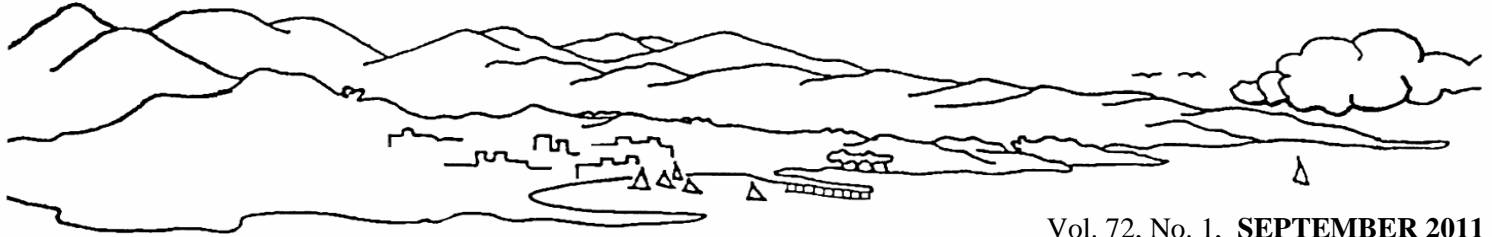




CHANNEL VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA

Serving South Santa Barbara County



Vol. 72, No. 1, **SEPTEMBER 2011**

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September Community Forum: League Year Kick-Off Panel on Priorities for Program & Action

Wednesday, September 21, 2011, 12 to 2 p.m., Louise Lowry Davis Community Center
De La Vina at Victoria St. - Free and open to the public. Refreshments to augment your brown bag lunch.

The Forum will be focused on gearing up for the League year with a panel discussion highlighting program priorities and action. The purpose of this forum is two-fold:

1. To orient members on recent past Program & Action successes and opportunities for further engagement on issues in the new League year.

(Continued on page 4)

**Consensus Workshop: Federal Role in Public Education
Saturday, Oct. 1, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (see article on page 4)**

Messages from our New Co-Presidents

From Stacy Shepherd

Hello, and welcome to another year in League membership! I am excited to have been chosen to serve as your Co-President for Membership and Community Education and look forward to a full and exciting year. Here is a brief look at what the immediate future brings.

MEMBERSHIP

Yes, it's that time again! If you haven't done so, please return your envelopes and membership dues to the office. We thank you for the consideration.

VOTER SERVICE

Ten candidates have filed for three seats on Santa Barbara City Council—so this will be a vibrant and active election season.

Please join us for a Candidates Forum on September

24th at the Faulkner Gallery, from 2-4 p.m. Also, refer to *SmartVoter* and watch the upcoming *Touring With the Candidates*.

COMMUNICATIONS

Watch your e-mail for an invitation to participate in the newly-formed communications committee. Whether you have fifteen minutes or two hours to spare, there is a place for you!

From web design to tweeting, there are many ways to get the League message out. All that is needed will be some volunteers to each take a manageable slice of the pie. Let's get out there and show some League Internet Spirit!

Thanks again, and feel free to contact me about any concerns you may have as a member.

From Beth Pitton-August

I am very excited to be writing my first Channel Voter article as the LWVSB's Co-President for Program & Action. Our P&A team has had a busy summer preparing for the new League year – and it is now upon us.

Before I tell you about what we have planned, I would first like to thank every League member who has welcomed and congratulated me on this new role. Your encouragement is greatly appreciated.

Second, I would like to acknowledge and thank every LWVSB League member for all that you have done

and do every day to safeguard democracy. I have always been awed by your experience, expertise, and kind willingness to share what you know. Through this process of preparing for a new League year as a member of a great new leadership team, I have come to appreciate (and I must admit, rely upon) you all the more.

Now for upcoming activities, I am pleased to share with you our plans for the September Community Forum, the important consensus workshop on October 1, and October Units.

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Co-President
Program & Action
Beth-Pitton-August (2013)

Vice-President
Program
Joanie Jones (2013)

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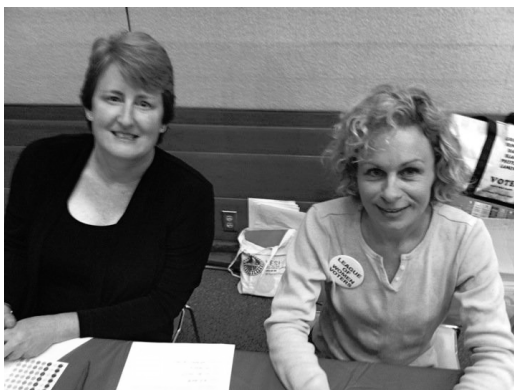
Meet the League's Co-Presidents

Beth Pitton-August and Stacy Shepherd will share the presidency of the League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara for the next two years.

