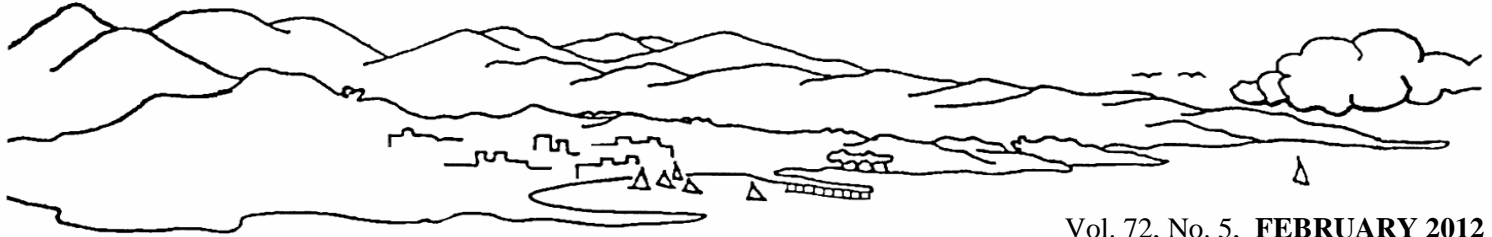




CHANNEL VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA

Serving South Santa Barbara County



Vol. 72, No. 5, FEBRUARY 2012

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February Community Forum: Does Your Vote Really Count? League Explores Election Controversies

Wednesday, February, 15, 2012 - 12 to 2 p.m.
Louise Lowry Davis Center, 1232 De La Vina St.

Attacks are underway to manipulate, eliminate and distort the will of voters in America. How? Well, join us for a lively discussion at our February forum at which four of these current issues will be dissected.

- (1) Voter Suppression. Legislative techniques to turn away voters at the polls, referred to as voter suppression, are galloping throughout the country. Photo identification cards, proof of birth or other documentation may be required of voters— the poor and the elderly are disproportionately impacted by such measures. The League and the courts have NOT reacted favorably to these restrictions— come hear more.
- (2) The National Popular Vote. The National Popular Vote bill would guarantee the Presidency to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states. Come hear how the current system has failed us and how a new popular vote amendment enacted by each State will circumvent an antiquated constitutional requirement.
- (3) California Initiative and Referendum Study. We will also discuss the status of the LWVC update

study to analyze the California Initiative and Referendum processes, which have often been misused and abused by special interests. Measure “J”, or the Pardon Project to drill onshore oil wells in Carpinteria, is an example of a corporation using the initiative process to eliminate any governmental restrictions, conditions of approval or oversight for a clearly impacting project. This was the first of its kind and the initiative failed, that time.

- (4) Status of the Redistricting Initiative. Will all the hard work of the CA Redistricting Commission be overturned? Status of this possibility will be discussed.

The League is not only a trusted resource for unbiased information on elections such as SmartVoter, but also serves as a bulwark against threats to voting rights, democratic process, and fair government.

Keynote speakers will be announced. There will be time for questions and answers. Bring your own brown bag lunch; cookies and beverages will be provided. The forum is free and open to the public. Parking is also free.

*Jane Benefield, Director-at-Large,
Observer Corps*

Climate Change - How Does It Affect Us? Topic for February Discussion Units

California has led the nation in passing legislation intended to reduce the tons of greenhouse gases that are poured into the atmosphere and cause disastrous changes in the world climate. Cap and trade, low carbon fuel – many elements of the state’s plan sound like things that someone else must work out.

However, the local Sustainable Communities Strategy now required by the state is an element that we on the South Coast must develop. Each governmental entity in the area is responsible for working out a plan that integrates transportation, land use and housing so that vehicle miles traveled are minimized. This

Continued on page 3

Passing The Torch

"There are some dedicated workers in the League. When they do something, they do it." That's what Herb Linville had to say about his long experience in the League of Women Voters. He could just as well have been describing himself. Herb has been heading up the Channel Voter and other LWVSB mailings such as the Directory, Garden Party invitations and membership renewal notices for twenty years. At its annual Garden Party in 2009 the League honored him for his dedication and hard work. Now he is ready to pass the torch.



