



FREMONT, NEWARK & UNION CITY

NOVEMBER 2013

LOOKING AHEAD

WEDNESDAY NOV 20TH
Y VOTE Contest Meeting
Miriam Keller's house, 7 P.M.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 9TH
HOLIDAY PARTY AND
POTLUCK –
Carolyn Hedgecock's house, 6 P.M.
*Contact Mary Miller about what to
bring to share*
Entertainment by the board!

MONDAY, JANUARY 27th
BREAD & SOUP DINNER and
LWVUS PROGRAM PLANNING
League Office 6 P.M.

**INFORMATION ABOUT
LWVUS STUDY UPDATE OF
AGRICULTURE POSITION**
More information and links to web
sites and videos in next VOTER

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

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18th

DR. GARI BROWNING
PRESIDENT, OHLONE
COLLEGE

3375 COUNTRY DRIVE
FREMONT, CA

7 P.M.

**JOIN US FOR AN UPDATE ON
OHLONE'S BOND MEASURES
AND THE PROGRESS ON RE-
DESIGNING THE FREMONT
CAMPUS**

**DR. BROWNING WILL
ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT
THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY
COLLEGES IN OUR
CHALLENGING FINANCIAL
ENVIRONMENT AND WHAT
THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR
OHLONE**

What questions will you have for
our distinguished guest?
Coordination with high schools?
Solar installations?

Presidents' Message



I just recently read a Facebook post by a friend urging people to stop complaining and do something positive. Then I saw this lovely sign posted by another friend-*Promote What You Love Instead of Bashing What You Hate*. Both of these things reminded of the importance of The League of Women Voters in this age of polarized, cable news politics. People can now get their news and form opinions from only the point of view they already support.

We must continue to work to keep our friends, neighbors, and our community at large actively engaged in our democracy by providing non-biased information, participating in community events to encourage voting, and providing government watchdog activities.

Voter Services got off to a strong start coordinating two public events. Volunteers represented our League at Newark Days Community Information Faire and at Ohlone College's Associated Student Body elections as a way to mark National Voter Registration Day. Volunteers registered voters and provided literature about the League.

We began the year well with two public meetings, the first co-sponsored with the Alameda County Library on the implementation of the Affordable Care Act with representatives from Covered California to answer questions. Check out our web site www.lwvfnuc.org, for resources to help you navigate the new health care law. The Alameda County Libraries also have resources and people to help you sign up. The second, meeting on Sustainable Agriculture, co-sponsored by Tri-City Ecology, was held in October at our League meeting room. Justine Burt, LEAF (Local Ecology and Agriculture Fremont) board member, described what local sustainable agriculture is and how we can support it. This is our first step to our LWVUS Agriculture study update. The LWVUS study update addresses 1) genetically modified organisms (GMOs), herbicides, pesticides, agriculture water pollution, aquifer depletion, antibiotics in livestock, accurate food labeling, and 2) current agriculture finance issues including consolidation in agriculture industries, crop subsidies and the federal agricultural regulatory process. Look for more information in future VOTER issues.

Sam Neeman and Carolyn Hedgecock

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Published 10 times a year by the League of Women Voters of Fremont, Newark, and Union City (LWVFNUC)

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Layout Design: Jane Mueller, Well Chosen Words

ACTION GROUP

This page highlights Action Group activities. Check out the Calendar and join us for one of our meetings. Next one: November 14th, League office, High Noon.

Action Team Interviews

-Andrea Schacter-

One of the more interesting aspects of the Action Team involves interviewing our elected representatives. Through these interviews, we attempt to learn more about these folks than is usually discernible through their campaign literature, and at the same time, educate them about the League and our role in maintaining transparency in government.

We try our best to interview all elected and newly elected representatives of boards, councils, and appointed commissions. Examples are community college trustees, school board members, city council members, and members of the district hospital board. Additionally, we also conduct legislative interviews with those who represent us in Sacramento and Washington, D.C. after the LWV California provides four specific questions.

Typically, two League members—one experienced interviewer and one newbie—conduct the interview, after developing a list of questions that the Action Team deems appropriate. Casual in style and informational in approach, we often meet in a local coffee shop at a time that meets the needs of our guest. Although confrontation is not our aim, we do ask incisive questions that we believe represent the current issues and problems facing that specific entity.

Interviews are a great way to participate in the League, and there are always opportunities to get involved. If you are interested, please contact Alex Starr, Chair of the Action Team.

