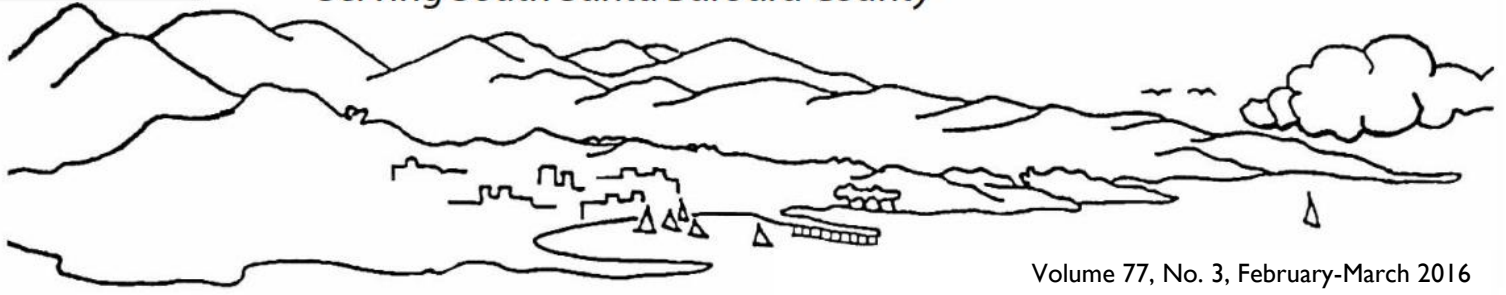




# CHANNEL VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA

Serving South Santa Barbara County



Volume 77, No. 3, February-March 2016

### Hot Topics

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## February Community Forum About Time: Stopping Gun Violence

Wednesday, February 17

There are 30,000 violent gun deaths in America per year and over 100,000 people are wounded. Gun control and prevention of gun violence are pivotal topics in this election year. There is also new momentum to reduce gun violence following President Obama's recent heartfelt town hall speech seeking to require background checks for all gun buyers.

What do the statistics tell us, as opposed to the polarized media? What are practical and immediate solutions we can attain? What laws and policies are showing positive results? What can you do? These questions will be discussed at the February Community Forum by experts who advocate against gun violence.

The League is proud to announce a special guest speaker, Reverend Alyssa DeWolf. Alyssa is the Reverend at the First Congregational Church of Santa Barbara and is active in many local issues, including gun violence. Alyssa previously served at the Newtown Community Church where she pastored to the victims and the families after the shooting tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School.

Other speakers include Toni Wellen, President of the Coalition Against Gun Control, a nonprofit coalition which views gun violence as a public health issue not a political one, and Chief Deputy District Attorney Kelly Scott, who heads the Litigations Operations, which includes homicides and domestic violence. (Con't on page 4)

## March Community Forum Goleta Development: What is There Now And What Will the Future Bring?

Wednesday, March 16

The League is concerned about the new development occurring in the Goleta Area and about what the impacts will be on traffic and on water availability. For the March Community Forum we have invited former Mayor and Council Member Margaret Connell to talk to us about how many of these phased developments were included in Goleta's original General Plan. The Goodland Coalition will address their concerns about the future. The Westside Goleta Coalition will share their recent victory in changing the location of one important project. (Con't on page 4)

*Community Forums are held the third Wednesday of the month at the Louise Lowry Davis Center, 1232 De la Vina St., noon to 2 p.m. They are always free and open to the public. You are encouraged to bring a brown bag lunch and your friends. Parking behind the Center is free during the forums.*

## Message from Co-President Amanda Pelch

January 2016 was our Program Planning Month for League of Women Voters U.S. At each of the three Unit Meetings Program Planning was the only topic of discussion. What is Program Planning? LWVUS tells us that Program Planning “is a valuable League tool for identifying issues for focus and for insuring that League resources, human and financial, from our grassroots volunteers to our professional staff, are engaged where they have the most impact.” (Letter to League Leaders, December 2015). All levels of the League participate in this process. Good planning makes us better leaders in our local, state and national communities.

In this process we develop what we will be proposing for study. This coming biennium what is proposed will be different. LWVUS has asked us not to propose any new studies; instead they are asking that we use our current positions and develop action plans to implement them. They want more voter registration and lobbying of local, state and national levels of government to implement League positions. Happily, our local League has been taking action for many years. Not every League does this.



Co-Presidents Amanda Pelch and Lindsey Baker

The National League Convention will be June 16-19 in Washington D.C. There the Convention participants will decide what the focus will be for this biennium. It will be an exciting Convention as this is a big divergence from much of our past.

