November 20. **You can be sure that the original dreamers will be in the audience!**

Natural Resources

By Mary Savala 434-1227

Agricultural Land Preservation

The LWVF was instrumental in the adoption of the League of Women Voters of California's position on Agriculture which recognizes Agricultural Land as a limited resource which must be preserved for the economic and physical well-being of California and the nation. Since then LWVF has been prodding the County of Fresno to act aggressively to preserve agricultural land in Fresno County, arguably the most agriculturally productive area in the world.

LWVF was part of a settlement agreement in 2003 that provided funds which may be used to implement a farmland conservation trust in Fresno County. The Great Valley Center has advised our local League that a promising strategy for a Farm Land Trust would be a multi-county effort with agricultural community advisory groups specific to each county. The Sequoia Riverlands Trust's Board of Directors agreed that they could, with assistance, expand their mission to include acquiring and monitoring farm land easements in Kern, Kings, Tulare and Fresno Counties. They have begun their efforts in Kern County with the aid of funding for farmland preservation acquired by Sierra Club law suits for mitigation of loss of farm land against some development in Kern County. Other Land Trusts in Fresno County including the San Joaquin River Conservancy and Trust, Kings River Trust and the Sierra Foothills



Land Trust do not want to hold development rights on farm land or outside their identified jurisdictions.

Opportunities have recently opened up for expanding the Sequoia Riverlands Trust's efforts in Fresno County. Preliminary talks have begun with private land owners,

mining operations and the Board of Supervisors to acquire development rights on key agricultural lands. **The Farm Land Trust would buy or accept the rights to develop agricultural acreage, leaving the land itself in the possession of the property owners to continue farming operations. This strategy gives farmers cash and protects important agricultural land from being developed.**

If LWVF were to participate with the Sequoia Riverlands Trust in efforts to preserve farm land, funds could increase the awareness of how land trusts operate. Farmers would be helped to stay in agriculture while the capacity of a land trust like Sequoia Riverlands Trust to work in Fresno County is increased. The future looks hopeful.

Measure C Extension

The Fresno County Transportation Authority (FCTA) and the Fresno County Council of Governments (COG) met in joint session on October 9 to approve a fee schedule for regional transportation mitigation on new development. The fee schedule will apply only for mitigation on key regional road and highway projects identified in the Measure C Ex-

tension and prioritized by FCTA and COG. The approval came after a major study of development fees and construction costs. **Developers in Fresno County took exception to the interpretation of the Measure C extension and its predictions of revenue from the sales tax.**

Revenues are down from the very conservative estimates of revenue in the sales tax measure, and construction costs have escalated since their original estimates, resulting in difficult decisions about construction priori-

Revenues are down from the very conservative estimates... construction costs have escalated....

ties. But lengthy negotiations resulted in an acceptable compromise for developers and political officials.

The next step before fees are actually collected on new development will be the adoption of the fee schedules by each city and the County of Fresno in a standardized ordinance. The ordinance must be adopted by January 1, 2009 in order for the city or the County to receive regional Measure C funding. It is expected that the ordinances should sail through the City Council and Board of Supervisors process. However, Selma did express its distaste for imposing additional costs on housing and the mayor of Selma voted against the fee schedule at the COG meeting.

Breaking news

The Student Chapter of LWVF has received word that it has been recognized as an official student organization on campus.

Dr. Diane Blair with assistance from Diane Woody and Sue Sheragy began plans to form a student chapter of the LWVF at CSUF last spring. In order to become a recognized student organization, at least 15 regularly enrolled students had to be recruited as members. With that goal met, the students along with the League drew up a constitution to be submitted to the Office of Student Activities and Leadership Development of CSUF. The new student chapter of LWVF has now been officially recognized and is ready for action. The student chapter members have already been involved in voter registration

CONSTITUTION OF LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FRESNO—CSUF STUDENT UNIT

ARTICLE I: NAME AND PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION

- Section 1** The name of this organization shall be the League of Women Voters of Fresno—CSUF Student Unit
- Section 2** The purposes and political policy of this organization are:
Part 1. Purposes. The purposes of the LWV are to promote democratic government through studying, discussing and arriving at consensus on issues by the membership, and taking action on appropriate LWV positions and principles at local, state and national levels of government.
Part 2. Political Policy. The League shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.
- Section 3** This organization is recognized by California State University, Fresno and adheres to all regulations as set forth in the Handbook for Student Organizations and Use of Campus Facilities and Grounds.

