

# Voter

The League of Women Voters  
Of Fremont, Newark and  
Union City



## ANNUAL PROGRAM PLANNING POTLUCK

At Syeda Yunus's home  
1744 Corte de Orinda  
Fremont  
January 12, 6:30 PM

Please contact John Landers to tell him what you will bring.  
656-8877 or [jolanders@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jolanders@sbcglobal.net)

**What do you want to see on the agenda for the League in California  
for the upcoming biennium?**

As a valued member of this grassroots organization, you have the **opportunity and the responsibility** to indicate the issues on which you believe the state League and all local Leagues in California should focus their time, talent, money, and reputation.

We hope you use the program planning process as an opportunity to think strategically about the work of the League on the state level. Consider where there is the most **need**, where we will be most **effective**, and what activities best serve our **mission**. And consider the **indirect impact** of these choices, particularly on membership recruitment and retention, fundraising, and our reputation—all of which are crucial to the future of your local League as well as that of the LWVC.

—LWVC

**Education?**

**The Economy?**

**The Budget?**

**Prison Reform?**

**Water?**

President's Message for the January 2009 Voter

Dear Fellow Leaguers:

Happy New Year!! We had a very enjoyable Holiday Celebration where we were first hand witnesses to some of the most talented people in our League and had a smorgasbord of tasty items. Thanks to all who participated especially to Marilyn Singer for organizing and to Miriam Keller for hosting.

I hope you are recovered from the Holiday Season and the New Year's festivities and ready to implement our goals for the rest of the fiscal year ahead! We have much to do and many issues to address. We start the year off with Program Planning on January 12<sup>th</sup> – an annual grassroots process where all of you are invited to provide input into our priorities and to set goals. We are holding the Program Planning meeting in my home so I am extending a personal invite to you to join us and let us know what is important to you. If you want to get involved in more depth, you can also join the Action Committee or the Education Committee. They too will have meetings in early January. You can click on the calendar link on our website at [www.lwvfnuc.org](http://www.lwvfnuc.org) to get specific times and dates.

Our state League, LWVC, is in the process of formulating its strategic plan and has asked for feedback. Strategic planning and general ongoing evaluation of strengths and weaknesses is critical for the health of any organization. For more information about this process and how it may impact LWVC, please visit the members only website. You can contact LWVC or our League to provide the URL address.

You are also welcome to any of our Board Meetings which are held at our new office at the Fremont Cultural Arts Center on 3375 Country Drive on the third Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm. The League embodies the best values of our democracy and is a staunch advocate of civic engagement and government accountability. The crucial role the League plays in our community can only happen with your support.

Once again, Happy New Year to all.

Syeda R Yunus, President

*The League of Women Voters is where hands on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement .  
Join LWV and be directly involved in shaping the issues that keep our community fair, vibrant and strong.*

At the December 18<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, the Board:

- Approved the minutes of the November 2008 Board meeting; heard committee reports, President's report and Treasurer's report.
- Agreed to print Guide to Government one more time before having it only on the website
- Appointed Alex Starr as Director with responsibilities for chairing the Action Committee and the Leadership Trainer.
- Discussed the importance of keeping more statistics regarding our activities. We know that we distribute at least 10,000 affidavits, filling 149 boxes throughout the Tri-City Area but we need to keep more statistics about how many people we register to vote.
- Arrived at consensus regarding upcoming programs – please see calendar for more details.
- Discussed ways to increase membership.

Minutes, Treasurer's report and President's report should be available on the members only website at [www.lwvfnuc.org](http://www.lwvfnuc.org).

## ACTION COMMITTEE

Our December meeting was a lunch highlighted by Lara York's presentation to us about school finances in Fremont. FUSD has wisely used a 3% reserve fund level instead of the usual 2% of most districts. This has helped them in this time of budget crisis. However, no school district is out of the woods financially. Dependence on the state budget has complicated everything for school districts since there has been no action taken yet in Sacramento to address the budget shortfall. As Lara mentioned our state standards are high but the funding per student is low. Much constraint exists of where and how to cut expenses to meet the goal of a balanced budget because of contractual obligations. So far no one has come up with a realistic plan to solve this issue. Lara shared with us many scary statistics. Among them were: California educates 1 in 6 children in the USA; Prop 98 guaranteed funds were suspended two years ago; our state ranks 46th in per pupil funding which is exacerbated by our high cost of living and diverse student body; FUSD will receive another interim budget report in January and the news will probably not be good.