Next, I want to mention our local Bylaws Committee. This year and in 2017, we are reviewing, updating and rewriting our Bylaws and

Procedure Guidelines. Our first task is to come up with a list of definitions for League language. Terms such as Program Planning, League Principles and Program Policies will be defined. We toss around many terms but so many of us only have a vague idea of exactly what they mean.

This is how each of you can help: Please write or email me any terms on which you are not clear, the more the better. Once we have received your input and compiled a complete list, we will publish the glossary and put it on the website. Email me your terms at [CoPresCommEd@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:CoPresCommEd@lwvsantabarbara.org). I am looking forward to hearing from many of you. Thank you all for your support of LWVSB.

*Amanda Pelch, Co-President, Community Education, Membership & Administration*

## League Holiday Party!



SB City Council Member Cathy Murillo (left) with League Member Janice Rorick



League Member Bonnie Jensen with SB Council Member Frank Hotchkiss

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email: [league@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:league@lwvsantabarbara.org); Web: [lwvsantabarbara.org](http://lwvsantabarbara.org)*

## February Discussion Units:

### What Did We Learn About District Elections?

At our June 2015 Annual Meeting League members removed the words supporting “at large elections” from their local Government position as a result of their 10 month study of possible district elections in the City of Santa Barbara. The City held its first new district elections in November 2015. The League would now like to consider what we have learned about this return to a past form of electing City Council members.

Members of the Voter Service team will discuss their experiences conducting three separate Candidate's

Forums, one in each district, instead of one citywide Forum. They will report on the results of that election, as documented by the City Clerk's reports and we will discuss how the change to district elections affected the turnout. In 2017, when we have three more district elections, we will need to know how we can best reach the voters in each district, and where the central meeting places should be. If you have questions, bring them to these discussions (see the Calendar for dates and locations).

*Susan Shank, Voter Service Director*

## March Discussion Units:

### What Do League Members Think About Short Term Rentals?

You may think that the issue of short-term vacation rentals like Airbnb is decided, but it could continue to cause problems as it has across the country.

Many young people are very enthusiastic about renting out their own homes or apartments, and about using short term rentals when they travel. This puts pressure on settled neighborhoods and on the rented apartments needed for workers in the area.

The League has always been concerned about the lack of affordable rentals in this area, and this use for tourists has serious effects. Our local area has an almost zero vacancy rate, and taking rental apartments for other uses means that there will be even less housing for our working population. In

addition, the family owned neighborhoods have found that short term rentals in their midst present new problems of noise and partying that they have not faced previously. Cities, on the other hand, sometimes see this as another source of tourist and tax revenue, and therefore encourage them. In Washington, D.C. many apartment buildings are constructed just for short term rentals.

At our March Discussion Units (see the Calendar for dates and locations) we will discuss what experience League members have had with short term rentals, and whether we would support or oppose them.

*Connie Hannah, Vice-President for Program*

### State League Urges You to Ask Before You Sign

The League of Women Voters of California encourages its members and the public to be cautious during this period of circulation of initiative and referendum petitions.

Voters are often asked to sign a petition “just to get it on the ballot so people can vote on it.” The League says to voters, “Your signature is valuable, perhaps

even more valuable than your vote. Why? Because far fewer signatures are required to qualify a measure for the ballot than votes needed to pass it once it's on the ballot. Only sign a petition for an initiative or referendum that you believe belongs on the ballot.”

See the six questions you should ask yourself before you sign a petition on the [LWVSB website](#).

## Our Area Takes First Step to Form Green Energy CCA, But Utilities are Pushing Back

Last April the League held a forum on Community Choice Energy or Community Choice Aggregation (CCE or CCA). CCE programs give communities local control of their power by creating a new non-profit government agency responsible for procuring electricity for everyone in the community. This new agency is able to offer clean electricity with a higher percentage of renewable energy than the utilities, while supporting local renewable energy development, energy efficiency installations, and the move to a local smart grid. Existing CCE programs in Sonoma, Marin and Lancaster have proven that CCEs can offer cleaner electricity for a cheaper price with more local benefits. CCEs are regarded as the most impactful local action in fighting global warming and limiting greenhouse gas emissions. A video of the forum is available at: [lwvsantabarbara.org/Events](http://lwvsantabarbara.org/Events).

In May, the City of Santa Barbara and the County of Santa Barbara voted to fund a feasibility study, the first step in forming a CCE program. Since May, several local governments have also voted to participate and help fund the study including San Luis Obispo and Ventura Counties along with the cities of Ventura, Morro Bay, Moorpark, Ojai, and Carpinteria. Goleta is supplying electric use data but not money as they feel the money they send the County each year as part of incorporation should cover this.