ARTICLE II: REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP AND MEANS OF SELECTION OF MEMBERS

- Section 1** Membership in this organization shall not be denied to any student of California State University, Fresno on the basis of race, religion, national origin, ethnicity, color, age, gender, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, or disability.
- Section 2** There shall be two types of membership in the organization: voting and associate.
- Section 3**
A. *Voting Members:* Regularly enrolled students at California State University, Fresno who have paid semester dues for the organization and who are citizens at least 18 years of age shall be Voting Members. Students meeting these criteria who join the League shall be voting members of League of Women Voters of Fresno (LWVF), LWV California, and LWVUS.
B. *Associate Members.* Others who join the League of Women Voters of Fresno—CSUF Student unit shall be associate members.
- Section 4** Any person who subscribes to the purposes and political policy of the LWVF shall be eligible for membership.
- Section 5** Any member may be suspended or expelled from the organization for conduct obviously contrary to the Constitution of the organization or for conduct, which grossly impairs the rights of the members to enjoy the benefits of the organization. The alleged offense must be reported in writing and submitted by a member. After the alleged offense has been submitted to the organization, the accused member shall have a right to a hearing before the board of directors at a regular meeting and may be suspended or expelled only upon the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the voting members present.
- Section 6** Any member removed by such a vote may file a grievance with the University Student Grievance Board by contacting the Dean of Student Affairs Office. A member of the Dean's staff will review the grievance procedures with the student.

ARTICLE III: OFFICERS

- Section 1** The elected officers of the organization shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer, and others as deemed necessary - see provisions for amending.
- Section 2** Powers and Duties of Officers:

Continued on page 6

A. The Chair shall call, coordinate the agenda, and preside at all meetings of the organization. The Chair may be the official spokesperson of the organization, after discussion with the LWVF president or designee, representing the policies, views, and opinions of the organization in its relations with the campus and community at large while adhering to the principles of the League of Women Voters (such as “speaking with one voice”). She/He shall have such further powers and duties as may be prescribed by the organization.

B. The Vice-Chair shall preside at organization meetings in the absence of the Chair. She/He shall perform all legal duties assigned by the Chair. She/He shall serve as a communication coordinator for the organization, taking and distributing meeting minutes, notifying all members of the organization meetings, and distributing other announcements and correspondence for the organization.

C. The Treasurer shall handle all financial affairs and budgeting of the organization, maintaining all necessary accounting records. Said records shall be maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. She/He shall maintain bank accounts in the organization’s name, requiring signatures of both the Treasurer and Chair for authorized disbursements. All disbursements at variance with the budget in excess of \$50.00 require the majority approval of the organization.

Section 3 Qualifications necessary to hold office in this organization are as follows:
The President and Treasurer of the student organization are required to meet the minimum requirements established for Minor Student Representative Student Officers.

Minimum Academic Qualifications

Students must be matriculated and enrolled at CSUF and maintain a minimum overall 2.0 grade point average each term. The students must be in good standing and must not be on probation of any kind.

Incumbent Unit Load

This requires undergraduate students to earn six semester (nine quarter) units per term while holding office. Graduate and credential students must earn three semester (four quarter) units per term while holding office. Students enrolled at quarter campuses must attend a minimum of two quarters during the academic year to maintain eligibility.

Incumbent Maximum Allowable Units

Undergraduate students are allowed to earn a maximum of 150 semester (225 quarter) units or 125 percent of the units required for a specific baccalaureate degree objective, whichever is greater. Graduate and credential students are allowed to earn a maximum of 50 semester (75 quarter) units or 167 percent of the units required for the graduate or credential objective, whichever is greater. Students holding more than this number of units will no longer be eligible for minor student government office.

Section 4 Petition by one-third of the total number of members shall be cause for recall election. The offense must be described in writing and submitted by a member. After the offense has been submitted to the organization, the accused officer shall have at least 48 hours before the hearing. A recall election shall be held at the next regular business meeting after the presentation of the recall petition and shall be conducted as a special election. Recall will require a favorable vote of a simple majority of the voting membership in attendance.

Section 5 In the event that an elected officer is unable to fulfill his/her term of office, there shall be a special election to fill the vacancy. Any eligible member, including those already holding office, may be nominated for a vacant office.

ARTICLE IV: MEETINGS

Section 1 Regular meetings shall be scheduled at least bi-monthly during the academic year.

Section 2 Special meetings may be called by any elected officer (i.e., Chairperson, Treasurer, etc.) or by 5% of the voting members of the organization. All members must be given a minimum of 24 hours notice, weekends and holidays excluded, prior to the meeting time.

Section 3 Official Business cannot be conducted unless a quorum of the membership is present. A quorum for this organization is defined as 50% + 1 of the voting membership.

Section 4 An officer or designee of LWVF—CSUF Student Unit must attend each monthly meeting of the League of Women Voters of Fresno in order to present a report on the CSUF chapter’s activities. If such attendance is not possible, then in lieu of attendance a written report must be delivered to the president of LWVF at least 24 hours prior to the regular monthly meeting.