At the next Action meeting we will discuss our recommendation to the board as to whether or not to support a study of the state prison system. Several Leagues have asked for local support for this at the 2009 LWVC convention. Concern was voiced that the scope of the proposed study might be too big and should be confined, but how? At the next meeting we will also discuss who will head the interview team for newly elected and re-elected officials. There was also a request that members look at the Government section of the LWVC update to keep up with details of the continuing California budget crisis.

And finally, a reminder of the LWVBA Bay Area League Day on January 31st in Oakland. Topic is Water. As usual the speakers will be very good. Traditionally we have paid for our members to attend while they take care of their own lunch fees. We hope the board will continue this policy. —Alex Starr

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE BAY AREA

### Water: California's New Gold

### 2009 Bay Area League Day

Saturday, January 31, 2009

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Registration and refreshments: 9:00 – 9:30 a.m.

MetroCenter Auditorium, 101 Eighth Street, Oakland, CA 94607

Faced with a changing climate and a drought cycle in California, the Bay Area has a critical opportunity to plan for the future use of water, a finite resource. The demise of a healthy Delta system has raised the question of water use, diversion and storage. Can the Delta fisheries be restored while the farmers continue to use 80% of the water supply passing through the Delta? Is there a conveyance system that can provide protection for the fisheries and an adequate supply of water for the farmers? Can the choice of crops affect the water usage? Should all water users be required to have water meters? These are the questions we have — come to Bay Area League Day and join the discussion in the search for answers!

**Keynote Address: State of the Delta and Water Resources**

Lois Wolk, Newly Elected State Senator and State Assemblymember (2002-08)

**Delta habitat: Can a healthy Delta habitat be restored?**

Christina Swanson, Executive Director, Bay Institute

**Crop choices: Can California be more water-wise in growing crops?**

A.G. Kawamura, Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture

Heather Cooper, Research Associate, Pacific Institute

**Levee maintenance: What are the threats to the Delta levees?**

Raymond B. Seed, Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering, UC Berkeley

**Regional-conveyance of water: Who owns the waters of the state?**

Katherine Kelly, California Department of Water Resources

**Bay Area regional perspectives of the Delta Vision:**

Kathleen Van Velsor, Project Director for Water and Land Use Studies, ABAG

This year's Bay Area League Day is made possible in part by the East Bay Municipal Utility District.

----- **REGISTRATION FORM** -----

The price of this year's Bay Area League Day is \$25 (\$15 without lunch) before January 23, and \$30 (\$20 without lunch) after that. To register, please write check payable to "LWVBA" and send with this form to 1611 Telegraph Avenue, Suite 300, Oakland, CA 94612.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Local League: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration is also available online at [www.lwvbayarea.org](http://www.lwvbayarea.org).

For more details, call (510) 839-1608 or send an e-mail to [editor@bayareamonitor.org](mailto:editor@bayareamonitor.org).

## Breathe Easy: Air District No-Burn Rule Now in Effect

By Chris Ingraham

Given the comparisons of President-elect Obama to FDR, it's not unreasonable to wonder if Obama will reprise Roosevelt's weekly Fireside Chat. But if he does so this winter, in the Bay Area he might need to do so in front of a natural gas fireplace. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is now enforcing its wood burning regulation, which prohibits homes and businesses throughout the nine-county region from burning fires outside or in chimneys during days of particularly low air quality.

The new regulation began as a hotly debated subject at public workshops last year, when the Air District showed preventative concern for the diminished quality of air during Bay Area winters. Over a series of these workshops, people weighed in on the Air District's proposal to prohibit residents from using their own fireplaces in order to preserve healthful winter air. Some people showed concern about an unjust invasion of personal liberty, but the vast majority agreed that air quality during the winter months has become sufficiently problematic to justify a new, stricter regulation. Last July, Regulation 6, Rule 3: Wood-Burning Devices, passed successfully before the Air District's Board of Directors. The new regulation on wood-burning devices is now in effect.