It takes a team of four or five people about one and a half to two hours to complete the CV mailing, including labeling and sealing the newsletters (if folding is required, add another two hours). In addition to leading the team, Herb's responsibilities include coordinating with the CV Editor, picking up the pieces at the printer, taking them to the Post Office when prepared, staying up to date on sorting requirements and other Post Office policies and procedures, and providing a report to the Treasurer on postage paid. If you are interested in taking the torch – and fulfilling a much-needed and highly valued service for the League.

Jan O'Dowd is also passing the torch. In the Fall of 2001, she established a Mentor Program for new members to replace orientation meetings that had formerly been offered. Since then she has managed the program and recruited about 30 mentors,

contacted (or tried to contact) approximately 300 new members, and assigned a mentor to about 50 mentees. I myself was a beneficiary of her efforts. My mentor, Irene Stone took me to lunch, explained the unique intricacies and opportunities of the League, and gently nudged me to think about ways I could get more involved. She offered several ideas that fit my experience, which encouraged me to see that I had something to contribute.

With Jan's decision to discontinue the Mentor Program, we are reinstating member orientation meetings (March 3 at the League office) and establishing a Membership Committee. If you are interested in helping build our membership and make new members feel welcomed and engaged, consider joining this committee.

Please join me in thanking Herb and his team, Jan, and the many mentors for their efforts, which have contributed immeasurably to the knowledge and participation of LWVSB members. Each of these roles might be just the opportunity to attract a prospective League member. Think of your friends, family, and colleagues who are looking for something meaningful to do. Now who will carry those torches?

Beth Pitton-August, Co-President Program & Action

LWVSB Garden Party 2012

The League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara's 2012 Garden Party will honor our 39 male members as a group. Men now constitute 13.5% of our total membership and, whatever their level of involvement, are welcome and equal partners in the League's efforts.

The Garden Party still needs a chairperson and members. Whatever your interests and skills, there is something for you to do. Tasks include mailings and phone calls to prospective sponsors, outreach to elected officials/legislative liaisons for certificates of recognition, materials production and publicity, decorations, set-up and clean-up crew, reservation table (name tags and sign-in sheets), AV tech, and more. If you are interested in helping, please contact the league.

Many people may not know that the League of Women Voters, since the 1970s, has been open to men. In this time of economic, political, and social upheaval, we think it's also time to celebrate the fact that through the League, men and women are working together to promote informed and active participation in government, and making a difference.

We must acknowledge the fact that without men, women would not have finally, after many hard-fought battles, won the right to vote. With many battles ahead, particularly in this critical election year, let us honor and recognize that through the League, men and women are carrying on that legacy together.

For both men and women the League serves as a conduit for individual civic participation. Or it adds new depth to one's existing community endeavors. Through our Garden Party, we want to hear and celebrate the stories of what these men value about the League of Women Voters, what led them to join the League, and how they have been involved in League and community activities.

All League members are encouraged to take this opportunity to invite their male friends, family members, and colleagues (along with their partners) to join in our celebration - and join the League. The Garden Party itself will serve as a launching party for a membership drive that recognizes and promotes the power of men and women working together in League.

Beth Pitton-August, Co-President Program & Action

The Channel Voter is published eight times a year, monthly except for January, June, July, and August, by the League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara, 328A E. Carrillo St., Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

Email: info@lwvsantabarbara.org • **Web:** <http://lwvsantabarbara.org>

Fight Back Against Citizens United

Today you have an important opportunity to take an essential first step to fight back against *Citizens United* and the deregulation of the campaign finance system.

We need real campaign finance reform, and getting President Obama to nominate new commissioners to do their duty and enforce campaign finance laws is a good place to start. We need to gather 25,000 signatures of support by Feb. 10. We need to urge the President to clean house at the Federal Election Commission (FEC).

