



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



Voting

Democracy

Civic Engagement

Three Great Meetings in January

January 18, 6:30 pm

Program Planning and Potluck

League Office Meeting Room

3375 Country Drive

Do we want to ask LWVUS to update the Arms Control Position or the Military Policy and Defense Spending Position or do we want a new position on the Federal Government and Education?

Call John Landers for potluck item to bring.

January 25, 7:00 pm

We are co-sponsoring the

3 Mayors Forum on a Constitutional Convention

Speakers from California Forward and the Bay Area Council

Ohlone Administration Bldg, Newark Campus

Fremont Bank Conference Center, 2nd floor, wing 1

The 3 Mayors will bring ideas to the local level.

January 30, Bay Area League Day

9:00 am to 2:00 pm

Metro Center

101 8th St., Oakland

“ Big Steps, Little Steps to Addressing Climate Change ”

President' s Message

As I write this I think about the compromises that Senators have just made in the Health Care legislation. There are many discontent with it – for going too far and for not going far enough. It will still have to go to conference with the House version. No matter what the final version is, it will be historic. That ' s the way compromises work – everyone is a bit dissatisfied. Let ' s hope the final bill will help address many of the issues that concern the League.

Locally we will tackle Program Planning at our January meeting. This year we feature positions from LWWUS since the national convention will occur in June. Delegates at the convention will consider the results of this nationwide planning process that Leagues will participate in. It is possible that changes in the overall direction of LWWUS will occur with new emphasis placed on an issue not recommended by the national League. It happened in D.C. when Syeda and I attended some years ago. Ideas for revising the position on arms control (not updated in many years) have circulated to many Leagues. Some are also suggesting that we need a policy to deal with Federal legislation and the schools across the country. We have a detailed listing of positions for our local schools but nothing on a national level.

Action policies and positions have their roots in the League ' s study and consensus process at every level of League – local, regional, state and national. Our state League describes the process this way, “ League program consists of those governmental issues chosen for concerted study and action. The process of planning the program for League members begins with the review of existing positions and current issues by local Leagues. After member discussion, each League chooses those positions that it believes should be retained, reviewed, updated and/or deleted as well as those that the League should emphasize in the upcoming biennium.”

It continues by saying that “ The proposed program

could include areas of emphasis for advocacy using existing positions, or education of members and the public, or possible development of new or updated positions through the study process.” After evaluating responses from local Leagues, the national board ' s recommended program “ is presented to the membership with the delegates to the (LWWUS) convention making the final decision. ”

Come to our January meeting and help us decide what we would like LWWUS to concentrate on in the next biennium!

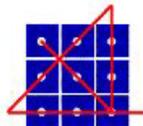
Alex

Board Highlights

- We played hooky and did not have a December board meeting.
- January 25th League will participate with our three cities in a forum on California ' s Constitution and prospects for its revision. It will be held at Ohlone ' s Newark campus.
- Sign up for January 30th Bay Area League Day on Climate Change.
- Rev up for our celebration for the League ' s 90th

Voter Sponsors

We'd like to acknowledge the following donors to the League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark and Union City.



Well Chosen Words
Creative Marketing Communication
Jane Mueller, Owner
www.wellchosenwords.net

Dale Hardware
37100 Post St., Fremont
www.dale-hardware.com



We also extend our thanks to
Ellen Culver
Alex Starr
Bill Harrison & Jennifer Toy

Interview with Jeff Davis, AC Transit Director, Ward 5 11/19/09

Interviewers were Sets Amann, Alex Starr and Miriam Keller.

As expected many of the answers we received are dictated by revenue problems seen by many agencies.

AC Transit is now audio streaming their meetings but deem video streaming not cost effective now. There will soon be an archive of meetings audio streamed .

Davis is committed to having one single transit agency in the Bay Area. While still a dream he says that coordination of services should not depend on having a single agency. He sees one regional agency with the CMA 's included. He sees a start with combining Alameda County and contra Costa County agencies. He noted that AC Transit and B.A.R.T. are the only transit agencies in the country, except for one in Denver, that are elected .That raises the question of accountability. He thinks that VTA is a better model since groups of cities have representatives on the board. All appointments are from cities and thus all are elected officials. They tend to see broader issues since they are also concerned with land issues.

He had no solution for covering transit problems when the Bay Bridge is closed. AC Transit would provide more coverage but they don 't have the buses sitting around. In other words AC Transit does have not enough resources to address the temporary problem when it occurs.