The rule is designed to reduce dangerous emissions caused by wood smoke, which on especially bad nights accounts for a third of the fine particulate matter in the air. Particulate matter is what you see when you see a filmy layer of haze hanging over a valley. Basically, it's stuff that's not air — in the air. In 2006, the federal government set a new standard for unhealthy air, based on the density of particulate matter. If, on average over any 24-hour

period, fine particles 2.5 microns in diameter or smaller surpass 35 micrograms per cubic meter of air, then that air is deemed unhealthy. In the Bay Area, these levels will probably be reached about 20 times between now and the end of February, and on those Winter Spare the Air Alerts, residents in the nine counties will be banned from burning fires.

The new regulation also: requires cleaner burning EPA-certified stoves and inserts in new construction and remodels; limits residential and commercial "black" smoke exceeding 20 percent opacity; prohibits the burning of garbage, plastic and other harmful materials; and requires that firewood sold in the Bay Area be labeled with disclosures about its moisture content, and that manufactured logs or pellet fuel be labeled with announcements about the no-burn rule.

According to Kristine Roselius, a spokesperson for the Air District, plans are in place to advertise the rule through a comprehensive outreach program. Spots on TV, in print, on radio and online will join commercials in movie theaters and signage on milk cartons. In particularly vulnerable areas — usually those that sit in a valley, like Napa, parts of Marin, Campbell and other areas of Santa Clara County — roaming recumbent bikes will advertise the rule and the days it comes into effect. Letters are being sent to hotels, realtors, restaurants and other commercial enterprises. There are exemptions for buildings or homes whose sole source of heat is wood, and for outdoor grills, pizza ovens, and barbecues. For enforcement, the Air District will send inspectors to targeted areas to look for wood smoke rule violations. There is also a hotline, 1-877-4-NO-BURN, for people to find out the burning status and make a complaint. Just don't tell your neighbor you're tattling; after a first-time warning, fines from several hundred to several thousand dollars may be levied.

One in seven Bay Area residents suffer from a respiratory illness that makes them susceptible to wood smoke.

Asthma, bronchitis, recurrent coughing and shortness of breath, among other ailments, are often exacerbated by poor air quality. Mortality rates and hospital admissions due to lung and cardiovascular problems are higher on days with high quantities of particulate matter in the air.

The Air District and its growing body of supporters hope that the new regulation will provide a manageable solution to preventing extreme pollution. Successful existing "no burn" programs in San Joaquin Valley, Sacramento, and Puget Sound, Washington, offer strong precedent, suggesting that the new regulation here will serve its purpose.



### Will You Be Our Focus Group?

On Thursday evening, January 29<sup>th</sup> there will be a presentation on affordable housing at the League office in the community building on Country Drive at 7 PM. The purpose of the meeting is to get feedback on a presentation that has been prepared by members of an ad hoc group called Advocates For Affordable Homes.

The group is planning to hone a presentation that they will later present to various civic groups to educate people on the need for affordable homes in the Fremont area. Your input is needed to help make the presentation both informative and user-friendly.

Some of the presenters are John Smith, Doug Ford, Sister Caritas from the Sisters of the Holy Family, Judy Zlatnik, Dr. Rajabally and Marilyn Singer. We are the presenters, and you are our helpers to get the information ready to go on the road. Your input is valuable, so please come out on the 29<sup>th</sup> and be part of the action.

—Marilyn

EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY

NOVEMBER 2008



## High School to Community College New Efforts to Build Shared Expectations

Californians are becoming increasingly concerned about whether the majority of the state's young people have the skills and knowledge they need for adult success. In looking at strategies for improving students' prospects, the work of both high schools and community colleges is coming under greater scrutiny.

*Many high school graduates are unprepared for the academic rigors of community college work*

Past research indicates that many high school graduates may not fully understand the academic standards they must meet if they

take college-level courses at one of the 110 California Community Colleges (CCC). In addition, recent high school graduates who enroll in a community college vary considerably in their prior academic preparation, with many leaving high school unprepared for the rigor of college-level classes.

Unfortunately, clear statewide data summarizing the extent of this problem are not available. However, one example from City College of San Francisco (CCSF) is not atypical. Among high school graduates from San Francisco Unified School District who enrolled at CCSF in the fall of 2006 and took placement tests:

- In math, only 27% placed into a course that might transfer to CSU or UC, while 30% placed into a course below introductory algebra.
- In English, 58% placed into basic skills courses that do not count toward a community college degree.