Already in this important election year, new Super PACs are flooding elections with huge expenditures from million-dollar donors. Because they are supposedly independent from the candidates, and with new loopholes from the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision, Super PACs can raise and spend unlimited amounts from corporations and individuals,

and they can do so with limited disclosure.

While there are different avenues that can be taken to fight back against *Citizens United* and cut the influence of special interests, you can join us by taking the first step today by urging President Obama to appoint new commissioners to the FEC. Among other duties, the FEC can define what election efforts are independent from the candidates.

The FEC is supposed to be the agency that enforces campaign finance laws, but it is dysfunctional. Of the six commissioners at the agency, three of them staunchly refuse to enforce the law, and five of the six are serving despite expired terms. It is time to clean house. Don't just sign it yourself; post the petition on Facebook, Tweet about it and forward this note to all of your friends. Together we can make sure that the citizen's voice is heard.

Continued on Page 4

Coming Your Way: The Privatization Study

Plans for the League's national study of privatization are coming into focus. The March and April units, plus the March forum, will be informational and will consider the consensus questions.

Our study packet includes the following:

Scope of the Study:

1. The study is to identify those parameters of policy issues to be considered in connection with proposals to transfer federal, state and local government services, assets and functions to the private sector.
2. It will review the goals and impacts on the community.
3. It will identify strategies to insure transparency for the common good

Various Forms of Privatization:

1. Contracting. Typically, competitive bidding by private bidders to perform a government activity.
2. Transfer. A government may transfer assets or responsibilities to a private entity.
3. Managed Competition Process permits an agency such as the highway department to submit a proposal and bid to compete with a private entity.

Criteria for sustainable management of a common pool resource such as water. (An incomplete list)

1. Clear and accepted boundaries of group using the resource.
2. Rules governing use match local conditions.
3. Those affected can modify the rules.
4. Accountability.
5. The users have long term tenure rights that are widely accepted.
6. Means for dispute resolution.

The consensus questions will be in the March Channel Voter. Save this article and the questions. Background papers and more information online at <http://www.lwvmcva.org/PrivatizationStudy/>. This is an easy-to-use website from a local League in Virginia. On that site, near the bottom of the "Pages" list on the right side, click on "Other LWV Groups" for some important materials, including LWV California's Privatization Checklist and LWV Seattle's report from their 2009 Study on Privatization.

Pat Shewczyk, Director, Water

February Discussion Units - *Continued from Page 1*

concept is not new to us; witness the disputes during the development of Plan Santa Barbara over reducing the number of commuters vs. building large condo-complexes. The eastern Goleta Valley has also struggled with the problem where it centered on the possible loss of agricultural lands.

- Will we need to change our concepts of how people want to, or should, live?
- If more people live on the South Coast instead of in Ventura or Lompoc with long commutes, do we have sufficient resources – water, traffic capacity, open space and ag lands – to accommodate them?

Come to a February unit meeting (see Calendar on back page for dates) and join the discussion of these and related questions. Members of our committee will be present to facilitate.

Jean Holmes, Sustainable Communities Committee

UPDATE: Help put the SAFE California Initiative on the Ballot To Replace Death Penalty in California

As we told you in the last Channel Voter, LWVC has asked us to sign and circulate the petition for the SAFE California Initiative – the Savings, Accountability, and Full Enforcement for California Act. The SAFE California Act will replace California's death penalty with a sentence of life in prison with no chance of parole as the maximum punishment for murder.

This means convicted killers will remain behind bars forever – with no risk of executing an innocent person. Some of the millions saved by ending the death penalty would be invested in catching more killers and rapists. See December's article for more details, go to www.lwvc.org, or contact me.

All petitions must be returned to the state Campaign Head-

quarters by Feb. 15, or bring them to the LWVSB office before then so we can mail them in for you. You can help us by:

- Turning in ALL petitions on which you've collected ANY signatures now! Take them to the LWVSB office or mail them to: SAFE California Campaign, 237 Kearny St., #334, San Francisco, CA 94108.
- Picking up new petitions at the LWVSB office (or call to make arrangements to get them) and continue to gather signatures.
- Turning in any blank petitions that you do not plan to circulate. We still have time to get them to volunteers who can use them.

