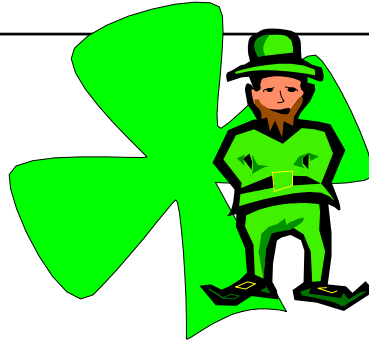


Voter

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



Happy St. Patrick's Day



March, 2005

Our Community-Who Belongs?

Co-sponsored by an ad-hoc committee from the Tri-City area, LWVFNUC and the City of Fremont Human Relations Commission

A Public Forum to discuss community membership for vulnerable minorities. Speaker: Attorney General, Bill Lockyer. (See page 4.)

It will be held in the Valhalla Hall on the Irvington High School campus on Thursday, March 10th at 7:00 p.m.

League Members are encouraged to attend.

AND

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FREMONT, NEWARK AND UNION CITY
AND THE AFGHAN JOURNAL/PACIFIC NEWS SERVICE

invite you to join award-winning authors Tamim Ansary and Khaled Hosseini at a special reading and kick-off ceremony for the Afghan Story Creative Writing Contest.

Tuesday, March 29, 2005

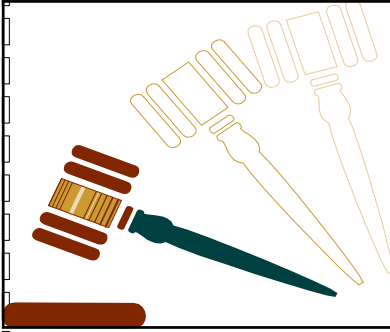
At New Haven Unified School District Board Room,
12:30 pm—2:30 pm

Mr. Tamim Ansary is the author of *West of Kabul, East of New York*, a non-fiction bestseller in the Bay area and in other communities around the country, named a New York Times pick of the week in April, 2003. It has been chosen as a common reading text by numerous colleges and high schools including Tulane University, Carleton College and others. Library Journal has listed it as one of the top 20 adult books for high school students.

Mr. Khaled Hosseini is the author of *Kite Runner*, a national bestseller in hardback and paper back. His novel has been on the San Francisco Chronicle Fiction Bestseller List for over 15 weeks. The film rights to Hosseini's novel has been optioned by DreamWorks Studios.

The Afghan Story is a project of Afghan Journal/Pacific News Service. It is an effort to promote Afghan-American literary works that explore themes of cultural identity. This project aims to render the rich Afghan-American immigrant experience visible not only to Afghan-Americans themselves but also to the society at large. The Afghan Story expresses a quest that is central to Afghan-American youth today to define who they are by discovering and telling their stories. Refreshments will be served.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



After our successful election monitoring for the Sikh temple we are going to continue to reach out to parts of our community sometimes overlooked. On March 10th we will be one of many co-sponsors of a program at Irvington High School entitled "Our Community – Who Belongs?" California Attorney General Bill Lockyer will attend as well as Mayor Wasserman. We will hear from both Sikh and Muslim community members. Later in March, on the 29th, we will again co-sponsor an event that will feature a presentation by author of *The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini. See the Voter cover for more details.

We continue to do the everyday League activities, observe elected and appointed bodies, review our bylaws and local policies in time for the annual meeting, interview newly elected and re-elected officials to determine their views on issues of timely interest, and as ever, encourage members of the community to join the League. Look at the list of open board positions and consider joining the new board. There are many opportunities to serve, even share a board slot.

—Alex Starr

BOARD BRIEFS

- ▶ Heard report from the Nominating Committee on new ways to share board responsibilities.
- ▶ Appointed members of the local positions review committee.
- ▶ Appointed members of the bylaws review committee.
- ▶ Heard of progress on plans for the LWVC Democracy Dinner fundraiser.
- ▶ Planned printing of newest edition of Facts for Voters.
- ▶ Appointed members of budget committee.
- ▶ Discussed possible names for speaker at annual meeting in June.