"From housing, to health care, to the environment, to offering voter services, the League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara has been working on issues that affect all of us every day," the co-presidents said. "One of our goals for the new League year is to celebrate the many local coalition partners who are vital to our efforts."

Elected at the June annual meeting, Stacy will be responsible for membership and community education and Beth will work with the league's program and action team.

Beth has been a league member since 2006, serving as secretary from 2008 to 2010 and social policy co-chair in 2010. She was also on the nominating, executive, communications and 90th anniversary celebration committees, and represents the LWVSB on the local Pro-Choice Coalition.



She and her husband moved to the area from Chicago in 1999. Beth worked for Direct Relief International for 11 years and is now an independent consultant helping non-profits and individuals with grant writing and special projects.

"After many years of volunteering in literacy in literacy programs, I enjoy helping to promote democratic literacy

with the League president," Beth said.

Stacy came to Santa Barbara in 1993 to study computer science and has been employed at Cisco Systems since March 2000. She has been active in many community organizations, including the Commission for Women and Friends of the Commission for Women.

She was the League's liaison to the Pro-Choice Coalition and vice president for community education. Stacy was also in charge of SmartVoter and organized unit meetings and the 90th anniversary celebration of the League.

Vicki Allen, Channel Voter Editor

City Council Candidates Forum

The League will hold a forum for Candidates for Santa Barbara City Council on Saturday, September 24, from 2 to 4 p.m., at the Faulkner Gallery, Santa Barbara Central Library, 40 East Anapamu Street.

We hope you can attend – but if you can't, the Forum will be aired later on Santa Barbara Channels. Just go to www.sbchannels.tv and you will find a schedule of times. The program will also be available on the Web through www.smartvoter.org, along with the popular series of candidate snapshots "Touring With The Candidates."

The City election will be a Vote By Mail election. Ballots will begin to be mailed out on October 10. The last day to register to vote in this election is October 24. Ballots must be received by the City by November 8 - postmarks do not count.

For more information visit SBCityVote.org and, of course, be sure to check out Smart Voter at www.smartvoter.org.

Some interest has been expressed by local teens in having a forum with the candidates to discuss issues affecting teens. We are working with other groups to determine if we can help organize such a forum.

In other news, League Voter Service is offering training to volunteers in community organizations interested in registering voters. If you belong to an organization that would like training in this area, please contact me or Janice Rorick, Voter Service Co-Chair, and we'll be happy to schedule a workshop.

Sandy Stites, Co-Chair, Voter Service

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>

State Redistricting - Final Maps are Drawn

After the independent California Citizens Redistricting Commission voted to ratify the final maps on Aug. 15, unchanged from the draft final maps and with only one dissenting vote, the maps have now been approved and forwarded to the Secretary of State. The new districts have displaced over 60 political incumbents.

This is the first time in the history of California that an independent citizens commission drew district boundaries for U.S. Congressional, State Senate, State Assembly and Board of Equalization districts. How will California change? Commissioners said that hundreds and hundreds of people became involved in the process, coming to public hearings, speaking for themselves and for others (people of different backgrounds supporting Hmong and Sikh communities). This was the first time for many citizens and seemed to ignite a landslide of interest in the governing of our state.

California is the first in the nation (again) to adopt this process. Other states are eager to see the process to the finish line and start to address political interest districts and gerrymandering in their own states.

The Commission's entire process has been open and transparent. The public has been able to watch the Commission deliberate, discuss and ultimately draw the lines. Commissioners heard them: over 2,700 members of the public spoke at 34 Commission hearings around the state and close to 20,000 comments were received in writing. The Commission has carefully considered the varied interests throughout the state and has successfully balanced those interests in crafting fair and representative

districts.

Note: the Redistricting Commission in 2011 held three public hearings, the maps were published on the Friday before the Labor Day weekend and approved the following Tuesday. Not our best day!

Any legal challenge will be sent straight to the California Supreme Court for review. This provision was written to expedite any legal challenge so a decision could be made on the maps in time for the June 2012 elections.

