

CANDIDATE FORUM SCHEDULE

This year we are holding our candidate forums where the public can watch the live event and we can tape the proceedings for later broadcast. Please try to attend as many forums as you can to thank the candidates for taking part in the democratic process.

KICKOFF MEETING VOTER SERVICE



At our kickoff meeting, each League committee will explain their plans for the year and ask people to sign up. Don't be shy. Voter Service needs moderators, timers, question sorters and ushers. They also need people to hold registration drives, fill the red, white, and blue affidavit boxes in the Tri-Cities area and deliver pros and cons and Easy Voter Guides. People are also needed to deliver a pro or con talk on one of the twelve propositions that are on the November ballot. Voter Service also needs people to help with the Voter Information Booklet and with smartvoter.org.



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Education Committee will also be holding signups at the Kickoff meeting. We need new members. We keep losing our members as they are elected to school boards. We research issues at the State level and at individual school boards. We ran a media contest for high school students last year and need to use the results of that contest in the upcoming election.

ACTION COMMITTEE

This committee is where the action is. We have been studying the A's project and the Patterson Ranch Project. Our members eventually become specialists on various topics such as housing, transportation, budgets, state and local finances and healthcare. Observers are needed to attend local agency meetings and report to the Action Committee. It's a great group of people and you will learn lots.



CABLE COMMITTEE

It's fun putting on a cable program from scratch. We find the issues, do the research, write a script, find knowledgeable guests and then do all the technical jobs to produce a program. New members are always welcome. Sign up at the kickoff.



HOMEOWNERS COMMITTEE



Homeowners' Association sometimes have controversy with their elections. The League is available to hold efficient, transparent and legal elections for these groups. If you are interested, sign up at the kickoff.

You can't sign up easily if you don't come. Attend our opening public meeting of the new school year. Get involved. The more you do, the more knowledgeable you will become. Democracy is not a spectator sport.

Smoke Season: California Wildfires Pollute Bay Area Air

By Chris Ingraham

Perhaps you saw it. Sometime toward the end of June, at midday, the sky reflected a reddish glow, not unlike the colors you see at dusk. You might even have found it beautiful. But you didn't see an early sunset or renegade fireworks. What you saw, if you saw it at all (residents of the northern Bay Area counties were advised to stay inside) was the residual smoke and pollution from some of the over 2,000 individual wildfires that have burned or are still burning across California this summer.

Firefighters and policy makers statewide have known for months that, after the relatively dry winter and spring, this summer would be an especially fire-prone season. They were right. Although the nine-county Bay Area has yet to be hit this summer with particularly calamitous fires, areas in outlying communities have suffered severe fire damage, resulting in secondary effects to the Bay Area that put air quality at an annual low.

Typically, and perhaps rightly, talk of wildfires focuses on the extent of a fire's physical damage: on the fire's acreage, on the severity of its scarring to the landscape, and then on containment and (if necessary) evacuation of endangered residents. But the effects of a bad fire can be felt hundreds of miles from the nearest flame, as smoke contaminates the air and travels as wildly and uncontrollably as fire travels over dry land. In fact, it's often harder to predict the extent and course of air pollutants than it is to estimate the extent and course of a fire itself. What this means is extra work for groups like the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, which is responsible for issuing warnings about air quality throughout the Bay Area.

The Air District regulates the activities of stationary sources of air pollution, such as factories and power plants, in order to attempt more effectively to control the region's quality of air. Poor air quality can pose serious dangers to health and threaten our quality of life. As "beautiful" as a midday sunset may

be, it also means shortness of breath, coughing fits and general respiratory discomfort for some people, along with potential unnoticed, invisible damage to our lungs and respiratory system. For people who suffer from asthma or similar ailments, an especially polluted day can seriously aggravate their symptoms. And for people with serious respiratory conditions, overexposure to polluted air at the levels we're seeing this summer could not only lead to hospitalization, it could even be life-threatening.