Finance – Jean Holmes

As Action Group "Specialist-Finance" I try to follow national, state and city actions that affect League interests: housing education, taxes, services, etc.

One good source is California Budget Bites cbp@cbp.org an email service of the California Budget Project. This organization gives both short and in depth explanations of the State Actions and Federal ruling.

News sources for local cities fiscal status are scarce, (Why don't we have a newspaper which covers Fremont, Newark and Union City governments?)

I try to be aware of editorials, columnists, etc, relate to this field. I am by no means an "expert" in any phase of this assignment. I welcome any insight you may have in this area of local finance.

Transportation – Sets Amann & Alex Starr

We serve as liaisons to the LWV Bay Area Transportation Committee. We had a hand in writing a letter from our League to MTC & ABAG about Plan Bay Area and how it would affect our area. We also prepared testimony to MTC & ABAG about the Plan when they held a public meeting here in Fremont.

We monitor BART progress to Warm Springs, AC Transit decisions that might affect our area, and any other transit issues in our Tri City area. Our latest effort was in editing LWVBA's Transportation position on airports to bring it more up to date.

Housing – Miriam Keller

Editor's Note: often Housing issues involve overlapping issues with school districts. The following is an example of that. Miriam's knowledge of Education issues is critical to combining these two areas of concern.

The Fremont School District is increasing in number of students enrolled each year. It is faced with 2500- 3000 housing units that might be built eventually around the new BART station and 500 units are planned for the

Patterson Ranch area. At the same time most Fremont schools are bulging or already overloading their new students.

At a recent FUSD board meeting a consultant reviewed for the school board options that are available to them in this situation.

Development Impact Fees: The fees are assessed on a per square-foot basis. Current law permits the district to charge a development impact fee of \$5.27 per square foot of residential development and 51 cents per square foot for commercial/industrial development. Staff estimates that the developer fees collected on the anticipated projects will meet less than 50 percent of the total costs necessary to build new schools.

Mitigation agreements with developers: Developers can voluntarily provide additional mitigation of land, money, interim housing, developer-built schools or the formation of a Mello-Roos district. They might do this because good schools improve the price of the homes around them.

Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act: This act authorizes the creation of community facilities

districts around all or some of an agency's jurisdiction in order to levy a special tax in the Community Facilities District for capital and other projects.

GO bonds: General obligation bonds are long-time voter approved debt supported by ad valorem tax on property in the district according to the consultant.

School Facility Improvement District. This alternative to a district-wide general obligation bond allows districts to create a sub-area for purposes of calling such an election.

In further discussion of the topic the following was included. An advantage of Mello-Roos is that it allows you to approve a bond measure that is specifically for an area that is potentially going to be developed while you still have a few large land owners. The houses are sold subject to that Mello-Roos tax and then it is paid over time and a bond can be issued to pay for school facilities or other infrastructure within that area, paid for by the ones who will benefit by it. A disadvantage is that developers are not as happy to have their new development subject to a Mello-Roos tax because people coming in are then going to have to pay that tax.

From LWVC

Action Alert, Calls to Action, Action Requests – What's the Difference?

Over the past weeks, some local Leagues have received action messages from the LWVC. These have been targeted messages, focusing on key legislators on issues of importance to us: the money in politics bills we are cosponsoring, and protecting the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

If you received one of these messages, we hope that you contacted your legislator in the name of the League, and that you passed the message on to your members so that they can contact the legislator as individual constituents.

What are the different kinds of messages the LWVC sends?

Action Alert: An alert asking members and other individuals to take action.

Call to Action: An alert asking local Leagues to contact their legislators in the name of the League.

Note: These first two – action alert and call to action – are sometimes used interchangeably for alerts asking members and/or local Leagues to take action.

Action Request: A message from an individual Program Director, asking for action on issues of importance within the program area.

These generally represent issues that, while not an overall priority issue for the League, are a high priority within the program area. The League's voice could help persuade particular legislators. These messages are couched as requests, but we do hope that local Leagues will find the resources to respond on some level.

JOB OPENING!

The [CA Votes - LWVC Education Fund](#) is seeking to hire an experienced Project Manager for our Voter Service and Education initiatives. This position will report to the Executive Director and manage the implementation of key projects including, but not limited to:

- Future of California Elections (FOCE) Voter Information Group
- Easy Voter Guide Project (EVGP).

Read more, apply and share -

<http://cavotes.org/about/jobs/project-manager-voter-service-education>

Education Committee Appointed; Applications Being Accepted!