Republicans announced recently that they may challenge the new legislative district maps. California Republican Party Chairman Tom Del Beccaro has said they may file a referendum for the 2012 statewide ballot. A handful of special interest groups, including the California Friends of the African American Caucus, Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund and the Coalition of Asian Pacific Americans for Fair Redistricting, have threatened to sue over objections to the lines.

“The Citizens Redistricting Commission (<http://wedrawthelines.ca.gov>) has published the final maps, the culmination of seven months of extremely hard work. The League of Women Voters of California applauds the work of both the commissioners and the public. Unlike redistricting in the past, this process has been open, transparent and participatory—a true citizen-driven process. We are confident that this first-ever commission will be a model for the entire nation,” stated LWVC President Jennifer A. Waggoner.

Jane L. Benefield, Director, Observer Corps

Santa Barbara County Supervisors Adopt Final Redistricting Map And The Impact of State Redistricting

The County Board of Supervisors adopted a new redistricting map on August 9. This final map established the boundaries for five County district boundaries for the election of supervisors.

This most recent map for supervisorial districts as prepared by Supervisor Salud Carbajal moved New Cuyama from the 5th district to the 1st district. Guadalupe was moved from the 4th to the 3rd District with Isla Vista remaining in the district.

The results of the State Commission redistricting for state assemblymember and state senators and congress in the county:

Briefly, the new 37th State Assembly District includes the South Coast, Santa Ynez Valley and part of western Ventura County. State Senate District 19 includes Santa Barbara County and western Ventura County and the Channel Islands.

The new 24th Congressional district boundary approved by the State Redistricting Commission moves from San Luis Obispo on the north to the City of Ventura on the south, and includes more inland areas than the prior district.

Before adoption of the new boundaries, there were many public meetings and review of several proposed maps prepared by members of the public. *Cheryl Rogers, Member, LWVSB*

Consensus Workshop: Federal Role in Public Education

LWVUS is conducting a national study on the role of the federal government in public education (Pre-kindergarten to 12th Grade) and our Santa Barbara League has been participating in this study. All members are invited to take advantage of this opportunity to provide feedback on critical issues for our public schools.

No formal background in educational policy is needed to contribute to the consensus. Almost everyone is an expert on public education because of their experiences, either personal or through their children, grandchildren or friends. Many of our members are keenly interested in this topic as current and retired teachers, current and former school board members, administrators, and other education activists. Everyone can make a valuable contribution to this process.

The scope of the consensus includes funding and equity issues as well as common core standards and assessments. The consensus questions were developed by a national study committee and approved by the LWVUS Board. Each participating League will discuss the same questions. Necessary background materials will be provided in advance online and at the meeting itself.

The results of all local consensus meetings will be forwarded to the LWVUS. If the responses demonstrate that there are areas of agreement among members, the national Board will develop a position on the role of the federal government in public education. The League will then be able to influence public policy decision-making, for example, by lobbying Congress for or against a bill on education. LWVUS may also ask local members to assist in such efforts by calling or writing their members of the House or Senate.

The consensus workshop will take place on Saturday, October 1 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Marmalade Café meeting room. The café is located in La Cumbre Plaza straight across the parking lot from Vons. Lunch at a cost of \$10 each will be provided. It's important to attend the entire workshop if you can since questions will be discussed throughout the day.

The link below is to the 15 consensus questions that are divided into 3 areas: 3 general questions; 6 questions on Common Core Standards; and 6 questions on Funding and Equity.

http://www.lvw.org/Content/ContentGroups/Study/Taskforces/PublicEducation/PublicED_ConsensusQuestions.pdf

The following link is to several brief background articles on each of the study areas (History of the federal role in public education; Common Core Curriculum; and Equity and Funding).

http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Public_Education&TPLID=191&ContentID=17596

Interested members who are unable to do any advance preparation are welcome to attend. Copies of the consensus questions will be provided and there will be a Power Point presentation of any necessary background materials.

Nancy Harter, Chair, Education Committee

September Community Forum *(Continued from page 1)*

2. To inform the public, issue stakeholders, and coalition partners on League accomplishments and challenges for Program & Action and an invite them to join or work with (or continue to work with) us.

As with all of our forums, we hope this will be a good opportunity for potential League members to learn more about the benefits of membership. Please invite your friends and colleagues! Also, we ask that League committee members and liaisons to League coalitions invite their networks to the forum and plan to help us acknowledge and thank those present during the program.