Most of the wildfire smoke that has polluted the Bay Area has come from afar, but even for wildfires within the region, there is little the Air District can do by way of prevention. Unlike a contained fire, which might burn in the relative safety of a fireplace, for example, wildfires are mobile and unpredictable. Regional park districts and forest services, along with the statewide Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, are charged with the job of creating awareness and combating the dangers of wildfires across California. Aside from urging safe recreation (no matches, no illegal campfires, etc.), thinning forests, conducting periodic controlled-burns, or fighting the aberrant case of arson, these groups are more or less resigned to the idea that preventing wildfires is impossible, because wildfires are considered to be naturally occurring events tied to seasonal climatic changes.

Recent attention to the climate crisis affecting the whole planet raises issues about what we can do, both individually and as shapers of public policy, to reduce the likelihood or severity of future fires. From an air quality standpoint, however, the Air District is simply left with repeating an inversion of an old adage: where there's fire, there's smoke — so stay away!

In a typical year, ozone levels are highest during the summer, since it is created in a photochemical reaction involving heat and sunlight, and builds up over the course of long, sunny days. Levels of particulate matter are conversely highest during the winter, when the cold weather inspires more people to use their fireplaces, and temperature inversions trap air close to the ground. The California wildfires, however, put particulate matter into the air at levels typically associated with win-

ter. This combination of unseasonably high particulates with summer ozone has posed a unique threat to people's lungs.

Over the last full week of June and the first full week of July, smoke from blazes in Big Sur, Lake County, Mendocino County, and other locations drifted to the Bay Area, prompting the Air District to issue a series of health advisories. Essentially, these recommended reducing exposure to smoke and curtailing outdoor activity by children, adults who usually exercise or work vigorously outside, and people with respiratory disease. The smoke created unhealthy breathing conditions, as indicated by the Air Quality Index, the Environmental Protection Agency's color-coded system used by the Air District for rating daily pollution concentrations of ozone and two sizes of particulate matter, as well as carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and sulfur dioxide (see box below).

The Air District has already issued an unprecedented number of wildfire-smoke-based health advisories this summer. These advisories, which each lasted about a week, began on May 23, June 23, and July 8, and were issued in addition to the eight Spare the Air advisories put out this summer due to high ozone levels. While the situation has stabilized in recent weeks, wildfires can commonly flare up all the way through October, so more advisories may be forthcoming. Residents can stay informed as to future developments by calling 1-800-HELP-AIR or visiting www.sparetheair.org, the website for the Air District's Spare the Air program. In addition to daily forecasted AQI readings for the entire Bay Area, the website offers pollution-reduction tips as well as information on avoiding needless exposure to air pollution and smoke.



Rural firefighters dewatering a fire near native bush.

THE BUDGET BATTLE

Anne Henderson, LWVC State and Local Finances Program Director

The six-person budget conference committee, composed of two Democrats and one Republican from each house of the legislature, has completed its work on the Governor's revised budget. Although the lion's share of the budget was agreed to by both sides, significant differences remain along party lines.

The Big Four, the leaders of the Senate and Assembly from both parties, have been meeting to discuss those differences, but they are not expected to be resolved quickly. The differences are the familiar ones. Democrats call for increased revenues to maintain programs, particularly those protecting the poor, elderly and disabled, and for restoring some education funding. The Republicans insist there should be more cuts, resist new revenues, and call for changes that would put new restrictions on the budget process.

The Democratic majority has agreed to about \$6 billion in cuts, but say they want more than \$9.7 billion in added revenues to close the \$15.2 billion shortfall the state is facing. The Republican minority has said they might consider closing some tax loopholes and has hinted that they might be open to some revenues.

Neither side likes the Governor's proposal to fill the gap by borrowing against potential increases in the state lottery. That proposal would have to be put on the November ballot, and the Governor has suggested a backup provision in the measure for a 1 percent temporary increase in the sales tax in the event the lottery proposal were rejected.

The Democrats are proposing to get \$5.6 billion through a package of tax increases similar to those that were approved on a temporary basis by Governor Pete Wilson in a previous crisis but expired in 1996. It would raise the top income brackets, for joint incomes between \$321,000 and \$642,000 from 9.3 percent to 10 percent, and for incomes above that to 11 percent. (In addition, an existing 1 percent surcharge on incomes over \$1 million would remain in effect.) It would also restore the corporate tax to its pre-1997 rate of 9.3 percent from the current 8.84 percent. Another \$2.6 billion would be realized from changes in the ability to write off net operating losses and a tax amnesty program expected to accelerate collection of back taxes.