More Ways You Can Get Involved in STATE ACTION

See the state League's website, www.lwvc.org, for more information on these issues and how you can help. These are all in the right-hand column (Advocacy).

Support the California DISCLOSE Act! Fight back against *Citizens United* and anonymous Super PACs at the state level! **Support AB 1148**, which would require the largest major funders of political advertisements for candidates and ballot measures in California to be clearly and unambiguously identified. It will also require campaign committees to maintain a Web site where the largest major funders are listed so voters can easily access this important information. Read LWVC's letter and learn how you can support the California DISCLOSE Act at www.lwvc.org.

Support SB 654: Protect Affordable Housing Funds: LWVC supports SB 654 (Steinberg) which would protect existing housing funds of dissolving redevelopment agencies. Redevelopment set-aside funds for low and moderate income housing are the largest source of funding to address affordable housing needs. *This is a critical problem on the South Coast, particularly for the City of Santa Barbara.* Read LWVC's letter (sent Jan. 21) at www.lwvc.org.

Recommendations for the Redistricting Process: LWVC and our local League followed the work of the Citizens Redistricting Commission as it drew new legislative and congressional district lines last year. Now it's time to look to the future. Read LWVC's letter to the commission suggesting improvements to the redistricting process, focusing on those which would require statutory changes, and offer your ideas, too.

Linda Phillips, State & National Action

Come to the LWVC Regional Training Workshop in Santa Barbara February 25, 9:30-12:30 Marmalade Café, La Cumbre Plaza

An action workshop for the San Luis Obispo County, Santa Maria Valley, Santa Barbara and Ventura County Leagues will be held Saturday, Feb. 25 at the Marmalade Café in La Cumbre Plaza.

The region shares so many issues: offshore oil, onshore oil and fracking, the environment, population pressure on agricultural land, social issues, and shared national, state assembly and senate legislators.

Chris Carson, the MTA for Santa Barbara, and Bev King, the MTA for the other three Leagues, will bring action and related voter service issues to a morning workshop (9:30-12:30) on

these topics. The reserved room holds 35 and we are hoping to fill it. There will be a continental breakfast buffet with coffee, tea, juice, fruit, bagels & cream cheese, and pastries. The cost is being underwritten by LWVC.

We are trying to make this event as easy and informative as possible. We hope for a lot of interaction and discussion by all of you on your common issues. Make your reservation with the league office or by contacting Beth Pitton-August.

*Bev King, MTA San Luis Obispo County,
Santa Maria Valley, and Ventura County League*

Plan Santa Barbara Finally Passes

Displaying both real cooperation and great relief, the Santa Barbara City Council unanimously agreed to approve their general plan revision. Both the Civil War and Revolutionary War took less time than this rewrite, community activist Lee Moldaver pointed out.

The public was polarized and very vocal at innumerable meetings over six years, where the key issues were how much increased density and reduced parking to allow, and how to develop affordable housing. During early discussions it was decided that all residential areas and El Pueblo Viejo would retain their present zoning. The city also provided that all developments would be under 45 feet, except under very special circumstances. This is probably a result of so many people having voted for lower height limits in the Measure B election, and League supported this.

The League was active at these meetings since 2005 and we participated in the compromises that were finally worked out. Credit for them goes to Councilmen Dale Francisco, Bendy White and Frank Hotchkiss, who worked for a year to find common ground in open meetings. Because the League has supported building smaller units and rentals, we can live with a plan that in certain areas gives developers of small rental units much increased density, if their projects can remain under 45 feet high. These units will also have one parking space per

unit. In addition, we endorsed the city's desire to discourage the building of more large, luxury condos.

Under Adaptive Management--also added to the Plan--after eight years or 250 rental units built, the City will be required to review this new incentive and decide whether to continue the increased density for rentals or remove it. This compromise provision should be acceptable to the many people in the community who are concerned about over-development destroying the small town character of their city.