Program & Action Panelists include:

1. Emily Allen (intersection of Mental Health/Homelessness/Criminal Justice)
2. Jane Benefield (Redistricting and Observer Corps)
3. Connie Hannah (Sustainable Communities)
4. Jean Holmes (Energy)
5. Nancy Harter, Education Committee (National Study on Fed. Role in Public Education)

November Action Training

Our Management Training Advisor Chris Carson will facilitate a discussion on taking action with the League of Women Voters. We hope to have a great turnout of both veteran and new members. Date, time and location to be determined.

LWV Observer Corps: Now more than ever we need government watchdogs!

Nothing strikes fear in the hearts of an elected or appointed official more than those few words on your lapel button: “League of Women Voters: OBSERVER.”

The Observer Corps keeps elected and appointed officials on notice by ensuring that issues facing the community are being handled “in the sunshine.” An observer is an individual who attends a governmental meeting, notes what happens at the meeting and reports back to the League.

Once I took up the challenge of reenergizing our local Observer Corps, several “vintage members” told me that this was how they began their association with the League of Women Voters.

The Observer Corps is a great vehicle for piquing your interest in the political arena, hearing from the citizens and elected officials *directly* while at the same time learning and advising the local league of hot topics.

Ideally, the observer corps monitors both the issue being discussed as well as the process by which they are being

discussed—i.e. adherence to the Brown Act, attitude toward the speakers, and behavior of the official. Observers usually do not “act” upon the issues at the meeting. So if you are gun-shy of public speaking, you will like this independent, low-key role. If you can attend a meeting or portion of a meeting, fill out a form and relay the information to the appropriate league person—you are just the person we need.

I will coordinate the Observer program by training you, introducing you to the agency you will be observing and helping guide you through the experience. You may attend meetings sporadically, attend several meetings or share the duty with other observers. If you have a special interest; say, you want to observe the Goleta Water District meetings—then you are welcome to follow your heart...please join us.

Jane L. Benefield, Director, Observer Corps



Observer Corps

October Discussion Units: New Board and Member Dialogue

The LWVSB Board (or a contingency thereof) will facilitate the October Units. At the units, we will offer a more in-depth discussion of our strategies and plans for 2011-2012. Most importantly, we want to hear from you. Please come prepared with your ideas. For example, Unit attendance has been waning. What can we do to improve them and stimulate interest among both long-standing and new League members? Or how can we incorporate “the 3 M’s” (Membership, Media, and Money) into League activities to help the LWVSB grow and engage the community? Also, what training would you like to receive – or what skills and expertise would you like to share?

Beth Pitton-August, Co-President

YOUR MESSAGE COULD GO HERE

If you are interested in advertising in future issues of the League’s Channel Voter, please call our office for more information, 965-2422.



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A lot has been happening this summer, with both legislation and regulations of concern to the League.

Clean Air

LWVUS has continued its defense of clean air, launching the Clean Air Promise campaign and a new website, <http://peoplenotpolluters.org>. Please make the Promise yourself, and send a message to our Senators urging them to make the promise and stand firm on protecting our air. See the website, or call me for further information.

In late July, the national League and coalition partners sent a letter to the House of Representatives urging House members to support the "Capps amendment" to the appropriations bill for EPA and the Interior Department, H.R. 2584. This amendment would protect Americans from mercury, soot, and other life-threatening toxic air pollution from power plants by striking a rider delaying the Mercury and Air Toxics Standard. Power plants are the largest manmade source of mercury, soot, and smog pollution in the U.S., and standards to limit these toxic and deadly air pollutants are long overdue. In particular, mercury exposure can cause brain damage and learning disabilities in developing fetuses and young children, and it is estimated that each year over 400,000 newborns are exposed to potentially harmful levels of mercury. LWVSB would like to extend our thanks to Rep. Lois Capps for this important effort to protect health.

Fracking

"Fracking" - horizontal hydraulic fracturing of oil and gas wells to increase their productivity - was the impetus behind a resolution on "safer drilling and mining," which passed unanimously at last year's LWVUS Convention. It has recently become an issue in Santa Barbara County, and at LWVSB's Annual Meeting, some of our "Advice to the Board" was to

keep an eye on the issue. We've been keeping track of local developments to see what action might be needed. On the state level, LWVC supports AB 591, which would require disclosure of toxic chemicals used in fracking operations, as well as how much water is used and other important data.