The Education Committee was appointed by the State Board. Barbara Inatsugu will chair the Pre K-12 grades and Joanne Levitt will head up Early Childhood Education as Co-Chairs of the Committee. Some applications for committee membership have been received; additional applications are welcome to insure that we have all areas of the state represented. Submit your letter of interest with a brief bio to Kay Ragan if you would like to be on the committee.

Proposed Higher Education Study

Lucas Ramirez, LWV Los Altos-Mountain View and Eleanor Yick, LWV Santa Clara Valley is the chair of the Study Scope Development Committee. You may sign up for the Higher Ed Study listserve at <http://ca.lwv.org/stay-informed>. The Committee is expected to identify the scope of the study, potential resources, develop questions the study will be expected to answer and to confer with our Executive Director, Melissa Breach relative to potential donors for support of the study. The State Board expects to receive the

Higher Education Study Scope and plan document prior to the January meeting.

From LWVC updates

NEW! Exceptional Individual Leaguers to be Recognized

Do you know someone in your local League who does exceptional work for the League? LWVC is initiating a process to formally recognize them with a certificate signed by our LWVC President at our bimonthly board meetings. We are currently forming a committee to review the nominations. Once consensus has been reached, a signed certificate will be sent to exceptional local Leaguers on a rolling basis.

Please brainstorm among your local membership and send your nominations to me directly explaining what your nominated individual does that goes "above and beyond" the excellent work we all do in League that elevates this person to exceptional status in your estimation.

Why do we have these awards? Not only is thanking people a best practice in business, it's a nice thing to do.

FROM LWVC AND SMART VOTER

Smart Voter® Next Generation Update

We are excited to announce the successful conclusion of Smart Voter's Next Generation challenge campaign! Our sincere "thank you" goes out to the many contributors who helped raise over \$50,000 of new money to support the development of the Next Generation of Smart Voter®, which will enhance the League's ability to reach and impact 21st century voters. Planning and work to transition the League to the Next Generation of Smart Voter® is scheduled to continue throughout 2013. This includes further development and testing of the innovative technologies that will add many valuable new capabilities and features. To support this ongoing development, we will begin adding new staff and volunteer expertise and time, to complement the existing dedicated Smart Voter corps. Information about how you can participate will be shared with local Leagues and Smart Voter volunteers as it becomes available.

Welcome New Members!

Toni Shellen was born and raised in Oakland, California. She went to San Jose State and earned a BA and Teaching Credential. She taught in Fremont until she retired. She is the ex-chair of local Democratic Forum and an active member of Pax Christi, Fremont. Currently she is the president of Tri-City Alameda Brady Campaign. She likes to spend time with her family especially her 6 grandsons and one on the way. She joined the League of women Voters because she truly believes in what the League stands for “Democracy is not a spectator sport!” Welcome Toni!!!

Marsha Parker was born in Pensacola, Florida. Her father was a Navy Aviator so she moved at least every two years, growing up mostly in coastal areas (East Coast and West Coast). She received her B.A in Social Sciences from CSU, Chico, teaching credentials from CSU, Fresno, MS in Educational Leadership from CSU, East Bay. Marsha taught about 25 years in different places and the last 7 years she was a principle at Mattos Elementary until she retired in 2011. She became active politically after retiring and saw the good works League was doing by educating the public about election issues. She is very concerned about the voter suppression laws that are taking effect in other states and the push to erode women’s rights. Marsha loves to travel, takes yoga and zumba classes, belongs to Book Club and women’s hiking group and many more.

Interview with Supervisor Richard Valle

Valle sees the county budget impact on children and families as probably the most severe. He is waiting to see the detailed itemized budget before making any decisions about allocations. He is also waiting for the results of the Human Impact Hearing.

Realignment: he is worried that Oakland seems to get more per capita sales tax income than the other areas in the county. He feels funds should be equity based. He meets separately once a month with the Tri City mayors to get their feedback.

Affordable Health Care Act: Alex Briscoe is working with Lori Cox the Social Services to have access points throughout the county where residents can sign up. Contact Valle’s office for the list. He also said that there are funds available from Measure A for a school based health center like the one at Logan. There is already talk of reauthorizing Measure A in 2014.

Immigration: Valle does not support Secure Communities, the campaign to capture undocumented people by the Sheriff’s Dept. The only positive he sees is that they are seriously considering reform at the Federal level.