QUOTE

A sufficient measure of civilization is the influence of good women—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME...

On February 13th and 14th, 21 hard-working Leaguers descended on Fremont Flowers to earn \$500 for our League. It was great fun. They were divided into teams of two or three. One team opened long, slender flower boxes and put greenery in them. A third team added baby breath to the boxes. The fourth team pushed each and every long stemmed rose stem into tiny plastic vials of water through a nearly microscopic opening on the plastic lid of the vial. Some rose stems were rather large. Using great strength, the stems were pushed through. This caused the water to come squirting out onto shirts, glasses and shoes. It is fair to say that that team was "all wet". Although the rose stems had been dethorned by a machine, some remained to stick fingers, but no blood was shed.

Another team carefully placed 12 gorgeous roses into the prepared boxes, folded over the cellophane and attached a label. The last team tied a red ribbon around the boxes.



This was not only an opportunity to earn money for the League, it was also a nice opportunity to have fun together, laughing, chatting and squirting one another with the tiny vials of water.

Thanks to Dirk Lorenz, owner of Fremont Flowers and to all the participants: Cathie Kelly, Holly Bell Walter, John Landers, Kay Emanuele, Margaret Palmer, Betty Foster, Ursel Bloxom, Sandi Pantages, Phyllis Merrifield, Barbara Friedrich, Ann Macleod, Alex Starr, Miriam Keller, Judy Keller, Sam Neeman, Ken Ballard, Sadhona Johnson, Dianne Bischoff, Bunny Robinson, Alice Johnson and Vesta Wilson.

—Vesta Wilson

A CONVERSATION WITH...

This interview was conducted by League members Susan Gearhart, Sam Neeman and Marilyn Singer on January 31, 2005.

Dr. Eapen brings a breath of fresh air to the Washington Hospital Board. He has worked in public health at clinics in Fremont, Newark, Union City and Hayward for over ten years. He is very knowledgeable about the public health sector and needs of the tri-city community. He is interested in improving community access to the hospital and ensuring the needs of all the community are served. Dr. Eapen is very supportive of the League's efforts to move the hospital board to more open and transparent governance including increasing public awareness of the board's decisions and the decision making process.

—Susan Gearhart

IVY WU INTERVIEW

On February 11th, the Education Committee (Miriam Keller, Ann Crosbie, Ken Ballard and Vesta Wilson) interviewed an enthusiastic Ivy Wu, newly elected Fremont Unified School Board Member.

Ms. Wu's top three priorities are communication, character development and accountability.

She says there is a polarization in the district: Asians vs. non-Asians. Asians are still angry over the boundary changes of a few years ago. She says that more boundary changes will probably be necessary, but should be attempted only with input from all stake holders. When Asians move into a neighborhood in order to enroll their children in the Mission attendance area, they are disappointed when their children cannot attend the schools they desire because of overloading. She says that Asian parents will go to great lengths to assure their children the best education. She says that the solution to the resentment felt on both sides is communication. People must understand the wishes and needs of both sides.

On the subject of high stakes testing, she believes that testing is necessary, but that schools should not be punished. There should be more rewards for good performance.

Merit pay, that has been suggested by the governor, is questionable, according to Ms. Wu. She has concerns about evaluation, that is, who will evaluate?

The interview ended on a positive note. The committee was pleased with Ms. Wu's enthusiasm and openness.

League President's letter to the Election Assistance Commission

Dear Ms. Hillman.

Thank you for convening the meeting yesterday with members of the EAC and civil and voting rights organizations. I thought the dialogue was both stimulating and instructive, and hope that EAC commissioners did as well. The League appreciates the openness and concern that your invitation to meet with the EAC demonstrates, and we look forward to assisting you in any way we can as the Commission embarks on an ambitious and important agenda for 2005.

As I said yesterday, the League is focusing much of its election reform work on five key areas of concern. Below is a brief outline of those concerns.

I. Provisional balloting. The League supports: 1) uniform standards for issuing, processing and counting provisional ballots, clearly stated and uniformly applied; and 2) the counting of all provisional ballots for all races for which each voter is eligible (including those cast from outside the voter's "home" precinct).