*Local variations in community college practices send mixed signals and make the problem difficult to measure*

California community colleges take different approaches to organizing instruction for students who need more preparation. Based on a report submitted to the community college Board of Governors, recent high school graduates who need basic skills instruction may encounter different course-taking paths—with different implications for how

long it will take to achieve their academic goals—depending on where they enroll.

The methods California's community colleges use to advise students about academic placement also vary based on local decisions, with campuses using their own choice of placement tests plus other measures. In 2005–06, the community colleges used 92 different instruments for assessment. However, one study found that just two commercial test batteries accounted for more than half of all placement testing in the colleges.

To explore the issues of student assessment and placement further, the chancellor convened an Action Planning Group for Assessment and Placement to evaluate:

- Recommendations for developing a common placement test for the system;
- Possible changes to state regulations or statute to make immediate enrollment in needed basic skills courses mandatory for new students.

*K-12 standards and tests offer potential tools for aligning expectations between the two systems*

Virtually all students in grades 9–11 take the California Standards Tests (CSTs), and the academic content standards on which they are based are shared across the K–12 system. As a result, some see the CSTs as a potential resource for:

- Creating better alignment between high school and community college expectations.

This is a summary of the November 2008 EdSource report, *High School to Community College: New Efforts To Build Shared Expectations*. The report focuses on where California's K-12 and community college systems meet and explores some of the potential opportunities currently under discussion for building better bridges between them.

California's high schools and community colleges are connected by the students they have in common.

- About 30% of California's public high school graduates in 2007 enrolled immediately in a community college in the fall.
- Recent high school graduates represent a fraction of all students the community colleges serve. In fall 2007, only about 16% of students were 18 or 19 years old with a high school diploma.

EdSource thanks the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for supporting the costs of researching, publishing, and widely disseminating this publication.

EdSource® is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization established in California in 1977.

Independent and impartial, EdSource strives to advance the common good by developing and widely distributing trustworthy, useful information that clarifies complex K-12 education issues and promotes thoughtful decisions about California's public school system.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Helping community colleges communicate their academic expectations more effectively to high school students and teachers.

Recent reports provide two visions for how high school CSTs might inform community college placement. The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), in its June 2008 *Back to Basics* report, recommends the use of former CST test items to develop common math and English placement tests for the community college system.

Meanwhile, grade 11 English and math CST scores—when combined with information about junior-year grades in these subjects—could shed light on which level of community college English or math courses a student is ready to take, according to a July 2008 study by the California Partnership for Achieving Student Success (Cal-PASS).

Both visions depend on colleges connecting the CSTs with local curricula.

#### *New legislation identifies the existing Early Assessment Program as a model on which community colleges should build*

The Early Assessment Program (EAP), which debuted in 2004, uses augmented CST tests to provide high school students with early feedback about their preparedness for college-level classes at CSU campuses. Students who do well on the EAP in grade 11 are exempted from CSU placement testing in English and/or math.

Senate Bill 946, signed in September 2008, expands the EAP so community colleges can volunteer to participate. The law sends the message that community colleges have the same academic standards for transfer-level work as CSU. Students can better prepare academically in their senior year while still being assured of their eligibility to attend community college.

The EAP presents community colleges with opportunities and challenges:

- One study found that the augmented English language arts CST is well

aligned with the de facto expectations of community colleges.

- However, more than half of 11th graders were *not* sufficiently far along in math in 2008 to take either the Algebra II or Summative High School Math CSTs—the two math tests that are part of the EAP. These students are more likely to depend on a community college for access to postsecondary education.

#### *Many efforts aim to build educators' capacity to support students as they make the transition*

The goal of improving students' academic preparation raises questions not only about alignment between K–12 and the community colleges, but also about the capacity of schools and colleges. Shared expectations make a difference only if California's educational institutions and faculty are capable of meeting them. Ongoing efforts to improve the capacity of educators are taking place on a number of fronts:

- The EAP includes a professional development component for high school teachers that focuses on academic topics important for high school students' eventual success at CSU or in transfer-level courses at a community college.
- Cal-PASS brings K–12 teachers and post-secondary faculty together regionally, through Professional Learning Councils (PLCs), to develop shared expectations and use student data to identify problems and evaluate new approaches.
- The Basic Skills Initiative (BSI) is a systemwide community college effort to improve basic skills education.

