

Voter

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



Mothers' Day—May 13

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FREMONT, NEWARK AND UNION CITY PRESENTS:

THE NEW JUVENILE HALL

Focusing on Health Care at Juvenile Hall

Monday, May 14

St. James Episcopal Church

37051 Cabrillo Terrace

7:00 Networking

7:30 Program



Speaker: Alex Briscoe, Alameda County Health Department

Have questions about the health care at the new Juvenile Hall?
Bring them to this meeting and find answers.

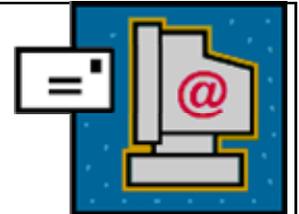
WEB CORNER

You're invited to try the League's updated website at www.lwvfnc.org. Now it's easy to find just what you need. Click the Google search box located at the top of the main page.

Check out the new left hand navigation panel. Board Members, Chair Persons, and Specialists will be updating you via the web. Visit the new [Global Climate Change](#) page and the updated [Testimonies and Letters](#) page to see some of our recent activities.

Don't have cable? Just click on [Cable Programs](#) to view recent Voting Matters programs on the web. Be sure you have high speed internet service for this new feature.

And be sure to visit the new Members Only web site. The logon i.d. and password have been mailed to you last week. Here you can find useful information including Job Descriptions, Guidelines, Tips, and forms needed by many of our League Leaders. Want to find out how Action Committee is doing? Check out the Action Committee Section here. If you haven't received the logon i.d. and password contact our web master at webmaster@lwvfnc.org.



—Sam Neeman
Documentation Specialist

President's Message

I can't believe that two years have gone by since I said that I would be president again. Time really flies when one is having fun. I have really enjoyed serving as your president and I hope that I will leave the organization in better shape than two years ago. The Board reports that will remind you of all that we have accomplished in the last year will be put in the Summer Voter.

Our Annual Meeting is very important for Leaguers. Please try to attend if it is at all possible. We will choose new officers and directors, ratify our local study position on Washington Hospital and our (ACC-Alameda County Council) position on the Alameda County Board of Education. This is your chance to have input on the budget and issues that you think we should be working on next year. If you are new or haven't been to many of our meetings, please come and get acquainted. It is the end of a year but the beginning of a new year.

We provide services and information to the voters, watchdog our local agencies and advocate for issues that we have studied. This coming year we will undertake the LWVUS study on immigration and celebrate our 50th year as a League. Come to the Annual Meeting and help us plan for an interesting, exciting new year.

—Miriam Keller

Board Briefs

At the April Board meeting, the Board

- saw a demonstration of our web site's new member-only page
- were apprised of our new responsibilities to get info to the web site
- made final arrangements for our Earth Day table and our Cool Cities Forum on 4/28
- approved our new Bylaws revision which needs member approval at the Annual Meeting
- approved our local study position on Washington Hospital Governance
- discussed the ACC study position on the Alameda County Board of Education and Superintendent of Education
- reviewed the budget before it goes to the Annual Meeting

VOTING MATTERS APRIL PROGRAM "COOL CITIES"

Moderator: John Landers, Member of Tri-City Ecology

Speakers: Rich Godfrey, Tri-City Ecology
Jeff Hobson, Transportation and Land Use Coalition

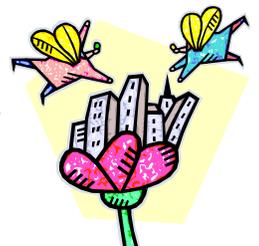
What is a "Cool City? The Cool Cities Initiative became effective in Michigan in June 2003 under the leadership of Governor Granholm.

The choice by the League to present the Cool Cities program in April was most timely considering that Mayor Bob Wasserman of Fremont and Mayor Dave Smith signed the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement in April joining other mayors nationwide. On Saturday, April 28, a meeting was scheduled titled "Cool Cities--Stopping Global Warming One City at a Time". Tri-City Ecology with the City of Fremont hosted an Earth Day Family Fair on Saturday, April 21.

Jeff Hobson said that the automobile is the most significant contributor to the problem of Global Warming. California is built around the car; where we live, work or play, even educate our children requires a car. However, not all of us are able to buy a new alternative fuel car. Jeff Hobson said we can maintain the old one until it falls apart because the manufacture of the new car contributes more to pollution than the old one will. How about that?