A request for proposals to write the feasibility study went out in December and bids are due in late January. This was done quickly so that results could be received in time to impact next year's Santa Barbara County budget cycle in May/ June. At that time a vote on funding for the next steps towards a CCE can be held. Thanks to the leadership of local governments, we are off to a great start towards Community Choice Energy. However, the next steps in launching a program and securing the necessary funding will require significant community support.

Utilities are currently working in two areas that adversely affect CCE programs. First, PG&E requested a doubling in the fees charged to customers who switch to a CCE. Joining a CCE is optional and increased fees will make it harder for CCEs to compete on electricity costs and will reduce the funds available to run these programs. The California Public Utility Commission made a preliminary decision backing the fee increase. The second issue, net metering, is the money paid by the utilities for excess solar energy put back into the grid. Low funding here lessens the size of solar installations and affects the move to a local grid. More information is available in the links section at [SBCEnergyChoice.org](http://SBCEnergyChoice.org).

*Colin Jones, Sustainable Communities Committee*

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### About Time: Stopping Gun Violence (Con't from page 1)

She will discuss preventative measures her office has taken in areas including returning truants back to school throughout the county. Research indicates reducing truancy diminishes high school dropouts and decreases crime in the long run. Join us for this important discussion!

*Jane Benefield, Publicity*

### Goleta Development (Con't from page 1)

When Sacramento tried to place a new California Highway Patrol station in a residential area of Hollister, a large community group worked with the CHP to move the new, larger station to a different location. Their experience proves that 150 people working together can solve problems. The League has often asked the City to consider our severe water shortage and traffic congestion when they are asked to approve new projects.

*Connie Hannah, Vice-President for Program and Action*



## Constitutional Amendment Process Study

The League of Women Voters U.S. (LWVUS) conducted a Constitutional Amendment Study in 2015. Our local Santa Barbara League decided to participate in the study.

Our Constitution was signed in 1789 and has been amended 27 times. The first 10 amendments (Bill of Rights) protected individual liberties and justice, placing restrictions on the powers of government. The majority of the remaining 17 amendments expanded civil rights.

There are two ways of proposing amendments: 1) Congress, by a two-thirds vote of both chambers, may propose a constitutional amendment to the states for ratification or 2) the legislatures of two-thirds of the states may ask Congress to call a convention to propose an amendment to the constitution.

It can take years to complete a Constitutional Amendment, the longest ever being 3 years and 343 days. Six amendments have been approved by Congress that were not ratified; 2 died with a time limit that was stated within the amendment and 4 are still pending. One among them is the Equal Rights Amendment.



On October 21, our League presented a public educational forum with attorneys Shane Stark and Joe Allen who gave a presentation on the history and process for a Constitutional Amendment. On Saturday, October 24, eleven League members met to study the Constitutional Amendment process using the study guide provided by LWVUS. We studied 15 questions, arriving at consensus on all but one, finding there was not enough information on that topic. The topic lacking consensus was “State delegates must be elected rather than appointed.”

One of the overriding concerns of the Study Group was that the only Constitutional Convention ever held was to revise the Articles of Confederation and they drafted a completely new document. No other

Convention has been held and there are no defined controls on a Convention. Thus, a Convention called to approve the Equal rights Amendment could be used to add or strike out other provisions of the Constitution.

On November 10, Amanda Pelch and I submitted the results of our study to LWVUS. Our Study Group found the Constitutional Amendment Process Study experience to be educational and FUN.

*Lindsey Baker, Co-President Program & Action*

## Voters' Right to Know Act: League Takes No Position

We have received a number of questions and comments about an initiative currently in circulation, #15-0068, The Voters' Right to Know Act.

This is a reminder that the League has no position on this measure.

The League rarely takes a position on a ballot measure until that measure has qualified for the ballot. Among other things, this allows us to have a better sense of all of the measures likely to be on a ballot, and evaluate them together. The exceptions

to this rule are almost always measures in which we have had a major role in proposing and drafting. This measure does not qualify as such an exception: while we were consulted, we had only a minor role in the language of the measure.



### **Goleta City Council Hearing on Funding the Community Choice Aggregation Study, December 1**

This was Goleta's second chance to fund and help develop the CCA Feasibility Study. The City rejected the \$15,000 it would take to be part of the study. As a result, the City may join any CCA that is formed later, but they will never have any role in designing it. We urged them to join now so that they could influence the study.