#### *The work on transitions has just begun*

California policymakers and educators are working to develop new ways to support student transitions from high school to community college. But this is only the beginning of the story. Which practices and strategies

will take hold, which can be made available to more students, and what results the public should expect remain open questions. The good news for California's students is that leaders in both systems are beginning to explore solutions to a shared problem and responsibility. □ □

#### TO LEARN MORE

This is a summary of the November 2008 EdSource report, *High School to Community College: New Efforts To Build Shared Expectations*. The full report—plus additional resources related to this topic and efforts going on throughout California—is available online at: [www.edsource.org/pub\\_transitions11-08.html](http://www.edsource.org/pub_transitions11-08.html)

#### Links of interest

- The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges: [www.asccc.org](http://www.asccc.org)
- Basic Skills Initiative, California Community Colleges: [www.cccbsi.org](http://www.cccbsi.org)
- California Community Colleges System Office: [www.cccco.edu](http://www.cccco.edu). This website includes more information about the Board of Governors, Chancellor's Office, Management Information Systems (MIS) data system, and Accountability Reporting for the Community Colleges (ARCC).
- California Partnership for Achieving Student Success (Cal-PASS): [www.cal-pass.org](http://www.cal-pass.org)
- California State University Early Assessment Program: [www.calstate.edu/EAP/](http://www.calstate.edu/EAP/)
- The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges: [www.rpgroup.org](http://www.rpgroup.org). This website includes information about the Center for Student Success, through which the group conducts research and evaluation projects.

It's easy to JOIN the **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**

**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**

Annual dues includes membership in Local, Bay Area, California and National Leagues.

Make your check payable to: LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS and mail it with this form to:

**LWVFNUC-MEMBERSHIP, P.O. Box 3218, Fremont, CA, 94539**

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual Membership - \$60 \_\_\_\_\_ Household - \$90 \_\_\_\_\_

Donate to LWVNUC \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donate to Ed. Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total enclosed\$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Dues and contributions to the League are not tax deductible. Contributions to L.W.V. Ed Fund are deductible to the extent allowed by law. For more information, or for confidential financial dues assistance, please contact: Sarabjit Cheema—sarabjitkaurcheema@yahoo.com

**Mission Statement**

The League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark, and Union City, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens 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.

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Materials are available 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM with  
permission of a board member.

**LEADING LADIES IN POLITICS**



Victoria Woodhull \_In 1872, women were not allowed to vote. But that didn't stop activist, businesswoman and spiritualist Victoria Woodhull from running for president. Frederic Douglass, a former slave, was her running mate.



Granny D. \_In 2004, 94-year-old Doris Haddock, called "Granny D.," ran for senator of New Hampshire. Her unorthodox campaign proved that you're never too old and it's never too late to run for office.



Long before Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama, Shirley Chisholm made a brave, albeit unsuccessful, bid for the U.S. presidency. As an African American woman running in the 1970s, she knew that she would lose; nevertheless she remained "unbought and



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### WATCH VOTING MATTERS

Tune in to watch Judy Zlatnik interview Rich Godfrey and Justine Burt. Topic: "Green Task Force".

**Fremont**, Channel 29, every Wednesday at 7:30 PM

**Newark**, Channel 6, every Thursday at 7 PM

**Union City**, Channel 15, every Thursday at 9:30 PM

**Visit our website:**  
<http://www.lwvfnc.org>

## CALENDAR

|                 |   |                    |                       |
|-----------------|---|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Thurs., Jan. 8  | Action Committee meeting<br>Brown bag lunch                         | 12:30 PM           | Kay Emanuele's home   |
| Fri., Jan. 9    | Education Committee Meeting   | 9:30 AM            | Miriam Keller's home  |
| Mon., Jan 12    | Potluck and Program Planning Meeting                                | 6:30 PM            | Syeda Yunus's home    |
| Wed., Jan. 14   | Cable Taping  | 2:00 PM            | Comcast Studios       |
| Thurs., Jan 15  | LWVFNUC Board Meeting   | 7:15 PM            | Cultural Arts Center  |
| Thurs., Jan. 29 | Affordable Housing presentation to focus group of<br>League members | 7:00 PM            | Cultural Arts Center  |
| Sat., Jan. 31   | Bay Area League Day   | 9:30 AM—2:30<br>PM | Metro Center, Oakland |