Republicans are so far playing it close to the vest on revenues and continue to say there should be more cuts. Senate Minority Leader Dave Cogdill did tell the Sacramento Press Club recently that Republicans might consider some increases if they are "revenue neutral" in the long run. They have also said they will demand changes to the budget process that would require more money to be set aside in reserves and limit revenue increases to only enough to cover inflation and population growth. The Governor has proposed a plan that would include those features, but would also give a Governor broad power to make budget cuts without legislative approval.

Assembly Speaker Karen Bass, while agreeing reserves should be increased, has spoken strongly against measures that would restrict future legislatures' ability to raise revenues



for services that can provide improvements California's citizens want and need and enable our vision of a better future. She has also proposed a new commission to recommend reforms to the budget process that would put California on a sounder financial footing. However, the commission would not be formed until after the current budget is passed.

In his May Revision to the state budget proposal, Governor Schwarzenegger also proposed a Tax Modernization Commission to modernize the state's tax laws and better reflect the current economy.

Republicans rightly point out that the income and corporate taxes Democrats want to raise are subject to sharp fluctuations reflecting changes in the economy. However, remedying that would require new revenues that are more broadly based and less subject to economic ups and downs, and so far they have shown little interest in those sources. In the end, there are likely to be cuts and reduced services that will affect all Californians and especially hurt those at the bottom income levels, who once again will be asked to forego cost of living increases. If the present battle lines hold, it is also likely that we will again turn to borrowing from special funds, such as the increased gasoline and diesel sales taxes that have resulted from higher gas prices. Such borrowing, of course, will have to be repaid with interest. —LWVC

PRAISE FOR SMART VOTER.ORG

Thank you, thank you, thank you for the "My Ballot" so that I found my polling place effortlessly! ... I found exactly what I needed and then some. Not only did it tell me where to go, I was able to just as easily get the directions from my house without having to go to MapQuest on my own. Maybe the unfortunate part is that our world has gotten so hasty, but at least the League of Women Voters realizes this and is saving the day! Thank you! - *San Joaquin County*

Just wanted to say great website. For the past 3 years I have used it for every election in my district. I especially love the Ballot Measures Analysis. It has helped me make more informed decisions. I always recommend your site to anyone that I know who votes or are unsure of a ballot measure. Keep up the great work!!! --*Los Angeles County*

Thank you for the LWV website and its recent enhancements. I have become a much more informed voter. As usual the LWV information is neutral and designed to INFORM, rather than PERSUADE. The audio clips of KPCC's pro/con sessions have been especially helpful. They are a welcome change from the awful "shout politics" which has become so common. Thanks again! Please keep up the good work. --*Orange County*

This is a great site...easy to navigate....well done! :-) --*Orange County*

...Wish more candidates would give more information. Might be nice to have some questions and responses to issues posed by the League (similar to at forums) posted. --*Marin County*

...I am interested in volunteering time to help this organization...--*Fresno County*

TELL YOUR FRIENDS

Go to SmartVoter.org for great information about candidates, measures, polling places and much much more.



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
RECOMMENDS

NOVEMBER 4, 2008 GENERAL ELECTION

PROP 1 High-Speed Rail Bonds Decision Pending

This \$9.95 billion bond act would partially fund a high-speed rail project segment between Los Angeles and San Francisco. Federal grants and public-private partnerships would be needed to fund the remainder of the total project cost (\$40 billion, including additional segments). Providing a transportation option that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and lessens the need to expand highways and airports is worthwhile. The high cost and financial uncertainties pose a problem. Legislation to require a new business plan, peer review, and other accountability provisions and to allow funding to be used for other segments was pending at the time of our review.

PROP 3 Children's Hospital Bond Act SUPPORT

Proposition 3 authorizes \$980 million in bonds to fund children's hospitals. These regional centers provide specialized care for children with serious illnesses or injuries without regard to a family's ability to pay. They treat the majority of California's low-income children. Eighty percent of the proceeds would go to eight nonprofit children's hospitals and 20 percent to University of California children's hospitals. Prop 3 will address escalating construction costs and improve health care access for children who are indigent, uninsured, underinsured or eligible for government health programs.