II. Statewide computerized voter registration lists. The League supports: 1) a single, uniform, official, centralized interactive system administered at the state level; 2) ensuring that voter registration intake agencies, including DMV, public assistance and disability agencies, are fully and electronically integrated in the computerized system; and 3) strong safeguards against erroneous purging that are clearly stated and uniformly applied.

III. Voting systems. The League supports the implementation of voting systems and procedures that are secure, accurate, recountable, and accessible. We do not support any specific technology, believing instead that standards must allow for technological innovation. Any analysis of voting systems must be balanced, and apply the same criteria equally and appropriately to all systems, including any attached devices for recording, printing, or other function. In particular, the League supports: 1) "second chance" voting, including notification to the voter and the opportunity to correct ballots in the case of overvoting or mistakes; 2) audit capacity and testing, 3) disability access, 4) alternative language access, and 5) standards to ensure low error rates.

IV. Polling place operations. The League supports: 1) a new national effort to examine polling place operations for the 21st Century; 2) uniform standards to ensure sufficient working voting machines for each polling place and for all voters; 3) guidelines to provide better organization of polling places; and 4) emergency response mechanisms to correct problems on Election Day.

V. Poll worker recruitment and training. The League supports: 1) a new national effort to recruit a larger, better

trained and more diverse election workforce; 2) guidelines for use of government employees as poll workers; 3) guidelines for the recruitment of poll workers, including diverse populations; and 4) best practices for uniform poll worker training systems, including definition of minimum standards.

Again, thank you for organizing and facilitating a meeting that offered the opportunity for each of us to share our work and concerns in an informal and collegial atmosphere. Certainly we in the League of Women Voters look forward to working with the EAC in the years ahead to reach common goals.

—Kay Maxwell, President, LWVUS

Thank You

Thank you to Dr. Salwan for allowing the League and TriCity Ecology the use of the Community Room at the Golden Peacock Banquet and Bistro for our January meeting. We appreciate this contribution to the League

LOCKYER TO SPEAK MARCH 10

Attorney General Bill Lockyer will give the keynote address at the upcoming event, "Our Community-Who Belongs?" which will be held in the Valhalla Hall on the Irvington High School campus on Thursday, March 10th at 7:00 p.m. The forum, planned by an ad-hoc committee from the Tri-City area and co-sponsored by the City of Fremont Human Relations Commission, will examine community membership for vulnerable minorities (mainly Muslims and Sikhs) in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and the war in Iraq. The program will also feature a welcome from Mayor Wasserman, testimonials of local Sikh and Muslim high school students and adults, and an opportunity for discussion. The event is free of charge and open to all. If you have questions, contact Dan Schoenholz in the Human Services Department at 574-2048.

LEAGUE AWARDED MACARTHUR GRANT FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES

Recently, the League of Women Voters Education Fund was awarded a \$225,000 grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to coordinate a national public dialogue about the delicate balance between civil liberties and homeland security.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Re-printed with permission from Louise Bernikow

Gage Stands Against Mixing Church and State

By Louise Bernikow, WeNews historian

February 24, 1890: Matilda Joslyn Gage takes on the Religious Right.

(WOMENSENEWS)--There was more to the 19th century progressive women's agenda than the right to vote. When Matilda Joslyn Gage saw conservative religious women like Frances Willard of the Women's Christian Temperance Union playing an increasingly larger role in that movement, coupled with broader pressures to dissolve the boundaries between church and state, Gage took action and spoke out. In 1890, Gage, the long-time political ally of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, organized a group of her own - the Women's National Liberal Union, based in upstate New York. At its opening meeting on February 24th, her speech called "The Dangers of the Hour," took on religious fundamentalism as a threat to human - and especially women's freedom.

There were, at the time, several bills and amendments before Congress whose "pretext," Gage said, was "protection of the people" against an encroaching tide of immigrants. Determined to make the United States a Christian nation, these proposals would have imposed Biblical dogmas and clerical authority on secular society. A proposed "day of rest" on Sundays, along with compulsory church attendance, was, she said, "not for the benefit of man, but in order to commemorate the work of creation."