### **Goleta City Council Hearing on the Shelby Project, December 2**

The Shelby Project involved rezoning a large agricultural site and changing the General Plan designation of the site in order to provide 60 market rate houses. The League opposed the project, as did a number of other organizations, on the grounds that agricultural lands are needed much more than luxury housing. The City Council voted to move the project forward.

### **State Hearing on California Highway Patrol Project, December 8**

The CHP has outgrown its current location on Calle Real, and wants to build a much larger facility located at 7400 Hollister Avenue. The CHP does not own the proposed new site, which is in the middle of a residential neighborhood next to Ellwood Elementary School. One hundred and fifty neighbors turned out to protest putting this industrial project in that location. The League has written a statement opposing the project and sent it to Sacramento. This site would present serious danger to the school, located only 500 feet away. There are to be above ground fuel storage tanks, a 145 foot tower for radio transmissions, and a complete gas station, with auto repair and maintenance equipment. A great many hazardous materials will be stored on site, creating additional concerns.

### **Goleta City Council Hearing on the California Highway Patrol Project, December 15**

Although the City of Goleta has no permitting authority for the CHP project, the City Council wrote a letter of concern in May, and recently the Council took public input for another letter that will be written. The League expressed the same concerns that we had in an earlier letter to the state permitting agency. The proximity to the school and nearby senior complex, as well as the impacts on the residential neighborhood in which this project would be built, led us to urge the state to find a more suitable site.

### **Goleta City Council Hearing on Venoco Onshore Facility Amortization Study, December 15**

For years, the League has followed the studies regarding possible termination of the old, non-conforming industrial Venoco Onshore Facility. One year ago, the City decided to restudy this, and the League requested that the study results be made available to the public as soon as possible, and that the City proceed with a termination ordinance.

### **League Asks for More Information on New Goleta Zoning, January 6**

When the City of Goleta was incorporated 10 years ago, it adopted the County Zoning Code for the area. Two years ago it decided to discard that zoning code, calling it too complex, and write a new one. At that time many people were concerned about how the public would stay informed about how the code was changing, and in November of 2014 the League sent a letter outlining its concerns. The environmental impact report and the new code have just been released, and the code is 480 pages long, and impossible to analyze. The League wrote the City a letter on January 6 asking for an Executive Summary showing what changes had been made and why. Included was our earlier letter asking for more public information.

## Membership News

Membership Form to Join League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara

- Here's my annual membership dues of \$70                       Second member in same household \$35  
 Please send me more information about League                       \$35 Student  
 I can't join right now; here is my contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to support the League

Make check payable to: League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara  
328 East Carrillo Street, Suite A, Santa Barbara, CA 93101  
You may also pay online through PayPal at [lwvsantabarbara.org](http://lwvsantabarbara.org)

*Discounted dues are available for special circumstances: Beverly King, 687-1124*

- I am committed--sign me up to:  Register Voters                       Join the League of Women Voters  
 Invite a friend to join the League                       Pledge financial support in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

## In Memoriam: George Solinas, Ginny Crane

### Be Our Valentine!

New and prospective members please come to a Membership Coffee, Saturday February 27 at 10:30 am, at the League of Women Voters office, 328 East Carrillo Street, Suite A, Santa Barbara.

The purpose of the event is to offer an informal setting to introduce you to League positions and activities and the members who oversee them. Does League jargon sometimes confuse you or League positions seem overwhelming? Come and enjoy the fellowship of other Leaguers, learn more about what we do and enjoy our newly remodeled office! All are welcome.

*Beverly King, Membership Development Director*

### Voter's Edge Training

There will be a training for anyone interested in Voter's Edge, the place for voters to find non-partisan information on candidates, ballot measures and initiatives. Visit [votersedge.org](http://votersedge.org) for more information.

Trainer Sharon Stone will be traveling from Sacramento to hold a workshop at LWVSB's office, 328 East Carrillo St, Santa Barbara, on Monday, February 8 from 9:30 to noon.