As for fare box recovery of costs, there is never enough income even with rush hour service. Ward 5 (Fremont & Newark) now gets its equal share of revenue that it raises through taxes.

Davis would like to see more informal meetings with local Fremont and Newark officials. Staff does meet but not the elected officials. In his 3 years in office he has never had the opportunity to meet with electeds.

He would support having AC Transit meetings in Fremont.

Davis noted that working with school districts to transport students on AC Transit buses is a high priority with him. He was a former school board member. Transporting students is a statewide issue since school districts are hurting financially, too. Generally Davis feels that transit agencies are not doing enough to promote collaborations for alternative delivery systems like car sharing, automated systems giving riders/commuters better information about when buses are coming, etc. However, the basic problem is that the public is unwilling to tax themselves to pay for this kind of information.

With Federal stimulus funds AC Transit was able to restore 50% of the cuts they had to make a short while ago.

One local complaint was that AC Transit bought their new buses from Belgium. Davis said that working with this firm was much better than going locally because all design issues were handled internally and fixed internally. In other words they provided service to AC Transit.

The financial system for AC Transit is scary now. Rick Hernandez was creative in swapping transit funds from one project to another with MTC agreement. They swapped out capital funds for operating costs. AC Transit is buying time to make some difficult decisions.

Davis questions the sustainability study being done by MTC.

Great Decisions

If anyone is interested in attending the Great Decisions Study Group which meets on the 1st Monday of each month from February thru June, contact Miriam Keller. Great Decisions is a discussion group using a book developed by the Foreign Policy Association. U.S. foreign policy in eight areas is highlighted each year.

LWVFNUC Testimony Before the Ohlone Board

The League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark and Union City has long supported the elimination of the numbered seat system for election to the Ohlone Board.

Eliminating the numbered seat system will encourage more participation in the election process and will encourage healthy competition. It will also elect the candidates who receive the most votes, a widely accepted idea of how democracy should work. In fact, in all other Community College elections in the State, the candidates with the most votes are the winners. The numbered seat system serves no useful purpose since a "seat" does not represent a specific area. With the exception of the two seats designated for Newark, none of the other five seats require a candidate to reside in a specific area.

We think that elections should be open with no unnecessary impediments placed before the voters. We understand that if the numbered system is eliminated, voters will have to learn a new system of voting. This should be easy since all other community college districts in the state use the same system, as do school boards and city councils.

We hope that you will move forward to begin the process to eliminate the numbered seat system of elections at Ohlone.

Jean Holmes represented our League.

Recent Voter Registration Changes 17-Year-Olds Can Register to Vote

An important voting rights bill was signed into law by Governor Schwarzenegger in October. AB 30 permits 17-year-olds who meet the voter eligibility requirements to submit voter registration affidavits. There is no longer a requirement that they turn 18 before the next election in order to register to vote. The registrant must still be 18 on or before the election in order to vote, but now anyone who is 17 has the right

to register. AB 30 was strongly supported by the League because it will encourage registration and voting by young people. It capitalizes on the timing of high school government classes and will encourage high school voter registration drives.

If a student registers to vote at 17, and then changes his/her address (college bound, etc.), it is still necessary to apply for a mail-in ballot or to re-register in the county/state of new residence.

Online Voter Registration

The State Voter Registration form is no longer posted on the Secretary of State's website. In the past, you could fill out the form online and have the Secretary of State send you the form to be signed and mailed. This program was discontinued in 2009. Current state law and regulations prevent a state or local election official from accepting a state voter registration form printed from a website. Therefore the Secretary of State no longer makes the state form available on the internet and discourages others from making it available on their websites.

The Secretary's website now allows voters to fill out the National Mail Voter Registration form, but the registrant must print the form, sign it, and then send it to his or her county election office.

For voter registration drives, the best practice is to use the postage-free, pre-addressed printed California voter registration forms available from your county election office or at post offices, libraries, and other locations.

Confusion may also arise because the National Mail Voter Registration form bound on the Secretary of State's website does not ask registrants where they were born. The federal National Voting Rights Act (NVRA) requires state and local election officials to accept the national form, even though under California law a registrant is required to provide his/her state of birth or country of birth if outside the U.S.

Welcome new member Leslie Gupta!