A potential amendment to the preamble of the U.S. Constitution that would insert explicit evidence of the "Christian character and purpose" of the nation provoked her wrath. That amendment called for the Bible as "the standard to decide all moral issues in political life . . ." Scriptural authority, Gage reminded her listeners, taught contempt for women, "through whom sin and death came into the world" as well as that "the wife (is) not an independent being possessing independent rights, but a veritable slave of the husband."

Were religious authority to move beyond the realm of both Catholic and Protestant institutions into civil life, it would undo the work of the movement that had secured women's growing legal independence in divorce, property laws and education, Gage believed. She resisted. Seeing the church as "that ever most unscrupulous enemy of freedom," Gage fired the first salvo of a campaign that would result in her book, "Woman Church and State," three years later. From then on, she was under government surveillance.

Louise Bernikow is the author of seven books and numerous magazine articles.

She travels to campuses and community groups with a lecture and slide show about activism called "The Shoulders We Stand On: Women as Agents of Change." She can be reached at weezieman@aol.com



Matilda Joslyn Gage

VISIT
WWW.WOMENSNEWS ON THE
WEB.ORG

ADDRESS CHANGES

Please enter these in your Member Directory.

Yvette Brittain
5614 Impatiens Common
Fremont, CA, 95538
510-979-9962
Same e-mail

Jennifer Toy and Bill Harrison
4551 Meyer Park Circle
Fremont, CA, 94536
510-790-6069
billandjennahome@comcast.com

E-Mail for Pat Lane
tutlane@telis.net

BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY – Jan.29.2005

"Bay Area Regional Planning – from Vision to Reality"

This year's Bay Area League Day was well attended by more than 100 attentive, enthusiastic participants. The April/May issue of the Monitor will have a more detailed report. Following is a précis.

Ted Droettboom, Regional Planning Program Director for the MTC, ABAG, BAAQMD Joint Policy Committee (JPC) listed the four areas of regional concern as:

- * Housing (population)
- * Traffic/transportation (infrastructure)
- * Economic activity (jobs)
- * Environment/air quality (open space)

He pointed out that there exist agencies that have responsibilities for each area except jobs/economic activity. He also noted how interrelated they all are.

The mandate for the JPC is to promote the Smart Growth Vision. One of the best ways to do this is to "maintain and strengthen existing communities." Regional collaboration has moved in a mode characterized by "hills and valleys" but it needs to move with "slow measured progress."

He reported that at the last meeting of the JPC, on Jan. 28, the day before our event, there was consensus to stop agonizing about "the how" and "just do it!" For more info on the JPC: <http://www.abag.ca.gov/jointpolicy/>

As the first speaker on the "Alternative Models for Regional Planning" panel, Revan Tranter, former Executive Director of ABAG, made a point of the importance of planning for 45 years from now. Would we not be in a better position if planning had begun in 1960?

Will Travis, Executive Director of BCDC, said that his training in planning had taught him to ask two questions:

- 1) What do we want to achieve?
- 2) Why we can't do it with what we have?

Nick Bollman, CEO and President of California Center for Regional Leadership (CCRL), said they organized to add the 4th E, Civic Engagement to sustainable development concepts of Economy, Environment and Equity and are presently working with 20 regional and civic groups. He stated "Regionalism is breaking out all over." You can learn more about CCRL by going to: <http://www.calregions.org/>

All the local officials on the "Thinking Regionally, acting Locally" panel agreed that it was easy to get local jurisdictions to talk Smart Growth talk but difficult to get them to walk the walk. Mostly, they said that if you are willing to have rationale and consistent principles you don't fear being thrown out of office for supporting a more regional viewpoint.

DEMOCRACY DINNER, 2005

At the Democracy Dinner on April 22, 2005 at the Fairmont Hotel in San Jose, League supporters will meet some of California's movers and shakers, learn about the global issues facing the U.S., and bid on exciting auction items from around California. A VIP reception and the silent auction begin at 6:30. Dinner begins at 7:30.