PROP 4 Waiting Period and Parental Notification before Termination of Minor's Pregnancy OPPOSE

Prop 4 requires a physician to notify the parent of a pregnant minor before performing an abortion. Mandatory notification laws may sound good but, in the real world, they put the health and safety of teens in danger. A frightened, pregnant teen who can't go to her parents may choose an unsafe, illegal abortion, or even contemplate suicide, instead of seeking the counseling and safe medical care she needs. Parents rightfully want to be involved in their teenagers' lives, but good family communication can't be imposed by government. California voters have rejected this proposal twice, but proponents have put it on the ballot again, adding more unreasonable provisions.

PROP 5 Nonviolent Drug Offenses. Sentencing, Parole and Rehabilitation SUPPORT

Proposition 5 would require the state to expand treatment and rehabilitation for nonviolent drug offenders and parolees, and reduce the criminal consequences of nonviolent offenses. Additional costs of treatment would be offset by reductions in prison and parole operating costs, as well as in the need for capital outlay for prison facilities. The League's study of juvenile justice affirmed the need to give funding priority to prevention, early intervention and rehabilitation.

PROP 6 Police and Law Enforcement Funding. Criminal Penalties and Laws (Runner Initiative) OPPOSE

This measure requires that nearly \$1 billion annually in state general funds be used for designated local law enforcement and probation programs. This will mean an increase of \$500 million a year for these programs and for operating prison and parole systems, and a \$500 million capital outlay for prison facilities. The League opposes the further restriction on the ongoing use of general funds. Harmful policy changes in this initiative include prosecuting more 14-year-olds as adults and giving counties less flexibility in the use of drug and mental health funds for juveniles.

PROP 7 Renewable Energy Generation

OPPOSE

Proposition 7 requires all utilities, including government-owned utilities, to generate 50 percent of their power from renewable energy by 2025. While the League supports a renewable energy target, we feel this is too optimistic to be achieved, and well beyond the targets for implementing the landmark greenhouse-gas emissions reduction law, AB 32. Moreover, Prop 7 is poorly drafted. Experts say it will not achieve its stated goals and will actually disrupt the development of renewable power. It will force small renewable energy companies out of California's market and cause higher energy bills.

PROP 8 Eliminates Right of Same-Sex Couples to Marry

OPPOSE

This proposed limitation of marriage as only between a man and a woman infringes on the equal rights that should be available to all people. The California Supreme Court has concluded that there is a "fundamental constitutional right to form a family relationship." The League opposed Proposition 22 in 2000 and continues to oppose such limits on the basic civil rights that should be guaranteed to all Californians.

PROP 9 Criminal Justice System. Victims' Rights. Parole

OPPOSE

Proposition 9 would expand the legal rights of crime victims in various ways and could undo many of the rights of prisoners and parolees to due process and speedy parole revocation hearings. This initiative asks voters to support victims' rights that are already protected under state law and is unnecessary.

PROP 10 Alternative Fuel Vehicles and Renewable Energy. Bonds

OPPOSE

This measure would authorize the sale of \$5 billion in general obligation bonds to provide rebates to purchasers of certain high fuel economy and alternative fuel vehicles, and to fund grants and other incentives for technology development. The League favors the use of bonds to finance capital expenditures or the purchase of property for public purposes. The purposes of this bond are not an appropriate use for state-issued, bond-generated revenues.

PROP 11 Redistricting Reform: California Voters FIRST Act

STRONG SUPPORT

It is an inherent conflict of interest for legislators to draw their own districts to guarantee their Re-election. Proposition 11 removes from the legislature the power to redraw district boundaries for the State Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization after each census. Instead, it provides for the appointment of a 14-member independent citizens commission to perform this process, establishes clear criteria for how the boundaries shall be drawn, and requires an open and transparent process with due notice, public hearings, and no communications outside of the hearings. This measure will hold politicians accountable and help stop the gridlock in Sacramento that keeps pressing issues from being addressed.