LWVBA POSITIONS 2008-2010

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT (updated 5/2000)

Support legislative action to establish a multi-purpose regional agency for the nine Bay Area counties with directly elected representatives from newly established districts.

Support, in the interim, state or local government action to consolidate existing regional agencies.

Support measures to make regional decision making bodies representative of the population distribution and region-wide governmental, environmental, social equity, and economic interests.

REGIONAL PLANNING (updated 5/2000)

Support legislation to establish state/regional/local comprehensive planning criteria that promote compact growth, natural resources protection, and social and economic equity.

ENVIRONMENT* Air, Land Use, Water, Solid Waste (updated 5/2000)

Support regional solutions to environmental pollution that provide effective air and water quality control and regional planning for solid waste management

Support measures for conservation and environmentally sensitive development of San Francisco Bay that promote enhancement and preservation of the Bay and its shoreline, tributaries, native vegetative communities and habitats

Support measures that ensure adequate parks and the protection of natural resources, open space, and agricultural land, both outside urban growth boundaries and in urbanized areas

Support natural resources policies to achieve:

NATURAL RESOURCES*CEQA MITIGATION (Condensed)

Support effective legislation, guidelines, and criteria for governmental decision making on mitigation of the negative environmental impacts of a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) that take into account whether: 1) the decision to proceed

or not is environmentally sound and gives particular attention to cumulative impacts, and 2) the mitigation plan is properly implemented under an acceptable process for meeting legal requirements and public need.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

Support a hazardous materials management program that protects the public health and the environment from the adverse effects of hazardous materials in the Bay Area.

SOCIAL POLICY* HOUSING (Updated 5/2000)

Support a regional housing plan that provides for balanced and equitable housing throughout the region

Support federal and state legislation that facilitates the implementation of regional housing goals

Support a regional fair share housing plan as part of the broader comprehensive regional plan

TRANSPORTATION*SURFACE (Updated 5/2000)

Support a long-term, comprehensive planning process consistent with the comprehensive Bay Area plan and growth management framework (currently ABAG ' s plan) to promote compact, transit-oriented growth patterns served by an efficient, interconnected, multi-modal transportation network

Support multi-modal, efficient, convenient, cost-effective, equitable, safe transportation planned in concert with land use and viable alternatives to reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and single-occupancy vehicle use

TRANSPORTATION*AIRPORTS

Support coordination between environmental and land use concerns and the need for aviation services in the Bay Area.

***Vertical Positions—Local Leagues are authorized to take local action on the basis of these positions.**

LWVBA 2008-10 Action Highlights and Potential Future Issues

Bay Area League Day

- “Water: California’s New Gold,” Oakland, January 2009
- “Big Steps, Little Steps to Addressing Climate Change,” Oakland, January 2010

Action Highlights

(For Action letters see www.lwvbayarea.org)

Regional Planning/CEQA Mitigation

- Commented on the scope of the Joint Policy Committee after the Bay Conservation and Development Commission was added to its membership. October 2008. JPC reduced the number of members per agency as we suggested!
- Signed ballot argument in support of Measure WW, to extend East Bay Regional Park Bonds.

Air Quality

- Program, “Public Health: Wood Smoke and Wintertime,” December 2, 2008
- Monitored Air District preparations for 2009 Clean Air Plan and update of regional CEQA air quality guidelines.

Natural Resources

- Participated in Bay Area Water Forum
- Monitored Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Commission
- Monitored local impact of state legislation on gray-water.
- Supported (with LWVC approval) bill authorizing Alameda County Water District management of groundwater.

Housing

- Monitored ABAG Regional Planning Committee and ABAG Focus Program: greening infill, transit oriented development, and community engagement.

Transportation

- Commented on environmental review and funding for the Dumbarton Rail Corridor. August 2008
- Supported (with LWVC approval) SB 375, Transportation Planning: Travel Demand Models. August, 2008
- Signed ballot measure argument in support of Measure VV, AC Transit Parcel Tax Measure, October 2008.
- Supported Marin and Sonoma Leagues in their support of Measure Q, Sales Tax Measure in support of the Smart Train, October 2008.
- Commented on AC Transit proposed fare increases for seniors and children, February 2009.
- Commented on Metropolitan Transit Commission’s Draft Transportation 2035 Plan, March 2009.

Climate Change (Using LWVUS Statement of Concerns)

- Supported AB 2558 (with LWVC approval) that would create a Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Fee to finance long-term transportation alternatives. June 2008.