The movers and shakers are the Co-Chairs and Honorary Committee for the dinner. They include Senator Dianne Feinstein; members of Congress Zoe Lofgren, Anna Eshoo, and Mike Honda; former Congressman Pete McCloskey; and elected and former elected officials from southern San Mateo, Santa Clara, and southern Alameda counties. We hope that the legislative schedules of the committee members will permit all to attend.

The banquet speaker is Ambassador Nancy E. Soderberg, Vice President for Multilateral Affairs for International Crisis Group, formerly Alternate Representative of the U.S. to the United Nations, and author of the soon to be released book, *The Superpower Myth*. Her topic will be "Global Challenges, Global Realities."

Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren will manage the festivities as emcee, and California State Senator Joe Simitian will auction selected items contributed to the Education Fund. A live auction will complement the earlier silent auction.

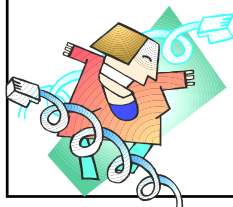
Proceeds from the dinner will benefit The League of Women Voters of California Education Fund and the education funds of the local Leagues planning and coordinating the event: Fremont/Newark/Union City, Los Altos/Mountain View Area, Palo Alto, Santa Clara Valley, San Jose/Santa Clara, and South San Mateo

Tickets for non-members will be \$150, for League members \$100. Non-members can reserve a table for \$1500, and members for \$1000.

More information is available on our web site at www.lwvc.org.

PLEASE NOTE

Your faithful E-TREE is getting many messages back as undeliverable. (Mostly associated with attbi). If you have changed your e-mail address, please send an e-mail to jojovest@aol.com so that you can enjoy the messages that your E-tree sends.



—Your E-Tree

VOTING DAY AT THE GURDWARA

Global Democracy Initiative Concepts Applied right here in Fremont!

By Syeda Yunus

LWV's website summarizes its Global Democracy Initiative ("GDI") as follows, "The Global Democracy Initiative is the League's integrated program for activists and non-governmental organizations worldwide. GDI provides technical assistance, in-depth training, printed materials and limited financial assistance to support grassroots democratic development - giving citizens the tools to create positive change in their communities and countries."

Most LWV members have heard of or know of GDI and based on an unscientific poll of local members, many want to participate in this initiative. However, the general impression is that one would have to go to Washington D.C or some place far away, like the Balkans, to participate. Members of LWV of Fremont, Newark and Union City (LWVFNUC) had an opportunity to experience GDI right in their own backyard when we were called upon to monitor elections for the Sikh Gurdwara in Fremont, CA on Sunday January 9th. 2005 and then count the votes on Monday, January 10th. Members of other Bay Area Leagues such as the Eden Area League and Alameda League also participated.

The Gurdwara is a temple for worship for the Sikh community and is one of the largest in Nation. Sikhism is a religion that originated in Punjab area of India and is over 500 years old. It is estimated that there are over 20 million Sikhs with around 25, 000 locally. The Gurdwara Supreme Council had been in a power struggle for eight years primarily between two factions, one side wanted Supreme Council members to be elected for life and the other wanted shorter terms.

Things apparently came to a head in 2002 after impromptu elections supervised by police in riot gear. The disputed election results went to court. The case was taken in front of Superior Court Judge Julia Spain. Judge Spain ruled that the California Corporations Code, which requires annual elections for religious nonprofit had to be applied rather than the temple bylaws that did not specify term lengths for leaders.

Our fearless co-president Alex Starr was approached by M.O. Sabraw, retired state appeals justice, who asked our League to monitor the elections. Alex told the board members who agreed that we should participate. Finally, many months later - we had our own GDI. I actually got there in the early afternoon, other league members such as Letha Seldanha, Voter Service Co-VP, Kay Emanuel, VP of Administration, who organized the volunteers and of course Alex Starr started bright and early on Sunday morning at 7:30 am.

Long lines and thousands of people went through the meticulously arranged system of checks and double checks. Each ID card was carefully scrutinized and processes followed with assertive precision. Being from India, Letha and I were able to understand cultural dynamics of the voters and our Urdu/Hindi came in handy for communication purposes. However, for some of the other League members, I think it was one of the first contacts with the Sikh community. I was pleasantly surprised to note that most of the people who came to my table, despite the emotionally charged election, did not attempt to commit voter fraud, with one exception. One family attempted to get in an extra vote by a family member, who, though an adult, did not have the mental capacity to vote by providing another sibling's ID. We caught that one.

