



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

# VOTER



## FREMONT, NEWARK & UNION CITY

Summer 2016



### **BART Warm Springs Station Tour June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

League members and their guests were treated to an extensive tour of the new Warm Springs BART station. Led by Molly McArthur we explored the rotunda at the entrance, the upstairs platform where a passenger enters the BART system and the new platform where the trains will arrive and depart. Unique tempered glass artwork on a grand scale lifted the terminal from an ordinary one to one reflecting Fremont’s landscape. The glass facing the bay featured blue glass with subtle bay life scenes. The glass facing the hills was green and the habitat for the hills below Mission Peak was illustrated. Decades in the planning the new station will be a welcome addition to the BART system, the new Warm Springs development area near Tesla and the southern end of Fremont.



### **Annual Meeting June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016 *Duties of Fair Political Practices Commission* Presenter: Phillip Ung**

Mr. Ung charmed his audience talking about the duties of the FPPC interspersed with humor and candor.

The FPPC is a five –member, independent non-partisan commission that has primary responsibility for the impartial and effective administration of the Political Reform Act. This act regulates campaign financing, conflicts of interest, lobbying and governmental ethics. The goal is to ensure that public officials act in a fair and unbiased way in governmental decision-making process. The FPPC also supports two goals of the League: transparency in government and fostering public trust in the political system.

## PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE



The essence of the League of Women Voters is exemplified in Margaret Mead's quote: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Hardworking, committed volunteers have done a dizzying array of civic engagement work throughout the fiscal year, many of whom were dealing with difficult personal challenges. During this time, we covered a broad range of topics and issues at our public forums and member meetings. On average, we held at least one public forum or member event per month starting with a kick-off meeting on the Higher Education Study in September.

Most of the public forums focused on the three major studies, LWVC – Higher Education Study, LWVUS Money in Politics Study, and the LWVUS Constitutional Convention/Amendment Study. The results will be posted on our website ([www.lwvfnuc.org](http://www.lwvfnuc.org)). We thank the leaders of the studies, Merna Morse and the constitutional convention/amendment committee, John Smith and the Money in Politics committee, Miriam Keller and the Higher Education Committee.

We extend grateful thanks to all the hard-working Board and off Board members for their dedication and consistent service. One of the most memorable highlights of this year was a partnership project with the Alameda County Registrar of Voters. Our League members registered over 1100 students at the high schools in our area! We applaud Setsuko Amann, Voter Service VP and voter service committee members for this outstanding achievement and look forward to working with the registrar's office to continue to foster voter participation.

Our League is very fortunate to have so many active and committed members, who volunteer generously of their time and efforts. We have not been able to mention everyone but we acknowledge that each and everyone of you who even attends just one meeting or convinces one person to register and to vote, contributes towards the mission of the League of Women Voters. We invite all of you to spread the message of the League and join us to ensure that we the people are the real owners of our democracy.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Officers

Co-Presidents	Syeda Inamdar Pauline Weaver <a href="mailto:president@lwvfnuc.org">president@lwvfnuc.org</a>
VP Administration VP Program	Miriam Keller Sets Amann <a href="mailto:program@lwvfnuc.org">program@lwvfnuc.org</a>
VP Voter Service	Carolyn Hedgecock Anu Natarajan <a href="mailto:voterservice@lwvfnuc.org">voterservice@lwvfnuc.org</a>
Secretary	Mary Miller
Treasurer	Peter Starr

### Directors

Membership Voter Editor	Evelyn La Torre Alex Starr <a href="mailto:voteredit@lwvfnuc.org">voteredit@lwvfnuc.org</a>
At Large	Kathy Bray
At Large	Sam Neeman
At Large	Alice Johnson
At Large	Sophia Liu
At Large	Susan Lemke

### Off Board

Action Group, Chair	Alex Starr <a href="mailto:action@lwvfnuc.org">action@lwvfnuc.org</a>
Communications/Media	Sam Neeman <a href="mailto:publicity@lwvfnuc.org">publicity@lwvfnuc.org</a>
Education Cmte. Chair	Miriam Keller
Webmaster/Db Admin	Peter Starr <a href="mailto:webmaster@lwvfnuc.org">webmaster@lwvfnuc.org</a>
Nominating Cmte.	Andrea Schacter, Chair Kathy-Steele Sabo Kathy Bray

**Pauline Weaver's Report from the LWVUS convention -** A ballroom filled with women and men all committed to voter education, registration, community activism and keeping officials feet to the fire - that was the LWVUS Convention! What a heady experience it was. The days were very long, from 7:30am to 9pm or later, but very productive. Although as Elizabeth McNamara reminded us, she found some old minutes which indicated that the then-President was convening a plenary session at 10pm! You have a report on the technical aspects of the Convention, so I won't reiterate that, but the whole Convention was so inspiring and energizing! That you all for the opportunity to go. Next time (2018), the Convention will be in Chicago. I do hope more of us will be able to go. Pauline

## LWVUS 2016 Convention

A personal report from Pauline Weaver will appear in the September VOTER. Here is a brief summary of some of the actions taken at the convention.

