



LOOKING AHEAD

FEBRUARY 1, 2014
 BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY
 “A New Vision for Open Space”
 MTC Auditorium, Oakland
 See calendar for more details

FRIDAY, MARCH 7
League Conference Room
7 p.m.
Our initial Friday Night at
the movies will feature
“Iron Jawed Angels”
Popcorn available

March ??

Join us for a Field Trip to our National
 Park honoring Rosie the Riveter.
 Recognizing Women’s History Month we
 will drive up to Richmond and visit this
 wonderful tribute to women in WWII

APRIL 5, 2014, 10 to 2
 Location to be determined
LWVUS AGRICULTURE STUDY
CONSENSUS MEETING

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!!HOT TOPIC!!

Fremont Police Chief
Richard Lucero

will address members at our
 League conference room

3375 Country Drive
Fremont
12 noon
Thursday, February 20th

Bring your brown bag lunch
 and join us in learning more
 about cameras, crime
 prevention, and how our public
 safety officers approach their
 job protecting Fremont
 residents and businesses in our
 multicultural city.

His talk will be followed by a
 lively Q & A.

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE



Presidents' Message

Who said "Failure is impossible"? Susan B. Anthony born on February 15, 1820 said it in a speech in 1906 at her 86th birthday celebration, the last words she spoke in public. She lived in a tumultuous times. Women of the Wyoming Territory gained the right to vote in December 1869. Voter discrimination "based on a citizen's race, color, or previous condition of servitude" was outlawed by the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870. Alas she did not see the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment granting women full voting rights in 1920.

We too live in tumultuous times. The League and our work is more important than ever. There are efforts to suppress voting rights across the country, a national discussion on fracking and locally we grapple with transportation and community development issues.

Stay informed with our Voter, our website www.lwvfnuc.org, Facebook, the Bay Area Monitor and our email alerts. **Get involved** - join our Action, Education or Agriculture Position Update Study groups working to keep democracy alive and well in our community. Contact either Alex Starr, Miriam Keller or Mary Miller respectively. People acting together can bring about great changes now as in earlier times - failure is impossible.

This month we get local - join Fremont's Police Chief Lucero for lunch on February 20th at noon at our League Meeting Room, 3375 Country Drive, Fremont; bring your lunch. The Chief will do a 20 minute presentation followed by a Q&A.

Remember – Democracy is not a Spectator Sport!

Sam Neeman and Carolyn Hedgecock

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Editor Alex Starr

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WANTED: COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

com·mu·ni·ca·tion (noun) com·mu·ni·ca·tion [kə,mju:ni'keiʃn]

1. exchange of information, 2. message, 3. act of communicating, 4. rapport, 5. Access

At the Board retreat this past Summer we set a goal to improve our communications. Our efforts have been hampered by a vacancy on the Board - Director of Communications. In the meantime Peter and Alex Starr, Daria Wagganer, Judy Chong and Sam Neeman have been working to get all of our communications consistent, timely, and visually pleasing.

We communicate via the Voter, Facebook, our website, E-tree, the 3 local Patches and local print media. You have probably seen some changes on our web site and may have seen

some problems with our new Gmail system. After spending hours on the phone with Google, Peter is hopeful that the problem has been solved.

Alex has been learning Constant Contact, an email distribution tool. Peter has moved us to Google's business Gmail and is tweaking our web site while concurrently working on a major redesign. The changes are coming slowly and we ask your patience as we work through new technologies and redesign.

Better yet consider joining the Board as Communications Director and help improve our local LWV brand and coordinate our efforts. If that is too much of a commitment for you at this point and you have artistic or marketing expertise and would like to help with the website redesign, please contact Sam Neeman via email at samneeman @ comcast.net.

Meet Our Members

This is the first installment in our new column that will introduce our members, and what they do—aside from League work—in the community.

An active retired couple, Andrea Schacter and Dave Fishbaugh, recently celebrated 27 years of marriage, and have resided in Fremont all of that time. Both League members, Andrea is currently serving as the V.P. of Voter Services, while Dave rarely says “no” to requests from Sam, Marilyn, Miriam or Alex for whatever is needed. These women must possess a special kind of magic, because Andrea hears that “no” rather often! (Just kidding).

Dave retired from West Valley College a little more than 3 years ago, and Andrea retired from the San Jose Public Library about 6 years ago. In addition to their involvement with the League, both keep busy with several community service activities. This year, both are pleased to volunteer at the VITA tax assistance site at the Fremont Family Resource Center. Dave works as an IRS certified tax preparer, while Andrea serves as an ambassador, directing clients to additional financial assistance services to help

them become more financially stable and secure, including Cal Fresh (formerly Food Stamps) and Covered California, our state's health insurance exchange. VITA serves individuals and families with an annual income of \$52,000 or less, and the services are completely FREE. The VITA site at the Family Resource Center is wildly busy, and this helps to make it a truly fun and energetic volunteer gig.