We noted that in many cases, adult offspring, would "coach" their parents, who were often not literate as to how to cast their votes. What surprised Letha was the number of young women who seemed to be "coached" from their husbands for their voting choices. That brings us to the next goal of GDI:

Targeting women as increasingly powerful voices in demanding accountability and good government in their societies, GDI expands community influence in public policy-making processes while building women's leadership skills through interactive, hands-on training and exchange. We did note however, that there was a woman candidate and of course women were at least allowed to vote. This is a long step away from other places in the world, such as Saudi Arabia, which, may begrudgingly allow some form of elections this year, still has not allowed women to vote.

All volunteers, from our League and other Leagues as well as temple volunteers worked tirelessly all day and into the early night. The tent "doors" finally closed at 8:30 pm. The process did not stop until the next day when the votes were counted by LWVFNUC members. Many members of the Sikh community that I later spoke with were quite appreciative of the efforts of the League to help them resolve a long standing crisis. Major Jagjit Singh, formerly of the Indian Army and a Sikh community member who had also volunteered during the elections, wrote us a email of appreciation stating, "Our thanks are due to League Of Women Voters for the success of the elections. There was no violence at all, every one was full of praise for a job well done."

If one picture is worth a thousand words, LWV's GDI was clearly seen in action in the local papers which featured "Leaguers" counting ballots. I have been a proud, badge carrying member of the League of Women Voters for many years but the Gurdwara elections were one of the highpoints of pride when leaguers demonstrated through action that indeed "Democracy is not a spectator sport."

SPRING EDSOURCE FORUM--Mar. 17 and 18

How can we improve the instruction and opportunities that high schools provide their students? And how do we make them relevant in today's knowledge economy? At the 28th Annual EdSource Forum, "Shaking Up the Status Quo: The Movement to Transform High School," a group of outstanding speakers will examine the multiple challenges involved in changing the status quo in California's public high schools. Don't miss this significant and timely event! Join EdSource on Thursday, March 17 in Manhattan Beach, or Friday, March 18 in Santa Clara. For more information, go to EdSource's Web site at <http://www.edsource.org/forum05info.cfm>.

Since LWVC is an EdSource subscriber, LWVC members are eligible for an early bird registration rate of \$50 until Feb.18. After that date, registration is \$60 for EdSource subscribers. To register, go to <http://www.edsource.org/order/confregform.cfm?issubscriber=1>

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CALIFORNIA EDUCATION FUND

and

The Leagues of Cupertino/Sunnyvale, Fremont/Newark/Union City, Los Altos/Mtn. View, Palo Alto, Southwest Santa Clara Valley, San Jose/Santa Clara, and So. San Mateo County

cordially invite you to the League's 85th Birthday Celebration



DEMOCRACY DINNER

Friday, April 22, 2005

The Fairmont Hotel
170 South Market Street, San Jose

6:30 p.m. – No Host Reception and Silent Auction

7:30 p.m. – Dinner and Program

Ambassador Nancy Soderberg - Keynote Speaker

Global Challenges, Global Realities

VP for Multilateral Affairs for International Crisis Group

Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren – Master of Ceremonies

CA Senator Joe Simitian – Auctioneer

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Hon. Ron Gonzales Hon. Pete Stark
Hon. Mike Honda

HONORARY DINNER COMMITTEE

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Hon. Jim Beall	Hon. Don Gage	Hon. Ira Ruskin
Hon. Nora Campos	Hon. Susan Hammer	Hon. Simon Salinas
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Hon. David Cortese	Hon. Sally Lieber	Hon. Alberto Torrico
Hon. Joe Coto	Hon. Abel Maldonado	Hon. Forrest Williams
Hon. Jim Cunneen	Hon. Pete McHugh	Hon. Ken Yeager

Democracy Dinner Response

Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____
Affiliation (Optional): _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone _____ E-Mail _____