Plan Santa Barbara has a number of new features that the League welcomes. For the first time, it will include a Historic Element written by local historians, and a new section on supporting healthy lifestyles. A reduction in the amount of square footage of commercial development allowed is also welcome, because it could help improve our jobs/housing imbalance. The rewriting has provided a real blueprint for the next 20 years, and staff is to be commended for their great patience in reconciling the public and decision makers' disagreements.

Actual implementation of the Plan will begin at the end of February, when the necessary ordinances will be scheduled. The League will continue to follow this important part of the general plan process.

Connie Hannah, Co-Chair, Sustainable Communities Committee

Healing the Heart of Democracy: February 22 Lecture by Parker J. Palmer

Courage to Lead is announcing that acclaimed writer and speaker Parker J. Palmer will give his first-ever public talk in Southern California—at the Lobero Theatre in Santa Barbara. Our League is a co-sponsor of the event.

Tickets for the 7:30 p.m. lecture (\$20 reserved, \$10 for teachers and students) can be purchased through the Lobero box office (963-0761) or www.lobero.com. Palmer's talk will be followed by a dialogue with the audience. Fifteen tickets--only one per member--are available on a first come first served basis. Call the League office at 965-2422 if you are interested. Ticket holders will meet at the Lobero Theatre at 7 p.m., which is 30 minutes prior to the event start at 7:30, to receive their ticket.

Palmer is founder of the Center for Courage & Renewal and the Courage to Lead program that is used to serve nonprofit leaders. Utne Reader called him "one of 25 visionaries who are changing your world." He is author of "Healing the Heart of Democracy: The Courage to Create a Politics Worthy of the Human Spirit," "The Courage to Teach, Let Your Life Speak," and "A Hidden Wholeness," and is founder and senior partner of the Center for Courage & Renewal. In 2010, he was given the William Harper Award, whose previously recipients include Margaret Mead, Elie Wiesel and Marshall McLuhan.

Looking for Leaders

Several mid-term vacancies have arisen on our board and committees. The Social Policy and Education chairs are both vacant now and Adopt-A-Poll will need a new chair after June.

The new Adopt-A-Poll leader can work with and learn from the current chair, Claire Van Blaricum, on this June's election. The new Social Policy and Education leaders will also receive support from continuing committees.

We are also looking for someone to chair/coordinate Special Events (The Garden Party, Holiday Party etc.).

If you are even curious about these roles, but uncertain about the portfolio, we want to hear from you! Please let either of us know if you would like to serve in any of these positions or can suggest members that you think would be good candidates.



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Hat, Treats and Special Guests at League Holiday Party



Planning Committee members Linda Mayo, Jane Benefield, Beth Pitton-August, Janice Rorick, and Joanie Jones



Connie Hannah and Jane Benefield



League Co-Presidents Beth Pitton-August and Stacy Shepherd



Amanda Pelch and Joanie Jones



Santa Barbara City College Trustee Marty Blum, Susan Shank and Mary Rose



Poet Sojourner Kincade-Rolle



New member Rita Shaw with Santa Barbara City Council member Cathy Murrillo



Goleta council member Ed Easton with Anne Heck and Susan Shank



Goleta council member Paula Perotte and League co-president Stacy Shepherd.



Bill Marks



Guest with hat.



Carpinteria council member Kathleen Reddington

Membership News

Help is needed on the membership committee

If you have one to two hours a month, please call me at 452-5804. The tasks are mostly clerical in nature, although I can also use help at our forums and evening gatherings.

The New Member Orientation will be Saturday, March 3. Please look for your invitation in the near future. This Orientation will be 2.5 hours at the League Office.