Dave's other volunteer activity is working at the Ohlone Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, where he helps restore birds and small mammals to health after they have been injured or orphaned. Andrea volunteers at the Oakland Museum as an ambassador, Washington Hospital Health Resource Library, and an occasional stint at the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco.

If you are part of an interesting or inspiring community service, please consider sharing it with your fellow League members. Alex would be happy to include it in a future VOTER newsletter.

DROUGHT

Reprinted with permission from UC Berkeley's Online NewsCenter

[Why state's water woes could be just beginning](#)

By [Steve Hockensmith](#), NewsCenter | January 21, 2014

As 2013 came to a close, the media dutifully reported that the year had been the driest in California since records began to be kept in the 1840s. UC Berkeley paleoclimatologist B. Lynn Ingram didn't think the news stories captured the seriousness of the situation.

"This could potentially be the driest water year in 500 years," says Ingram, a professor of earth and planetary science and geography.

Ingram has an especially long-term perspective. As a paleoclimatologist — a scientist who studies changes in climate by teasing data out of rocks, sediments, shells, microfossils, trees and other sources — she's accustomed to looking back over eons. And according to the width of old tree rings (which can record the coming and going of wet or waterless stretches), California hasn't been so parched since 1580.

"These extremely dry years are very rare," she says.

But soon, perhaps, they won't be as rare as they used to be. The state is facing its third drought year in a row, and Ingram wouldn't be surprised if that dry stretch continues.

UC Berkeley professor B. Lynn Ingram analyzes sediments and archaeological deposits to determine how climates change over the course of millennia.

Given that possibility, the title of a recent book by Ingram seems grimly apropos. [*The West Without Water: What Past Floods, Droughts, and Other Climatic Clues Tell Us About Tomorrow*](#), co-written with geographer and

environmental biologist (and UC Berkeley visiting scholar) Frances Malamud-Roam, was released by the University of California Press last year. The NewsCenter spoke to Ingram about the lessons to be drawn from her research as California heads into what could be its worst drought in half a millennium.

Q: California is in its third dry year in a row. How long could that continue?

A: If you go back thousands of years, you see that droughts can go on for years if not decades, and there were some dry periods that lasted over a century, like during the Medieval period and the middle Holocene. The 20th century was unusually mild here, in the sense that the droughts weren't as severe as in the past. It was a wetter century, and a lot of our development has been based on that.

The late 1930s to the early 1950s were when a lot of our dams and aqueducts were built, and those were wetter decades. I think there's an assumption that we'll go back to that, and that's not necessarily the case. We might be heading into a drier period now. It's hard for us to predict, but that's a possibility, especially with global warming. When the climate's warmer, it tends to be drier in the West. The storms tend to hit further into the Pacific Northwest, like they are this year, and we don't experience as many storms in the winter season. We get only about seven a year, and it can take the deficit of just a few to create a drought.

You mentioned global warming. Is what we're seeing consistent with the predictions that have been made about how climate change could affect California?

Yes. We've already started having a decreased snow pack and increased wild fire frequency. And we've been warming, and it's gotten drier. With Pacific Decadal Oscillation [the ever-changing temperature of surface water in the North Pacific Ocean], every 20 or 30 years we go in and out of these positive and negative shifts that affect precipitation and temperature. But now we're entering a period where it looks

like we're getting drier even though it doesn't necessarily correspond to that cycle. It looks like a trend. It's warming and drying, and that's definitely a big concern for Western states.

What originally sparked your interest in all this?

I grew up in Santa Barbara and personally experienced big floods followed by droughts. In 1969, half our backyard was washed away from an atmospheric river during a wet year. Then the '76-77 drought made a big impression on me because there was almost literally no rain that year. So I was drawn to trying to understand what controls climate and why it's so variable. It's definitely very complex. We haven't explained it completely, but we're on our way.

What's an "atmospheric river"?

That's when corridors of moisture come up from the tropics, traveling across the Pacific Ocean for thousands of miles to the West Coast and bringing the equivalent of, say, 10 Mississippi Rivers of water. There's a lot of rain within two or three days. Almost all of our major floods in California correspond to these atmospheric river storms. The last one that was really major was the 1861-62 flood. It completely filled the Central Valley with something like 10 feet of water. Sacramento was underwater.

We don't know why, but we see evidence for these major mega-floods every one to two centuries over the past 2,000 years. It's been about 150 years now since the last one, and now there are all these major cities in the very places that were submerged. The U.S. Geological Survey created a scenario for this — [the ARkStorm](#), it was called — and it showed that if we repeated the 1861 flood there would be something like \$725 billion in damage to the state. It would be a major disaster.

So on the one hand we should be worried about a drought, but on the other hand we should be worried about a flood?

Ingram stands in front of an Arizona sinkhole known as the Montezuma Well. It served as a water source for the Sinagua people until they disappeared from the area around AD 1300.