Transportation: Valle stated that the North/South transportation infrastructure is imbedded but more needs to be done with the East/West direction through out the Bay Area. He supports more money for public transportation and maintenance of existing systems. He would support Measure B if it included a sunset clause. The measure must include accountability to the voters.

Child Protective Services: He will speak with Lori Cox about a more efficient response to calls; also foster children, suicide in jails and mental health issues.

Affordable Housing: no solution offered at this time without redevelopment funds.

Interview with Congressman Honda

Conducted in April 2013

Understanding the diverse population in his new district is a priority for the Congressman. He sees Fremont as part of the regional entity we call Silicon Valley. Also in his district is the Berryessa area of San Jose and parts of Cupertino, Santa Clara and Sunnyvale.

Transportation: he supports more charging stations for electric cars and also Tesla's presence in south Fremont. He helped secure \$900 million in funding for BART to San Jose and wants enough funds to maintain the system. He thinks that if the public knows exactly what their money will buy, they will support bond measures.

Immigration: he is a strong supporter of immigration reform and helped pass the 1986 Amnesty Legislation. He sees this reform as a human rights issue and as an economic issue as well. He sees the benefits of harnessing the brainpower of talented immigrants. Overall immigration reform needs to be thoughtful, efficient and provide a pathway to citizenship. He supports the premise the Dream Act kids can become citizens. He believes in equal protection for all people regardless of sexual orientation.

Voting Rights Laws: As a co-signer of the Voter Improvement Act along with Rep. John Lewis, Rep. Honda says that voting rights laws should be inclusive, not exclusive.

He thinks that what some states are doing now is a sophisticated form of a poll tax. He thinks the Federal government should continue to challenge the constitutionality of exclusionary laws enacted by some states. To increase voter turnout he would like to see days designated for voting expanded while still respecting the Sabbath of various religious groups.

Gun Reform: Rep Honda said that the NRA gave him a 0% rating. He currently owns a gun and remembers spending time with his father target shooting as a boy. He wants more regulation and supports repeal of the Tiahrt Amendment.

Deficit: He supports a balanced approach to have revenue match expenditures. He thinks that since the spending on war was included in the budget (it was included in the budget as a supplementary item until recently) it has been much more difficult to find a balance. He authored a bill for a progressive budget that included trimming some defense spending along with decreasing corporate loopholes for companies doing business overseas. He would like to see the tax code restructured and is on the Task Force for the Budget and part of the Democratic Liberal Caucus. He supports fair trade, not free trade.

News from Our Three Cities

Union City – The Youth Commission is seeking teens to help give UC teens a voice. Play an active role in your community and have fun in the process. Earn community service hours and have fun in the process. Apply online at the city's web site.

Newark – Review the Draft General Plan Update and EIR on the city's web site or at the Newark Library or at the Community Development Office. This long-range plan provides a vision for Newark's future and a strategy for achieving that future.

Fremont – CareerBliss ranks Fremont in the top 10 of the happiest mid-size cities in America. The survey of thousands of workers measured employees' relationships with co-workers and bosses, work environment, job resources, compensation, company culture, and opportunities for growth.

Nov. 14	Action Group	12 Noon at League Office
Nov. 18	Ohlone College's President Dr. Gari Browning	7 P.M. League Meeting Room, 3375 Country Drive, Fremont
Nov. 20	Y VOTE CONTEST committee meeting	7 PM Miriam Keller's house
Dec. 2	Board Meeting	7 PM League Office
Dec. 9	Holiday Party and Potluck	6 P.M., Carolyn Hedgecock's House Contact Mary Miller for what to bring

ALL MEETINGS ARE FREE, OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND WHEEL CHAIR ACCESSIBLE

SAVE THE DATE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2014 9:30-2 PM

BAY AREA LEAGUE DAY

"A NEW VISION FOR OPEN SPACE"

MTC AUDITORIUM, 101 EIGHTH STREET, OAKLAND

LWVFNUC WILL PAY THE REGISTRATION FEE FOR MEMBERS WISHING TO ATTEND.

MEMBERS PAY FOR THEIR OWN LUNCH OR BROWN BAG IT.

THE MTC AUDITORIUM IS ADJACENT TO A B.A.R.T. STATION.

Mission

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

Diversity Policy

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

Join the LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS TODAY!

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

Name (s) _____

New Member Renewal

Transfer from _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

*Please make your check payable to:
LWVFNUC and mail it with this
form to:*

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Fremont, CA 94539

Individual Membership—\$60
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Donation to LWVFNUC

\$ _____

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