### Resolutions passed:

- **Motion** approved on a resolution on gun safety to support restoration of funding for gun violence research at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
- **Motion** to continue long standing position on Gun Control:  
*The League of Women of the United States believes that the proliferation of handguns and semi-automatic assault weapons in the United States is a major health and safety threat to its citizens. The League supports strong federal measures to limit the accessibility and regulate ownership of these weapons by private citizens. The League supports regulating firearms for consumer safety.*  
  
*The League supports licensing procedures for gun ownership by private citizens to include a waiting period for background checks, personal identity verification, gun safety education and annual license renewal. The license fee should be adequate to bear the cost of education and verification.*  
*The League supports a ban on "Saturday night specials", enforcement of strict penalties for the improper possession of and crimes committed with handguns and assault weapons, and allocation of resources to better regulate and monitor gun dealers.*
- **Motion** that the League of Women Voters of the United States will make statehood for the people of the District of Columbia a legislative priority.
- **Motion** that the LWVUS consider signing onto an Amicus Brief with the 21 youth plaintiffs from Our Children's Trust.
- **Motion** that LWVUS support the United States ratification of the UN COP 21 Paris Agreement.
- **Motion** that the LWVUS should continue working for full implementation of the EPA Clean Power Plan, especially at the state level, as a first step, and should call on the White House to implement an updated science-based Climate Action Plan that stabilizes global warming by bringing CO2 levels down to no more than 350 ppm by 2100.

- Adoption of two bylaws amendments regarding membership:
  - The first removed the citizenship requirement for League membership.
  - The second reduced the age requirement to 16.
- Dues: motion approved to raise PMP for the 2016-2018 Biennium to \$32

### The New Officers are:

- Chris Carson, president
- Karen Nicholson, vice president
- Toni Zimmer, secretary
- Henrietta Saunders, treasurer

### The Directors are:

- Maribel Balbin
- Amy Hjerstedt
- Kim Lauth
- Anita Loch
- Jessica Lowe-Minor
- Brenda Rogers
- Jessica Rohloff
- Deborah Turner

### Speeches:

- A speech from the new LWVUS CEO Dr. Wylecia Wiggs Harris emphasized the need for change and engagement as we look to the League's 100th anniversary in 2010.
- A speech from the new President Chris Carson (from CA) also emphasized change and engagement from the LWVUS perspective:
  - To increase civic engagement in key constituencies, we will work with the state and local Leagues to:
  - Protect the electoral process from restrictive measures that make it more difficult for citizens to cast their ballots;
  - Register and educate voters on key issues;
  - Reform redistricting processes to give equal weight to voters' ballots, regardless of where or for whom they are cast and
  - Reduce the corrupting influence of money in politics.

## Annual Reports from Board

### Report of Membership Chair Evelyn LaTorre

Evelyn LaTorre's report of her first year as membership chair reflects the many ways a League member can participate. In addition to welcoming 9 new members, arranging for an orientation for new members, greeting everyone at open meetings and sending out letters to prospective members, Evelyn participated in the July 4<sup>th</sup> parade, counted ballots for a HOA election and participated in the Higher Ed study.

Our membership chair arranged for Dr. Bruce Cain to be our kick-off meeting speaker, with John Smith interviewed state representatives Kansen Chu and Bob Wieckowski, and registered to vote 207 Washington High School students in conjunction with the ROV. Evelyn also prodded board members to help re-enroll late-paying or inactive members. Our final total was 108 members. Congratulations Evelyn on a successful first year!

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### Report of Program Chair Ellen Culver

Ellen Culver completed her successful term as Program Planning chair by arranging for interesting meetings for this past year. Being a true Leaguer Ellen shared her duties by asking other Leaguers to help out when she was out of town. September's meeting was a full discussion of the state study on California's Higher Education led by Eleanor Yick. In October Dr. Bruce Cain offered us a scholarly view of Money in Politics. November found us looking at the Constitutional Convention / Amendment study sponsored by LWVUS. December we celebrated with our usual Holiday Party and Program Planning event. January found us deep into the consensus meeting for Money in

Politics. In February we could choose to attend Bay Area League Day whose topic was *Reinventing Bay Area Transportation for the 21st Century* and also closer to home listen to Dr. Noam Cook speak about "Higher Education in Crisis." A special member meeting in March found us enjoying homemade soup before tackling the consensus for the Higher Education Study. April featured a movie about "*Electoral Dysfunction*". In May we presented for the public a Pro/Con discussion of the FUSD parcel tax. The annual meeting topped off the year with Philip Ung from the California Fair Political Practices Commission. With good humor and solid facts he explained to us their myriad functions

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### Report of Administrative Vice President Miriam Keller

This job holder oversees the League office and League office functions. Assisted by Jean Holmes, who collects and distributes the mail and Kathy Bray, who answers our telephone, Miriam chaired the state study on Higher Education, conducted the December Program Planning meeting and "twisted Merna Morse's arm to head the US study on Constitutional Amendment or Convention.". Since there was no specific fundraising event to chair, Miriam also helped Voter Service with our Voters Edge website (with help from Sam Neeman) urging candidates to take part in Voters Edge.