Potential Issues for 2010-12

- Continue monitoring the Joint Policy Committee (ABAG/MTC/BAAQMD/BCDC) in their guidance of regional land use, transportation and climate solutions.
- Monitor and comment on water supply issues affecting the Bay Area, issues related to the Sacramento—San Joaquin River Delta, the Bay Area Water Forum, and EBMUD’s 2040 Plan.
- Follow the BAAQMD Air Quality issues related to new standards, and impacts of transportation sources on both air quality, health, and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Monitor plans for High Speed Rail in the Bay Area, Transbay Terminal, BART extensions to the South Bay, and Sonoma and Marin Rail Transport (SMART) , and regional surface transportation.
- Monitor implementation of the MTC Transportation 2035 and plans for the next update.

PROPOSED 2009-2011 LWV US STUDY OF THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

PROPOSAL: To study the role of the federal government in public education, with a focus on (1) the basic goals of public education, (2) the role of the federal government in education policy-making, (3) the relationship between national, state, and local levels of education governance, including funding, and (4) the development of common standards.

PURPOSE: To establish national League positions that would enable the League of Women Voters to

- review, consider, evaluate and advocate for or against federal education legislation; to
- advocate on issues related to what the federal role in public education should be; and to
- join in coalition with other national organizations that speak out on issues of public education.

LEAGUE STATUS QUO: Currently, LWV US addresses education issues only as they are covered by other national Social Policy positions, regarding fairness, and access to equal opportunity for women, minorities and for classes of students requiring special protection or resources—poor children, special needs children, English learners (EL) , and others currently denied equal educational opportunity. As education has historically been the responsibility of the individual states and school districts, studying and acting on education issues has been left to Leagues within these jurisdictions. A table summarizing current state League education positions can be found at <http://www.sclaraco.calwvnet.org>.

BACKGROUND: The federal government is already heavily involved in funding, and establishing policy for all school districts receiving federal dollars. The Defense of Education Act of 1958 broke a long-standing taboo against direct federal aid to education.

Before the current economic crunch, national direct investment averaged about 10% of state-level K-12 education budgets across a wide range of programs, from Head Start and reduced-price school lunches to support for career education, homeless children, foster children and special education students. The recently reauthorized Higher Education Act addresses opportunities for many more students to afford college.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, originally passed in 1965, (known in its 2002 renewal as No Child Left Behind) is itself currently undergoing major restructuring before it can be reauthorized. Data on the powerful effect of pre-school learning has also brought federal initiatives to expand educational opportunities for very young children.

Evidence from all over the country reveals that resources and levels of support are very unequally distributed among the states, within states and school districts. Everywhere, ineffective, and/or underfunded schools have been concentrated in neighborhoods with large populations of poor, and non-English speaking immigrants. Dropout rates averaging 25-30% across a state grow to more than 50% in these neighborhoods.

Continued on page 8

Proposed LWVUS Study, continued.

An overarching concern with the quality and amount of learning achieved by our high school graduates has focused attention on the misalignment of existing high-school graduation requirements and the preparation students will need to succeed in the workplace and postsecondary education. Education organizations representing education professionals, elected officials and private-sector executives have taken on the voluntary challenge of creating a set of national educational standards or guidelines to be used by states to replace the current individual state standards.

RATIONALE: Across the country, education has been caught in the perfect storm of our current economic crisis. People are losing their jobs, their homes, their health insurance and their savings all at the same time. The recession has compounded the widespread misery by severely reducing state and local revenues.

Funding for public education, which at one time came mostly from local property taxes (and still does in many localities) , is now underwritten in most parts of the country by state income and sales taxes. When unemployment is high, tax revenue from these sources plummet.

Even as educational resources at the state and local level have shrunk, observers pointing to the weak performance of U.S. students in standard international tests, are calling for millions more college graduates to fill the professional positions being vacated by retiring Baby Boomers if we are to retain our standing in the global economy.

The new administration' s stimulus package (The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, or ARRA) is attempting to address the present contractions in state and local government revenues with large infusions of money attached to conditions requiring greater accountability. To help states sustain school budgets, \$55 billion has been allocated for education. Far more than in the past, the federal government is becoming involved in making policy as well as funding programs that will affect state and local school operations directly.