Amanda Pelch, Membership Development

Membership Directory Update

New Members:

- Erik Thomassen
- Betsy L. Kain
- E. Tenell Matlovsky
- Paul Nay
- Linda Gardy
- Rita Shaw
- Carol Lieff
- Bonnie Lassen

New Name and Phone Number: Jennifer Chambers: now: Jennifer C. Matlovsky

Don't Contact by Email: Betty Newcomb

LWVSB Education Fund Thanks Supporters

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the LWVSB Education Fund, I would like to thank all those who have contributed to the Fund. Your donations underwrite the Voter Service and Citizen Education activities of the League. Note that *all donations are tax-deductible* since they are used only for non-advocacy activities of the League. Checks, made payable to the "LWVSB Education Fund," may be sent to the League office at any time.

Irene Stone, LWVSB Ed Fund President

MEMBERSHIP FORM to join LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA

<input type="checkbox"/> Here's my annual membership dues of \$60* <input type="checkbox"/> Second member in same household \$30 <input type="checkbox"/> Student \$30 <input type="checkbox"/> Please send me more information about League <input type="checkbox"/> I can't join right now; here is my contribution of \$_____ to support the League.	Name _____ Address _____ _____ Zip _____ Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____
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Make check payable to: League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara, 328 A E. Carrillo St, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**Discounted dues are available for special circumstances. Amanda Pelch, 452-5804.*

Calendar

FEBRUARY DISCUSSION UNITS:

Climate Change Legislation-How Does It Affect Us?

- 1 **Wednesday: Evening Unit - 7:30 p.m., Pat Shewczyk's house,** Co-chairs: Pat Shewczyk, and Sheila Kamhi,
- 7 **Tuesday: Supper Unit - 5:30 p.m., Madame Lu's Restaurant,** 3524 State St., Lolly Quackenbush,
- 8 **Wednesday: Carpinteria Unit – 10 a.m., Carpinteria Women's Club,** 1059 Vallecito Rd. Chair: Barbara Godley,
- 8 **Wednesday: Valle Verde Unit – noon, North Gazebo,** 900 Calle de los Amigos, brown bag lunch, Contact Joan Kerns,
- 11 **Saturday: LWVSB Board meeting,** 10 a.m., League Office at 328 A East Carrillo.
- 15 **Wednesday: Community Forum: Does Your Vote Really Count? League Explores Election Controversies,** 12-2 p.m., Louise Lowry Davis Center, 1232 De La Vina St. Brown bag lunch, free and open to the public.
- 22 **Wednesday: Healing the Heart of Democracy,** lecture by Parker J. Palmer, 7:30 p.m., Lobero Theatre (call 963 -0761 for tickets).
- 25 **Saturday: Regional Action Training by LWVC,** with our neighboring Leagues, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Marmalade Café in La Cumbre Plaza.

LOOKING AHEAD TO MARCH

The Privatization Study

- 3 **Saturday: Member Orientation Meeting,** LWV Office.
- 6 **Tuesday: Supper Unit - 5:30 p.m., Madame Lu's Restaurant,** 3524 State St., Lolly Quackenbush
- 7 **Wednesday: Evening Unit - 7:30 p.m., Sheila Kamhi's house,** co-chairs: Pat Shewczyk, and Sheila Kamhi,
- 10 **Saturday: LWVSB Board meeting,** 10 a.m., League Office at 328 A East Carrillo.
- 14 **Wednesday: Carpinteria Unit – 10 a.m., Carpinteria Women's Club,** 1059 Vallecito Rd. Chair: Barbara Godley,
- 14 **Wednesday: Valle Verde Unit – noon,** North Gazebo, 900 Calle de los Amigos, brown bag lunch, Contact Joan Kerns,
- 14 **Wednesday: Community Forum: The Privatization Study,** 12-2 p.m., Louise Lowry Davis Center, 1232 De La Vina St. Brown bag lunch, free and open to the public.

SAVE THE DATE

**Sunday, May 6: Garden Party, 2-4 p.m.,
Lions Club Carpinteria**

Remember to check the LWVSB web site (<http://lwvsantabarbara.org>) for the latest event information.



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women and men, encourages informed and
active participation in government, works
to increase understanding of major public
policy issues, and influences public policy
through education and advocacy.

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