On the national level, LWV has recently taken action on regulations rather than legislation. From the press release for the coalition, *Earthjustice filed [a] petition on behalf of Environmental Defense Fund, The League of Women Voters and more than 100 other groups from across America... The petition asks the EPA to draft rules that—for the first time—would require manufacturers and processors of drilling and fracking chemicals to conduct testing and produce health and safety data needed to evaluate the health and environmental risks of their substances and mixtures...*

"People are understandably concerned about the potential health impacts posed by fracking. Here in Pennsylvania and across the region, as the pace of drilling has skyrocketed, so too have reports of illness and pollution," said Roberta Winters of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania. "The League of Women Voters is deeply concerned about this national issue that threatens the environment and public health. The state Leagues of New York and Pennsylvania are working hard to educate the public about the environmental, public health, and economic impacts associated with fracking. As we continue to advocate for public participation and transparency, we encourage citizens to make their voices heard to regain necessary environmental protections. Our nation's leaders are on notice that our organization, and more than a hundred others nationwide are pressing for swift action on this petition."

Linda Phillips, Director, State & National Action Director



LWVSB delegates and volunteers thanked for helping host the State League convention in Ventura.



Hard working League board members end their terms at Annual Meeting.

The Membership Committee has been busy this past year learning the ropes. My focus for our new year of 2011-2012 will be to grow our membership. We have many projects and studies to work on this year as well as observing the coming City Council Election. All our work requires people who are interested in making sure the political and voter processes are done properly with all having a voice.

I need help with my part of this process. We plan to have a designated membership volunteer at all events LWVSB participates in; this means events we are sponsors of and/or participating in. Please let me know if you have a spare hour for volunteering fun.

Our annual membership renewals were mailed out in early August. We renew all memberships as of Sept. 1

each year so everyone is now renewed on this date. New policies are being developed around this renewal date.

Happily Herb Linville and his great team at Valle Verde mailed out 237 pieces of mail for this endeavor. Happily we have already received approximately 40% of the renewals. Please send yours in as soon as possible.

Thank you to all who have assisted in the membership process: Joanie Jones, Suzanne Brothen, Herb Linville and his VV Mailing Team and of course the entire Board of LWVSB, both past and present.

Amanda Pelch, Membership Development Director

New Directory Information

Your Channel Voter includes an insert for your LWVSB 2011 Directory. Please glue these new pages (Page 4 for the new Board of Directors and Page 5 for the organization and chairpersons) into the directory. Also make additions and corrections to your directory throughout the year based on the Membership News in the Channel Voter.

Joanie Jones, Vice President

Help Wanted

November 8 is Election Day for the City of Santa Barbara. Voting for the City Council will be by mail only.

Citizens with questions often phone the League office for answers. We would like to have staff available in the office from the last week in September through the Election Date.

If you are interested in spending one morning or more in the office, please call the office—965-2422-- and leave a message.

Sheila Kamhi, Office Manager

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

SEPTEMBER 2011

NO SEPTEMBER DISCUSSION UNIT MEETINGS

- 10 Saturday: LWVSB Board Meeting**, 10 a.m., League Office at 328 A East Carrillo.
- 21 Wednesday: Community Forum: League Year Kick-off - Panel on Priorities & Action**, 12-2 p.m. Louise Lowry Davis Community Center, De la Vina at Victoria.
- 24 Saturday: Santa Barbara City Council Candidates Forum**, 2-4 p.m. – Faulkner Gallery, Santa Barbara Public Library, 40 E. Anapamu St.

Looking Ahead to Next Month

OCTOBER 2011

OCTOBER DISCUSSION UNITS: New Board and Members Dialogue

- 1 Saturday: Consensus Workshop: Federal Role in Public Education**, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m., Marmalade Café meeting room, La Cumbre Plaza. Lunch \$10.

- 4 Tuesday: Supper Unit - 5:30 p.m.**, Madame Lu's Restaurant, 3524 State St., Contact Lolly Quackenbush.
- 5 Wednesday: Evening Unit - 7:30 p.m.**, Sheila Kamhi's house, 1040 Portesuello Ave., Co-chairs Pat Shewczyk, and Sheila Kamhi.
- 8 Saturday: LWVSB Board meeting**, 10 a.m., League Office at 328 A East Carrillo.
- 12 Wednesday: Carpinteria Unit – 10 a.m., Carpinteria Women's Club**, 1059 Vallecito Rd. Chair Barbara Godley.
- 12 Wednesday: Valle Verde Unit – 2 p.m.**, North Gazebo, 900 Calle de Los Amigos. Contact Joan Kerns.

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



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Beth Pitton-August
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The League of Women Voters, a
nonpartisan political organization of
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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