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Section 5 Members of this unit shall receive all editions of The Voter, the newsletter of the LWVF. A member or officer of the association may submit a written report for inclusion in The Voter when approved by the Student Unit Chair and the LWVF chapter president.

ARTICLE V: ELECTIONS

Section 1 Officers are elected once a semester. Elections are held at the beginning of each semester and shall take place at a regularly scheduled meeting of the organization at which a quorum is present.

Section 2 At least one week's notice shall be provided for any meeting at which an election is to be held.

ARTICLE VI: ADVISORS

Section 1 An individual employed on a more than half-time basis by California State University, Fresno, and not a University Auxiliary employee, will serve as advisor to this organization as required by University guidelines.

Section 2 The advisor(s) shall serve a term of one year and will be selected at the same time as the officers of the organization.

Section 3 If an advisor is deemed to be ineffective by the organization, the advisor(s) may be removed from their role by majority vote of a quorum of the membership at a regularly scheduled meeting. A minimum of seven days notice must be given prior to such a vote.

ARTICLE VII: DUES

Section 1 This organization has the ability to assess the membership. Assessments shall be determined by a quorum of the membership and in consultation with the local affiliate organization at a regularly scheduled meeting.

ARTICLE VIII: METHOD TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION

Section 1 Proposed constitutional amendments or changes shall be presented to the organization, in writing, one meeting before being subject to a vote.

Section 2 Approval by two-thirds of the voting members present at a regular meeting shall pass a proposed change. The change shall be put into effect immediately unless otherwise stipulated in the amendment.

Section 3 A copy of any alteration to this document must be filed within 90 days after any substantive change or amendment in the Student Activities Office at California State University, Fresno, and copies sent to the President and Secretary of the League of Women Voters of Fresno at the League office.

ARTICLE IX: DISBURSAL OF ORGANIZATION ASSETS

Section 1 In the event the LWVF—CSUF Student Unit should become defunct, all assets will be turned over to the League of Women Voters of Fresno.

ARTICLE X: STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION

Section 1 This organization is affiliated with the League of Women Voters of Fresno.

Section 2 Any copy of any alteration to the League of Women Voters of Fresno's bylaws must be filed in the Student Activities Office at California State University, Fresno.

ARTICLE XI: RULES OF ORDER

Section 1 The League of Women Voters of Fresno—CSUF Student Unit accepts "Robert's Rules of Order" as its rules of order.

Section 2 Any issue not directly spoken to in this document will be resolved by referring to the Rules of Order.

This constitution was approved on October 3, 2008 by the active student members and is under consideration by the LWVF Board.

THE LWVF SUPPORTS MEASURE "L" for LIBRARIES

A "yes" vote on Measure L would replace Measure B and raise the current one/eighth of a cent additional sales tax to one-quarter of a cent to support Fresno County Libraries.

On your ballot Measure L will be found after all of the state propositions.

VOTER SERVICES

By Liz Shields 298-5183

Speakers Bureau

October was a busy month with presentations on the ballot propositions and distribution of Easy Voter Guides at the following events:

October 2: Alice Powell represented the League as a member of the audience at the KVPT mayoral debate.

October 4: Liz Shields staffed a voter registration booth at the Madera County Child Abuse Prevention Council "Fun Day" event in Madera.

October 5: Alice and Liz made a presentation to Hadassah and its guests at Woodward Park Library.

October 5: Liz made short presentations to College Community Church members, ably assisted by John Donaldson.

October 6: Liz made presentations to classes at Fresno Adult School.

October 7: Margaret Johnson made a presentation to State Farm Insurance personnel.

October 8: Liz made presentations to students at the Center for Advanced Research and Technology, a joint high school venture between Fresno Unified and Clovis Unified School Districts.

October 13: Alice made a presentation to San Joaquin Garden residents.

Easy Voter Guides

Approximately 4000 English language and 500 Spanish language Easy Voter Guides were distributed to local libraries, community groups, and colleges

Candidate Forums

Many thanks to Bill Murphy, husband of LWVF member Carolyn Murphy, who moderated the candidate forums for Superior Court judicial candidates, Congressional candidates, State Assembly candidates and Fresno Unified School Board candidates, all taped by Comcast on October 14 and 15. The forums were aired a few days after the taping and are available on demand until Election Day.

League members contributing questions for the candidates included Kay Bertken, Howard Watkins, Jane Worsley, John Shields and my students in the capstone finance class at Fresno State.

Seniors Taxi Scrip Program — Compliments of Measure C

Seniors 70 years of age and older now save 75% on Taxi rides in Fresno County by purchasing Taxi Scrip at the locations listed below:

Rules for Participation:

- You must live in Fresno County
- You must be at least 70 years of age
- You must show proof of eligibility with either a California Driver's License, Cal DMV Identification Card, or a Medicare Card
- Participants must fill out a Taxi Scrip application and submit it with their identification before purchasing scrip for the first time

Where can you apply for and purchase Taxi Scrip?