The League' s basic, long-standing commitment to social policy issues such as children and families, equality of opportunity, and good government underscores the need to involve ourselves with how these far-reaching changes in education will be shaped at the national level. Currently we have very little by way of relevant positions that enable us to speak directly to federal policy decisions affecting public schools. While there are many other constituent groups addressing education, we are uniquely positioned to advocate with a national public education position that will not be biased toward one stakeholder or another.

COST: We believe that most of the work of a study committee can be conducted like the immigration study—with online discussions and reporting, and conference calls. We estimate the cost of this two-year study to approximate the cost of the immigration study—mainly LWVUS staff time—for \$30,000 to \$35,000.

Doris Petersen, Nan Prince and Nancy Rogers, Palo Alto; Ellen Wheeler, Los Altos/Mountain View; Helene Lecar, Berkeley/Albany; Joanne Leavitt, Santa Monica

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: LWVFNUC and mail it with this form to:

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

Individual Membership—\$60

Household—\$90

Donate to LWVFNUC \$ _____ Donate to Ed. Fund \$ _____ Total Enclosed \$ _____

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Dues and contributions to the League are not tax deductible. Contributions to LWV 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 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.

LWVFNUC Voter

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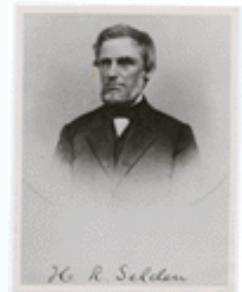
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A NOTABLE MAN IN HISTORY

Henry Rogers Selden

Henry Rogers Selden was born in 1805 in Lynne Connecticut. He came to the Rochester, New York area in the 1820's. By the 1840's, Selden had become a prominent member of the Rochester community. In 1845, he assisted in organizing telegraph lines which gave birth to Western Union.



In 1872, after being involved in the Republican National Convention, Selden withdrew from political life and returned to his law practice where he worked until his retirement. His most celebrated case was his defense of Susan B. Anthony when she was arrested for voting in the 1872 national election. Anthony had extensively researched her own case. She felt she had legal grounds to vote, but many of Rochester lawyers had refused to take her case. Selden listened to Anthony and agreed to review her research. After doing that, Selden told her that he believed that she had the right to vote. On his advice, she voted and was arrested.

At the trial, because she was a woman, she was declared to be incompetent to be a witness in her own defense. Selden agreed to be a witness, testifying for Anthony that she had voted on his advice. His subsequent argument to the judge and jury were to no avail.

In spite of the apparently pre-ordained loss, Selden provided what all agreed was a masterful defense of Anthony and never presented her with a bill for his services. She respected him immensely and was grateful for his work on her behalf.

In 1879, Selden retired from his practice of law. He died in 1885 and was buried in Mount Hope cemetery. His portrait hangs in the New York State Appellate Division Law Library in Rochester, New York.
Submitted by Vesta Wilson

WANTED: League member with an artistic flair to decorate a display case in Fremont Main library highlighting the League's 90th birthday in February. According to Sandi Pantages, "The case is reserved from Feb. 1-28, so one can go in on Feb. 1 after the library opens at 2 or so, to install the display." Please contact Alex Starr for more details!

WANTED: Observers. We can always use more League members as observers of local agencies. You can view some of them on cable in your easy chair or go to the meetings, wear your League pin proudly and make sure that our elected and appointed officials govern according to California's open government laws. Training provided. Contact Andrea Schacter or Alex Starr.

WANTED: More League members to train for cable crew. We will now be taping at Chabot College for Voting Matters. Everyone (old and new crew) will be trained to use the new equipment. Contact Kay Emanuele for specifics.

Please bring your copy of the Voter to the
January Program Planning Meeting.

Thurs., Jan 7	Action Committee	12:30 pm Brown Bag Lunch	Kay Emanuele 's home
Mon., Jan 11	Board Meeting	6:45 pm	League Office 3375 Country Drive
Thurs., Jan 14	Education Committee	9:30am	Ann Crosbie' s home
Mon., Jan 18	LWVFNUC Program Planning Meeting	6:30 pm	League Office 3375 Country Drive
Mon. Jan 25	3 Mayors Forum Constitution Convention	7:00 pm	Ohlone Newark Campus Fremont Bank Conference Center
Sat., Jan. 30	Bay Area League Day Climate Change	9:00 am—2:00 pm	Metro Center 101 8th St., Oakland
Sun., Feb. 14	League 's 90 Birthday		
Mon., Feb. 15	Birthday Celebration		