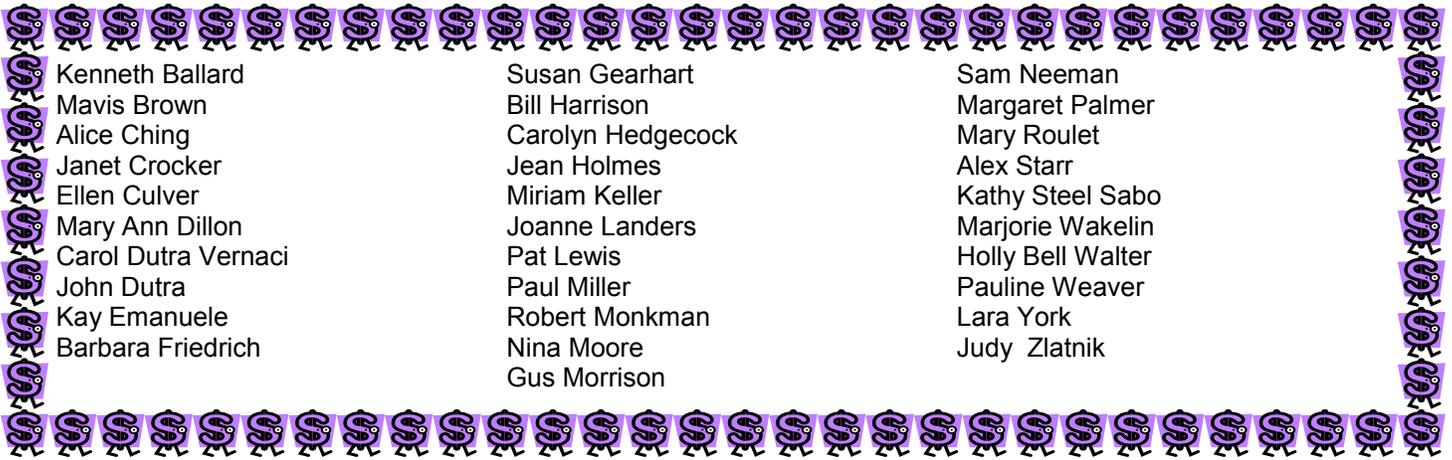
Rich Godfrey reminded us that fossil fuels will not last forever so we are all in this together. He said we must treat others as we would like to be treated. As a nation, we must work with countries like China and India who are dependent on their huge coal reserves to find cleaner technology.

One of the most significant points made by the speakers was that all of us can participate in finding solutions. Finding the solutions begins with each of us at a local level. April of this year is the time to get on board, recognizing that there is a problem and being committed to finding remedies and alternatives that work in our hometown and extend to our neighbors around the world.



— Muriel Nolan

THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTORS





FIFTIETH CELEBRATION

The 50th Celebration Committee will be meeting in May to finalize plans for the event. Please join us as we

PLAN YOUR 50TH CELEBRATION

What: 50th Celebration Planning Committee
When: Tuesday, May 15. 7 PM
Where: Sisters of the Holy Family Auditorium

For more information, contact Sister Marjorie—marjorie@holyfamilysisters.com or John Smith—jsmith1152@aol.com or 510-791-2179

Sent to Jean Holmes—a nice follow up to “Sunshine Week”

Received from Art Lampert, President, Alameda County Water District Board of Directors

Dear Jean:

Subject: ACWD Web Site--Inclusion of Staff Reports

Thank you for your comments at our March 8, 2007 board meeting regarding the Water District's efforts to ensure compliance with the letter and spirit of the Brown Act. I wanted to let you know that we have now added copies of staff reports to the agendas posted on the District's web site. Thank you again for the League's interest in ensuring that meetings of publicly elected boards and councils do remain both open and public.

Sincerely,

Art





Cogeneration

Cogeneration, also referred to as combined heat and power (CHP), is the highly efficient use of one fuel source (generally natural gas, but sometimes biogas from anaerobic digesters) to produce two energy products (usually electricity and heating or cooling).

In California, there are currently more than 750 active cogeneration projects, representing 17 percent, or 9,130 megawatts, of generating capacity in the state. A number of hospitals, universities, food processors, dairies, refineries, and other industries use cogeneration to power their facilities. Excess electricity that is produced is sold under contract to the investor-owned utilities. Many of the larger projects are an outcome of the 1978 Public Utilities Regulatory Policy Act (PURPA) that was passed to foster renewable resources and increase energy conservation. As a number of sizable CHP contracts are currently being renegotiated, an industry association known as CogenWorks has been actively seeking changes in the structure of new utility contracts.

Cogeneration is an important element in the mix of resources that will be needed over the coming two decades. Most electrical generation systems, by themselves, have efficiencies of less than 40 percent, but the addition of the heating (or cooling) component increases the overall efficiency of fuel use to 85 percent. Along with CogenWorks, the LWVC Energy Committee has been represented at a number of meetings with staff and commissioners of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). CogenWorks' chief focus has been on ensuring that the large contracts are renewed with favorable conditions, while the Energy Committee's concern is for a policy that will foster smaller community projects such as by hospitals, multi-family communities, and commercial centers.