Because League positions do not cover the issues in Proposition 2, Standards for Confining Farm Animals, and Proposition 12, Veterans' Bond Act of 2008, the LWVC is taking no stand on these measures.

UPCOMING SMART VOTER .ORG ENHANCEMENTS AND NEW FEATURES

We have started work on enhancing the SmartVoter.org Web site to provide a friendlier and cleaner look and feel, and developing new SmartVoter.org features that are innovative, customized and interactive. If you are interested in providing us with suggestions or participating in our "beta" testing of these improvements, please e-mail Ernie Ting at the address below.

Ernie Ting, Smart Voter Senior Director
director@smartvoter.org

It's easy to JOIN the LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Any person, man or woman, who subscribes to the purpose and policy of the League may join. To be a voting member, one must be at least 18 years of age and a U.S. citizen

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

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

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

_____ Individual Membership - \$60 _____ Household - \$90 _____
 Donate to LWVFNUC \$ _____ Donate to Ed. Fund \$ _____ Total enclosed \$ _____

Name(s) _____ Phone _____

Address _____ 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: Sarabjit Cheema—sarabjitkaurcheema@yahoo.com

Mission Statement

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

Diversity Policy

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

LWVFNUC Voter

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PO Box 3218

Fremont, CA, 94539

510-794-5783

President: Syeda Yunus

Treasurer: Carolyn Hedgecock

Editor: Vesta Wilson

Office Hours:

The LWVFNUC office address is:

3375 Country Drive

Fremont, CA

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

WHO KNOWS?

Which country was first to grant full voting rights to women?

THE SUFFRAGIST MOVEMENT—the last of an ongoing series

1917 The Arkansas legislature grants women the right to vote in primary, but not general elections. The result of this partial suffrage is that white women win the vote, but black women do not.

Five Midwestern states and Rhode Island grant women the right to vote in presidential elections only.

New York state is the first eastern state to fully enfranchise women

1918 President Wilson issues a statement supporting a federal amendment to grant women's suffrage.

President Wilson addresses the Senate in support of the 19th amendment, but it fails to win the required 2/3 majority of Senate votes.

1919 Michigan Oklahoma, and South Dakota join the full suffrage states.

The National American Association holds its convention in St. Louis, where Catt rallies to transform the association to the **League of Women Voters.**

For the third time, the House votes to enfranchise women. The senate finally passes the 19th amendment, and suffragists begin their ratification campaign.

1920 In the case of *Hawk vs. Smith*, anti-suffragists file suit against the Ohio legislature, but the Supreme Court upholds the constitutionality of Ohio's ratification process.

Despite the political subversion of Anti-suffragists, particularly in Tennessee, three quarters of state legislatures ratify the nine tenth amendment on August 26. **American women win full voting rights.**



**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

Tune in to watch Alex Starr, interview Linda Craig. Topic:
Proposition 11—Redistricting.

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

Hayward, Channel 28, every Monday at 9:30 PM

Visit our website:
<http://www.lwvfnuc.org>
and Smart Voter
www.smartvoter.org

CALENDAR

Tues, Sept. 9	Folding Party	1PM	Cultural Arts Center
Thurs., Sept. 11	Action Committee	12:30 PM	Kay Emanuel's home
Fri., Sept. 12	Education Committee	9:30 AM	Miriam Keller's home
Sat, Sept. 13	Fremont General Plan Workshop: Climate Change and Sustainability	9:00 –12:30 PM	City Council Chambers
Mon., Sept. 15	Candidate Forums	7 ND 8 PM	Fremont City Council Chambers
Wed., Sept. 17	Candidate Forum	2:45 PM	Comcast Studios
Wed., Sept. 17	Cable Taping	2:00 PM	Comcast Studios
Thurs., Sept. 18	LWVFNUC Board Meeting	7:15 PM	Cultural Arts Center
Mon., Sept. 22	Candidate Forums	7:00 and 8:00 PM	Fremont City Council Chambers
Thurs., Sept. 25	Candidate Forums	7:00 PM and 8:15 PM	Ohlone Child Care Center
Tues., Sept. 30	Regular Meeting	7:00 PM	St. James Episcopal Church
Wed., Oct. 1	Candidate Forum	7:00 PM	New Haven Administrative Building