Yes. If you look at the past, you realize that our climate is anything but reliable. We've seen these big fluctuations. Extreme droughts and extreme floods. My co-author and I wrote a couple review papers about that, but those weren't going to be seen by the general public. They were for people in our field. And we thought we should try to bring this message out to the broader public. Because if you're going to buy a house in the Central Valley, I think you should know about these floods. And we have to start assuming that we could go into one of these longer droughts and maybe start doing some serious conservation and rethinking of agriculture here.

If you look at the archaeological record, you see that the Native American population in the West expanded in the wet years that preceded those long droughts in the Medieval period. Then during the droughts, they were pretty much wiped out. There was the so-called Anasazi collapse in the Southwest about 800 years ago. In some ways, I see that as an analogy to us today. We've had this wetter 150 years and we've expanded. Now we're using up all the available water, yet our population is still growing.

We're vulnerable just like they were, but on an even larger scale. *residential Commission on Election Administration Issues Solid Presidential Commission on Election Administration Issues Solid Recommendations*

Professionalization of Election Workforce, Benchmark for Voter Wait Times Good for American Elections

Washington, D.C. — The Presidential Commission on Election Administration (PCEA) released [their report](#) to President Obama outlining how to improve the administration of America's elections. The League [submitted testimony to PCEA](#) in

September 2013 that urged the Commission to consider a five-point reform agenda as part of its recommendations.

“Our initial reaction is that there are many good recommendations in the PCEA report and others that we will need to look at more closely to examine the real impact on American voters,” said Elisabeth MacNamara, President of the League of Women Voters of the U.S. “For example, the recommendation for all states to provide for in-person early voting is an important and very positive step,” she said.

“We are pleased to see that the bipartisan Commission was able to roll up their sleeves and get to work on some of the endemic troubles plaguing our nation’s polling places,” added MacNamara. “PCEA’s prescription for what to do about lack of resources, inadequate compliance with federal laws, the need for professionalization of the election workforce, and creating a benchmark of no one waiting to vote longer than 30 minutes, are badly needed fixes for election administrators and voters.”

“The Commission’s report was right to recommend that our nation’s elections professionals should regularly partner with experts in the field of emerging technology,” said MacNamara. “A great example of this is the Commission’s recommendation endorsing Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV)

transmissions of voter information to elections officials. The League believes electronic transmission should be extended to social service agencies that register voters as well,” MacNamara said. “By adopting such electronic practices, officials can eliminate costly and time consuming steps in election administration, reduce errors and increase the ease and convenience of the elections process for both their workers and for voters.”

“While the League is enthusiastic about online voter registration, the accessibility of these systems continues to be a major concern” noted MacNamara. “The League’s testimony urged the Commission to recommend online voter registration systems designed for all eligible citizens,” said MacNamara. “But a weakness of the report is the endorsement of online registration systems that many eligible voters can’t use,” MacNamara said. “Of the systems in the Commission’s report, voters must have a driver’s license or a non-driver’s ID in order to register to vote online. This limitation is unnecessary, will substantially reduce the effectiveness of online registration and also raises concerns about the discriminatory effect,” added MacNamara.

“We look forward to working with Commission to implement the best of these recommendations and improve how elections are run across this nation,” concluded MacNamara.

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| Feb. 1 | Bay Area League Day | “Open Space” – 101 Eighth St, Oakland 9:30-2 P.M. |
| Feb. 10 | Board Meeting | 7 PM League Office |
| Feb. 13 | Action Group | League Office, 3375 Country Dr, Fremont, 12 Noon-2 P.M. |
| Feb. 20 | “Hot Topic” Fremont Police Chief Lucero | 12 Noon, League Office, 3375 Country Dr, Fremont. Bring your brown bag lunch. Q & A follows presentation. |
| March 17 | LWVUS Agriculture Study Comm. | Mary Miller’s home at 10 A.M. – organizing for the consensus meeting. |

ALL MEETINGS ARE FREE, OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND WHEEL CHAIR ACCESSIBLE
SAVE THE DATE
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2014 9:30-2 PM
BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY
“A NEW VISION FOR OPEN SPACE”
MTC AUDITORIUM, 101 EIGHTH STREET, OAKLAND
LWVFNUC WILL PAY THE REGISTRATION FEE FOR MEMBERS WISHING TO ATTEND.
MEMBERS PAY FOR THEIR OWN LUNCH OR BROWN BAG IT.
THE MTC AUDITORIUM IS ADJACENT TO A B.A.R.T. STATION.

Mission

The League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark, and Union City, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Diversity Policy

LWVFNUC affirms its commitment to reflect the diversity of our communities in our membership and actions. We believe diverse views are important for responsible decision making and seek to work with all people and groups who reflect our community diversity.

Join the LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS TODAY!

Any person, man or woman, who subscribes to the purpose and policy of the League may join. To be a voting member, one must be at least 18 years of age and a U.S. citizen. Members under 18, or non-citizens, are welcome as non-voting Associate Members. Dues include membership in LWVFNUC, Bay Area League, and the California and National Leagues. Financial support for dues is available through our scholarship program. Contact Andrea Schacter, Membership Chair, for information.

Name (s) _____

New Member Renewal
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