- Fresno Area Express 3590 N. Blackstone
- Fresno Area Express 2016 Tulare Street
- Clovis City Hall 1033 Fifth Street
- Clovis Senior Center 2150 Minnewawa

Order by mail:

Fresno County Council of Governments
2035 Tulare Street, Fresno 93721
(559) 233-4148
Online: www.fresnocog.org

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Education Report

By Kay Bertken 226-2720

We have been working to focus attention on the three FUSD Board of Education trustee races. On October 7, KVPR's Quality of Life radio program featured a half hour conversation between me and Sarah Woolf, member of Fresno Citizens for Good Government, and co-author of the 2004 report, *Choosing Our Future : A Community Call to Action*. **The program encouraged the public to look carefully at school board races, emphasized the importance of schools for the entire community and provided an unexpected but enthusiastic promotion of the League and Smart Voter.** On October 15 Liz Shields moderated a Comcast discussion with school board candidates as well as candidates for other offices. Other media outlets have been responsive to our requests to do profiles of school board candidates.

We are taking an active part in forums focused on the dropout issue. Francine Farber has secured a \$1,500 grant from the State League to help us hold a community event on the issue. Francine, Amy Arambula and I are meeting with United Way and the Center for Multicultural Cooperation to develop a proposal for America's Promise funding. **Fresno is one of their target cities for community education and action to improve graduation rates. United Way anticipates receiving \$10,000 to facilitate a summit on dropout prevention and has asked our league to be a co-convenor.** Our special grant will be used to fund a segment of the summit, possibly some parent focus groups. Other cooperating agencies will focus on students and educators. The summit has been tentatively scheduled for March. The preliminary plans call for meeting with representatives of parents, educators and students prior to March. The meeting will focus on asking a set of consistent questions, in an effort to see how these representatives view and experience the dropout problem and how they imagine solutions.

Governor Schwarzenegger has taken an active interest in the dropout issue and is encouraging mayors around the state to develop plans for their cities. **We are represented among the multiple public agencies and nongovernmental groups who have been meeting with Deputy Mayor Eban at City Hall. The group has met twice so far in an effort to identify opportunities for cooperation. Representatives of Clovis Unified,**

Central Unified and Fresno Unified are all participating.

The LWVF Education Committee met on October 14. **We reviewed our progress on the two issues proposed for work at our last meeting: encouraging media attention to the FUSD school board races and working on the drop out issue.** Much has been done in both areas. The media has responded positively to our efforts to highlight the board races. Francine, Amy and Kay have all been involved in several groups that share our interest in the drop out issue

Kay Fredrickson, who is with Child Protective Services, spoke about her targeted work with foster children as a model of agency cooperation and intervention for an at risk population. Child Protective Services sends social workers to the school sites to meet with their clients and the children's teachers. These students have improved both their attendance and their grades. Their suspension rates have dropped. When Kay began, none of these foster children participated in any extracurricular or college prep classes. That has all changed. The agency has worked to keep these students in a single school during the school year.

Susan Hansen reported from the perspective of the arts in the schools. She is a teacher assigned to do staff development work in the arts in three Fresno Unified elementary schools. She emphasized the point that local elementary schools have turned nearly 100% of their attention to math and language arts, the subjects that are tested. The arts, because they are not tested, are simply left out of the elementary school curriculum. Hansen proposed that the dropout problem is being fed in the elementary schools by a curriculum that does not engage students



What will your legacy be?

As a leader in your community, you know what you want to accomplish for yourself, for your family, and for your community. Consider making the League of Women Voters part of your overall estate plan next time you speak with your attorney or financial professional, so that your hard work will carry on.

You're Invited

to the League's Annual Holiday Party



Hors d'oeuvres

Dessert

Beverages

Conversation

Merriment



Merriment

*Bring holiday music, instruments,
voices, jokes and good cheer*

At the gracious home of Dr. Juan and Clara Touya

2351 West Warner, Fresno

One block South of Herndon, East of Van Ness

Saturday, December 6, 5–7 p.m.

Need a ride or have questions?

Call Georgia, 439-5410

We are grateful to our sponsors for their support in "Making Democracy Work."

League members who wish to be sponsors or to secure sponsorships for us, may contact Francine Farber at 226-5455

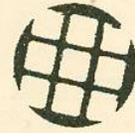
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Fresno, California
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pm097@csufresno.edu



Congratulations
League of Women Voters
for
another successful year
of service
to our community



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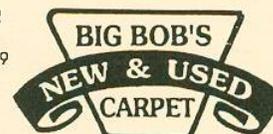
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