The California Energy Commission (CEC) has addressed cogeneration as an important concern in its Integrated Energy Policy Report (IEPR) process and sums up its benefits to California as *"reduced energy costs, more efficient fuel use, fewer environmental impacts, improved reliability and power quality, locations near load centers, and support of utility transmission and distribution systems."*

Small CHP systems have been limited in southern California because the smaller generators lack catalytic controls and currently are not able to meet the nitrogen oxide (NO_x) emissions attainment standards set by the South Coast Air Quality Management Board. Nevertheless, the California Energy Commission recognizes a near-term need to have the Public Utilities Commission develop a rate structure that will make it attractive for new and existing CHP developers to sell their excess generation into the state grid. It is important to acknowledge that utilities presently have no reason to encourage their existing customers to reduce their dependence on the utilities.

The recommendation of the CEC is that, rather than encourage a new program of subsidies, future contracts should provide both utility and CHP developer benefits. Additional research should be supported to ensure the availability of new gas turbines and internal combustion engines that can meet the environmental requirements of southern California. Export to the grid from CHP facilities should reflect the current wholesale electricity price, but new contracts could include a capacity payment to cover the assurance of additional power availability at times of peak power need, which would decrease the need for construction of new peaking power projects.

For more information, contact energy@lwvc.org

There's Method to this Madness: Meeting Regional Housing Needs

By Leslie Stewart

A new round of housing planning has regional agencies and local elected officials striving to match local plans with state and regional housing needs. This process—known as the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, or RHNA—has the worthy goal of increasing housing opportunities throughout the state. However, as previous cycles have shown, keeping everyone happy can be a challenge.

Although local governments have autonomy in planning where and how they develop housing in their communities, the amount of housing each city and county must provide hinges on a combination of state, regional, and local determinations. Starting with figures developed by the state Department of Finance, the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) determines regional housing needs. Then within the region, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) works with local governments to gather data and create a methodology for use in developing allocations for each jurisdiction.

To elicit local input for this cycle, ABAG convened a Housing Methodology Committee (HMC) composed of elected officials and staff on both city and county levels. The resulting methodology still brought complaints from most of the cities and counties, but the final version—adopted on January 18, 2007, by the ABAG Executive Board—does reflect extensive discussion and some measure of consensus. The HMC plans to continue meeting to discuss issues that arise during the subsequent phases of the process.

The methodology adopted in January will use weighted factors that include household growth (45%), existing employment (22.5%), employment growth (22.5%), planned employment growth near transit stations (5%), and planned household growth near transit stations (5%). Planned transit stations are not included. Jurisdictions that are below the regional average in low-income housing categories will be required to build more housing of that type, while jurisdictions with higher concentrations of low-income housing will need to build fewer new affordable units. Local jurisdictions can bargain with each other to adjust allocations as long as the total need continues to be met. The allocations are the basis for local general plan housing elements, which in turn must be approved by the state. Local jurisdictions must make it possible to build the number of units in their housing elements—although housing developers are not required to build them.

Using the adopted methodology, ABAG must issue a Draft RHNA by June 30, 2007. After a period when local jurisdictions can work with ABAG on revisions, there is an appeals period for local jurisdictions that still are in disagreement with their allocations. Appeals must be decided before the end of April 2008, when ABAG must issue the final RHNA proposal. The final allocation must be adopted and submitted to HCD by June 2008, and local housing elements based on the allocations are due to HCD by June 2009.

State law now allows a subregion to do its own methodology and draft allocations, and in one example of this law in action, the cities and counties in San Mateo have been approved to do a subregional RHNA process. This process runs parallel to ABAG's and the subregion is responsible for the same steps, including developing an allocation methodology and releasing draft numbers. If the subregion fails to meet one of these milestones, then ABAG must take back responsibility for allocating housing units to the subregion.

Under another change in the state law, this RHNA cycle is being shifted ahead to coordinate with the next scheduled update of the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), as an implementation of the policy-based regional planning process that began with the Smart Growth Vision. ABAG's Projections 2007, released in November 2006, will be the basis for the RTP and also contains the regional data used for RHNA.

When HCD approved ABAG's application to delay completion of the RHNA process to allow coordination with the RTP, this altered the timetable for coordinating population and household projections at the state and regional level. Every tweak to the RHNA methodology which ABAG approved in mid-January was accompanied by recalculations, some quite detailed, showing how each jurisdiction would be affected by the various components and how they were weighted in the methodology. However, those figures must now be reconciled with the state's figure for total regional housing needs for the 2007-2014 period. ABAG is currently working with staff from HCD to determine the Bay Area's housing needs, and it is expected that this number will be finalized in the next few weeks. The adopted methodology will then be applied to the regional needs number, and ABAG will release Draft RHNA allocations. At this point, local jurisdictions go through their own negotiations with the region and each other to adjust the Draft RHNA allocations to meet local needs.