- Please reserve ___ regular seat(s) at \$150 for a total of \$ ___.
- As member (s) of the **League of Women Voters, Fremont, Newark, Union City** please reserve _____ seat(s) at \$100 each for a total of \$ _____. (One per member, please.) **Please seat us with or near other FNUC League Members.** Thank you.
- I would like to become a sponsor. Please credit this sponsorship to: _____

Bronze Patron ___ \$2500 Sponsor ___ \$1000
Reserved table(s) of ten ___ \$1500 Friend ___ \$500

All sponsorships received by April 8th will be acknowledged in the program. Bronze Patron, Sponsor, and Friend include two reserved seats at the Democracy Dinner.

- I am unable to attend, but would like to make a contribution of \$ _____
- Enclosed is my **check payable to League of Women Voters of California Education Fund**
- Charge my VISA ___ MasterCard ___ Credit Card No.: _____
Expiration Date: _____ Name on Card: _____
Signature: _____

Mail your payment and completed Response Card by April 12, 2005 to:
LWV San Jose/Santa Clara, P. O. Box 5374, San Jose, CA 95150.

Please indicate your name along with your guests' names and meal preferences.

Name(s): _____ Chicken, Salmon or Vegetarian

- 1: _____
- 2. _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6. _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____
- 10 _____

All tickets will be held at the door. For more information, call Virginia Holtz at (408) 267-6253

Proceeds will benefit the voter education programs of the League of Women Voters of California Education Fund, a 501©3 organization. Under IRS guidelines, the estimated fair market value of your attendance at the Democracy Dinner is \$55. All contributions in excess of this fair market value are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

Lobby Day for Reproductive Justice Is June 7, 2005

The Lobby Day for Reproductive Justice, cosponsored by the LWVC, will be held on June 7 at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Sacramento. The day will include a general meeting followed by lobbying visits with legislators. A "[save the date](#)" flyer is enclosed for you to use if you wish. The specific theme and details of the event will be announced in the spring.

Marion Taylor, *Legislation Director*, legislation@lwvc.org

project Web site, www.cbp.org.

The Changing Face of California Conference on March 15, 2005

The California Budget Project's annual one-day conference will be held at the Sacramento Convention Center from 8a.m. to 6p.m. on March 15. The topic, *The Changing Face of California: Investing in the Future*, addresses the budget and policy implications of our state's shifting demographics:

- Half a million new residents are added each year.
- By mid-century Latinos will account for over half of the state's population.
- The largest share of population growth will occur in the Central Valley and Inland Empire.
- The proportion of children will decline; the proportion of the elderly will grow.

Speakers at the conference will include Tom Campbell, Director of the California Department of Finance (invited), chief budget advisors to the State Senate and Assembly, and Assembly Speaker Fabian Nuñez.

This meeting is a must for League leaders working on state and local finance issues. Early registration is now available at the California Budget Project Web site, www.cbp.org.

The League Speaks Out on Redistricting

Redistricting is in the air. The governor is presenting a proposal for reform of the redistricting process and has called a special legislative session to consider this and other government changes he wants voters to approve. He backs ACA 3 by Assembly Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy and Assembly member Sharon Runner, under which district lines would be drawn by a panel of retired judges instead of by the legislature and a "mid-decade" redistricting would take place as soon as this proposed constitutional amendment took effect. A number of other redistricting proposals

are also being presented. They include an initiative by Ted Costa, who made a similar proposal in 2004; SCA 3, a bill by State Senator Alan Lowenthal which would establish a different kind of independent redistricting commission; and several others offered by both legislators and initiative proponents. The governor has said he may call a special election this year on this and other initiatives.

On January 13, the LWVC sent a letter to the Governor and to all of the members of the Legislature describing our concerns about redistricting proposals and stating the elements supported by the LWVC Redistricting position. The letter is available on the LWVC Web site at <http://lwvc.org/lwvc/action/redistrict/>, where you will also find substantial background information on the issue.

We will be following up this letter with visits to legislators and their staffs. We will also be analyzing all of the proposals to see if there are any we can support.

Where Is Election Reform Needed?