Having too much time on her hands (not!) Miriam worked at the polls and by tradition donated her wages to the League. She also spoke before the Fremont City Council during Sunshine Week reminding them that a large development with 785 units, 326 K square feet of commercial space including a hotel and restaurant was approved by the Council on the consent calendar without saying a word to the public!!!

## Treasurer's Report Peter Starr

Peter Starr continues to serve as LWVFNUC Treasurer as he has for a number of years. Considering the fact that we have almost \$37,000 in cash deposits with the Fremont Bank, we still have to be concerned about the nearly \$3,800 deficit appearing on our 2015-2016 Financial Statements. This is an almost \$6,000 change from last year's \$2,000 surplus. 2015-2016 being an off-election year, no revenue was generated from the Voter Information Book (VIB).

We are experiencing continued increases in LWVUS and LWVC per Member Payments (PMP). PMP currently consumes all our revenue from dues. With this in mind, the Board will be considering an increase in our membership dues. In addition, we hope that we can match or exceed the \$8,000 in VIB revenue we received during the last election year.

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## Action Group Alex Starr

The name Action Group connotes many things. First and foremost is our watchdog role. We provide observers to local elected bodies and sometimes to planning commissions, **IF** we can find a volunteer. That is really a critical point.

If you can attend or watch at home a regularly scheduled meeting we would love it! You don't even have to attend our monthly meetings if it is not convenient. Just write up a few sentences about what you observed and share it with us. This is critical to our watchdog role.

From this role we write up testimony to elected bodies about their transparency or lack of it, about their informing the public about what an agenda item is about, about the consequences of their votes on any given item.

Sometimes we watch or observe for months with no action needed. Sometimes it only takes one meeting for us to take action.

This past year Action Group has also initiated or helped voter service and also with the selection of programs. Sets Amann was the initiator of the very successful program of registering high school students in our Tri-City area. Working with the Registrar of Voters office our League volunteers arranged for presentations where we registered over 1,100 high school students! Miriam led the charge for training for Voter's Edge, the newer, more complete version of Smart Voter.

We presented testimony to the Union Sanitary District and Alameda County Water District urging more transparency and encouraged the taping of meetings. We chastised the Fremont City Council for voting to approve a 700 unit complex on the consent calendar without any public input. We also supported testimony to the Fremont City Council alerting them to the restriction put on us by the city manager for future candidate forums for no audience.

We interviewed newly elected local officials on a getting-to-know you basis to find out what was on their minds and to introduce the League and our processes to them.

We recommended to the board that they support the FUSD parcel tax. We also asked that the new nominating committee look to fill board positions with actual job descriptions and have fewer at-large members. Worker bees are needed!

We critiqued ourselves about the consensus meeting on Money in Politics and decided we could do a better job.

Reluctantly we decided we did not have enough volunteers to run another Y Voter contest. We did start the process for another Voter Information Book.



## Moderator Training August 12th

**Join seasoned moderators at Marilyn Singer's home** on August 12th at 7 P.M. for a fun and fact filled training session. With many candidate forums scheduled for the Fall, we want to encourage new members to try their hand at moderating a forum.

We will have a role playing session featuring that terrible, role-playing twosome, John-the obnoxious-candidate Smith and Sophia the loud-unruly-first-time candidate Liu. Learn from tried and true moderators how to handle this terrible-twosome!!

To help you in the learning process wine will be served along with wise words and tips from current moderators. You will learn how to prepare a script.

**What is the role of a League moderator?** The role of the moderator can be that of a referee or host for an exchange of ideas between candidates.

The moderator introduces the participants, explains the format and procedures of the forum, identifies whose turn it is to speak, ensures fairness, and maintains decorum. The moderator should be a League member who has attended forums in the past and, preferably, has had some formal training or has participated in previous forums in some capacity.

Candidate forums are a vital part of the League's Voter Service Education Program. You will find that the audience - and the candidates - are very appreciative of the League volunteers who conduct our forums. It is a very educational and very rewarding experience.

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Editor Alex Starr

Wed., Aug 3	VIB Organizational Meeting	10:00 AM League Office 3375 Country Drive
Fri., Aug 12	Moderator Training	7:00 PM Marilyn Singer's Home

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

**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 Evelyn La Torre, Membership Chair, for information.

Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

New Member       Renewal  
 Transfer from \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**OR GO ONLINE AT LWVFNUC.ORG!**

*LWVFNUC is a 501 (c) (3) Organization. Please make your check payable to: LWVFNUC and mail it with this form to:*

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Individual Membership—\$60  
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Donation      \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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