EDSOURCE CONFERENCE REPORT

EdSource's 30th Anniversary Forum, held in Pomona and Palo Alto last week, was one of our liveliest and best attended ever!

You can now view the presentations and panel discussions from Thursday's Forum on EdSource Online: http://www.edsource.org/pubinvo_forum07pro.cfm

As we did at the very first EdSource Forum, we focused on the complex issues surrounding California school finance with speakers and panelists who brought an extraordinary depth and diversity of views to the discussions:

- * John Mockler's presentation, an overview of the past four decades of school finance in California, was both candid and enlightening.
- * Susanna Loeb shed light on the key findings from the state's most comprehensive research of school finance, the "Getting Down to Facts" project.
- * The afternoon panel of political experts was revealing and provocative in its discussion of the "Getting Down to Facts" research findings and the larger question of what Californians want and expect from their public schools.

If you couldn't attend the Forum, these videos are an excellent way to see the information that was presented. They are also handy if you want to revisit the presentations or share them with colleagues.

As always, the <http://www.californiaschoolfinance.org> website is a great place to find information and explanations of our state's complex school funding system.

—Barbara Inatsugu

TRANSPORTATION REPORT BY THE LAO

In January, the LAO released *California Travels: Financing Our Transportation*. The report addresses the objectives of voter-approved Proposition 1B, which allows the state to sell \$20 billion in general obligation bonds, and recommends that the Legislature take the following actions:

Adopt additional project eligibility and evaluation criteria

- Ensure timely project delivery
- Provide adequate resources to deliver projects, including increased use of contracting
- Provide ongoing program oversight.

This and related infrastructure and budget reports can be downloaded at www.lao.ca.gov.

NEW WORDING OF ENERGY POSITION IN BRIEF

At its March meeting, the LWVC board of directors voted to amend the wording of the Energy position in brief by inserting the words "and renewable resources" at the end of the first sentence. The position in brief now reads: *The League supports development of a state energy policy that will ensure reliability of energy resources and protection of the environment and public health and safety, at reasonable customer rates, giving primary consideration to conservation, energy efficiency, and renewable resources. State government should provide an efficient, coordinated energy administrative structure with open transparent procedures.*

—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

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 - \$50 _____ Household - \$75
 Donate to LWVNUC \$ _____ Donate to Ed. Fund \$ _____ Total enclosed \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____ Phone _____

E-mail _____ New Member _____ Renewal _____ Transfer _____

from _____



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: Marjorie Wakelin: 510-624-4500, marjorie@holymfamilyersisters.org

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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 Editor: Vesta Wilson
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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 of a board member.

REDISTRICTING

The League and its partners continue discussions on redistricting reform. We are increasing our efforts to work with key members and staff of the Legislature and with the Governor's staff to place a reasonable legislative redistricting proposal on the ballot. Several versions of a citizens' initiative petition have been filed with the Attorney General's office for title and summary in preparation for circulation for signatures. At this point, the LWVC board neither supports nor opposes any of these initiatives. A term limits initiative has been filed as well. Political considerations about how the term limits and redistricting reform proposals for the February 2008 ballot will mix are under discussion. —LWVC

ELECTRONIC CORNER

You may not be a fan of You Tube, but there is one thing that is interesting to us as members of LWV. It is a video about voting rights in the District of Columbia. You can get there by using this URL:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p19TVkoO51g>

But it is easier to get there by typing "YouTube" in your browser's search area, then typing "Voting rights" in YouTube's search area. (Do not use quote marks) There's a lot about voting rights there, so you have to scroll down until you see one by LWV. You will have the opportunity to send it to friends if you so desire.



—Vesta Wilson

QUOTE: Democracy is a device that ensures we shall be governed no better than we deserve. George Bernard Shaw (1856—1950)



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS OF FREMONT,
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(510) 794-5783

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WATCH VOTING MATTERS

Tune in to see John Landers interview guests Rich Godfrey and Jeff Hobson. Topic: Cool Cities

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.lwvfnuc.org>

CALENDAR

| Date | Event | Time | Place |
|------------------|------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------|
| Sat., May 5 | Alameda County Council | 9:30 AM | Northbrae Community Church, Berkeley |
| Thurs., May 10 | LWVFNUC Board Meeting | 7:15 | Sisters of the Holy Family |
| Mon., May 14 | General Meeting | 7:30 | St. James Episcopal Church |
| Wed., May 16 | Cable Taping | 2:30 | Comcast Studios |
| Thurs., May 17 | Education Committee | 9:30 | Miriam Keller's Home |
| May 18, 19, 20 | LWVC Convention | | Bakersfield, CA |
| Wed., May 23 | Action Committee | 12:30 | Marilyn Singer's home |
| Saturday, June 2 | Annual Meeting | TBA | TBA |