In November the LWVC board expressed a strong interest in election reform. In January President Jackie Jacobberger, Legislation Director Marion Taylor, and Program Director/Advocate Trudy Schafer met with members of the Secretary of State's staff in charge of elections, legislative affairs, and Help America Vote Act (HAVA) implementation. The staff characterized the November 2004 election in California as the smoothest in a long time. Part of this was luck—not having close races to test the system. Much of it was due to careful preparation by county elections officials and the Secretary of State's staff.

Among the indicators were very few questions about the new requirement for some newly registered voters to show identification, few questions as to whether a provisional ballot was counted, and the absence of equipment problems like those of March 2004. A growing proportion of voters vote by mail. About a quarter of poll workers were students; using them has eased the difficulty of finding poll workers in almost all counties. The biggest problem is the close of registration only 15 days before the election. After the election, some counties could not consider provisional ballots until they finished the process of entering the registrations of voters who had barely met the 15 day deadline.

We expressed eagerness to work more closely with elections officials in voter education and outreach.

Is it possible that the election reforms needed are more at the local and the national level than at the state level? We would like to hear from local Leagues if you have concerns about voting which you think should be addressed at the state level.

—LWVC

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

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 PO Box 3218
 Fremont, CA, 94539
 510-794-5783
 President: Alex Starr
 Treasurer: Catherine Souders Manhanpour
 Editor: Vesta Wilson
 Office Hours:
 The LWVFNUC storage office address is:
 4368 Enterprise St., off Grimmer, near
 Automall.
 Materials are available 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM
 with permission from a board member*

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
[Http://www.lwvfnc.org](http://www.lwvfnc.org)
Peter Starr, Webmaster,
Jack Keller, Back-up

Mission Statement
The League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark, and Union City, a non-partisan 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



POTLUCK FOR JULICE WINTER

On March 21, 2005, there will be a potluck dinner to honor and thank Julice Winter, who has moved to Livermore. It will be held at 6:30 PM in Mary Roulet's home, 41728 Chiltern, Fremont. Please RSVP to Mary (656-4874) with your menu selection.

Following the feast there will be a discussion of our accomplishments leading up to the 2004 election and how we can improve upon our preparation for the next election.

Julice has made great contributions to our League. She has been on the Board of Directors, chaired the committee for the Community College study, observed the Ohlone College Board meetings for years, hosted Voting Matters, "personed" the cameras, and much, much more. She was always available for the many tasks that often come up in our League.





**LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS OF FREMONT,
NEWARK AND UNION CITY**
P.O. Box 3218 Fremont, CA, 94539
(510) 794-5783

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WATCH VOTING MATTERS

Watch Ann Crosbie interview Betty Pow, FUSD director of secondary education and teachers Stu Terlman, Cheryl Cook-Kalio and Ressa Krishna. Topic: Character Education.

Fremont, Channel 29, every Wednesday at 7:30 PM
Newark, Channel 6, every Thursday at 7 PM

LOOK INSIDE:

Democracy Dinner, pp. 8 –9

Two exciting meetings, p.1

Voting Day at the Gurdwara, p. 7

CALENDAR

Mon., Mar. 1	Cable Taping	3:30 PM	Comcast Studios
Tues., Mar. 2	Action Committee	9:30 AM	Miriam Keller's home
Thurs., Mar. 10	"Our Community—Who Belongs"	7:00 PM	Valhalla Hall, Irvington High School
Fri. Mar. 11	Education Committee	11:45 AM Bag Lunch	Miriam Keller's home
Tues. Mar. 15	California Budget Project Forum	All day	Sacramento Convention Center
Wed., Mar. 16	Cable Taping	2:30 PM	Comcast Studios
Thurs., Mar. 17	Ed Source Conference LWVFNUC Board Meeting	All day 7:30	Westin, Santa Clara Mary Miller's home
Sat., March 19	Voter Deadline		
Tues. March 29	Afghan Literary Revival Program	12:30—2:30 PM	New Haven School District Board Room
Fri., Apr. 22	Democracy Dinner	6:30 PM	Fairmont Hotel, San Jose