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF SANTA BARBARA, INC.**  
328 East Carrillo Street, Suite A  
Santa Barbara, California 93101  
**Phone/Fax:** (805) 965-2422  
**Email:** [league@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:league@lwvsantabarbara.org)  
**Web:** [lwvsantabarbara.org](http://lwvsantabarbara.org)

Co-Presidents: Amanda Pelch, Lindsey Baker

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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## Calendar

FEBRUARY	MARCH
<b>2 Tuesday: Supper Discussion Unit</b> , 5:30 pm, Madame Lu's Restaurant, 3524 State St., Contact Karen Bunker or Jane Honikman	<b>1 Tuesday: Supper Discussion Unit</b> 5:30 pm, Madame Lu's Restaurant, 3524 State St., Contact Karen Bunker or Jane Honikman
<b>8 Monday: Valle Verde Discussion Unit</b> , noon – 2 pm in private dining room off breezway (parking in front lot), 900 Calle de los Amigos. Brown bag lunch. Contact Juliane Heyman	<b>9 Wednesday: Carpinteria Discussion Unit</b> 10 am, Carpinteria Women's Club, 1059 Vallecito Rd., Contact Jane Benefield
<b>8 Monday: Voter's Edge Training</b> , 9:30 – noon, League office, 328 East Carrillo	<b>12 Saturday: LWVSB Board Meeting</b> , 10 am, League Office, 328 East Carrillo
<b>10 Wednesday: Carpinteria Discussion Unit</b> , 10 am, Carpinteria Women's Club, 1059 Vallecito Rd., Contact Jane Benefield	<b>14 Monday: Valle Verde Discussion Unit</b> , noon - 2 pm in private dining room off breezway (parking in front lot), 900 Calle de los Amigos. Brown bag lunch. Contact Juliane Heyman
<b>13 Saturday: LWVSB Board Meeting</b> , 10 am, League Office, 328 East Carrillo	<b>16 Wednesday: Community Forum, Goleta Development</b> , Louise Lowry Davis Center, 1232 De la Vina Street, noon - 2 pm
<b>17 Wednesday: Community Forum, About Time: Stopping Gun Violence</b> , Louise Lowry Davis Center, 1232 De la Vina Street, noon - 2 pm	
<b>27 Saturday: Prospective and New Member Coffee</b> , 10:30 am, League office, 328 East Carrillo	

See the LWVSB calendar online: [lwvsantabarbara.org/calendar](http://lwvsantabarbara.org/calendar)



# League Committees

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There are many ways to get involved in the League, and joining a committee is a great way to participate! Contact the Committee Chair for more information on meetings times and Committee needs. You can also contact the league at: [league@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:league@lwvsantabarbara.org), (805) 965-2422

## Communication

Chair: **Vicki Allen**

Publicity Chair: **Jane Benefield**

email: [ComCoordinator@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:ComCoordinator@lwvsantabarbara.org)

email: [Publicity@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:Publicity@lwvsantabarbara.org)

Inform our members and the broader local community about League activities and issues. Skills in print and online media are needed to help with publicity. Write letters to the editor of local news media, contribute articles and photos about your experience with LWV to the Channel Voter and our website, help us share our information on Facebook and Twitter, or consider joining our Speakers Bureau.

## Community Elections

Chair: **Irene Stone**

email: [HOElections@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:HOElections@lwvsantabarbara.org)

This committee manages the elections for Homeowners Associations & the Farmers Market.

## Education

Chair: **Bill Marks**

email: [Edu@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:Edu@lwvsantabarbara.org)

The advent of the Common Core Standards and the Local Control Funding Formula has placed most of the responsibility for educating our Pre-K-12 students on the local school districts. The Education Committee is following the implementation of these changes especially as it impacts schools in our local districts.

## Energy

Chair: **Jean Holmes**

email: [Energy@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:Energy@lwvsantabarbara.org)

We follow developments, local and otherwise and prepare reports and advocacy statements for the League.

## Health Care

Chair: **Carole Marks**

email: [HealthCare@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:HealthCare@lwvsantabarbara.org)

LWVUS strongly supported passage of the Affordable Care Act of 2010 and continues the effort to educate our members and the public about this federal health reform law and its continuing implementation. The California League is a staunch 21-year activist ally of Health Care for All → CA and is supporting the Coalition for a Healthy California, the recently reestablished coalition working for single payer legislation to be renewed in the state. Our Chair Carole Marks is the liaison to Health Care for All's very active local chapter.

## Hospitality

Chairs: **Bonnie Jensen; Suzanne Brothen**, (Nov-April)

email: [Hospitality@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:Hospitality@lwvsantabarbara.org)

Choose a month to help set up the coffee service at our brown bag lunches at League's Community Forums. The shared tasks are light, enjoy interesting programs and meeting fellow League members.

## Membership

Chair: **Beverly King**

email: [Membership@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:Membership@lwvsantabarbara.org)

Meet and greet members and newcomers at monthly Wednesday Forums and other events. We distribute membership information and facilitate recruitment. Your talents and skills, be they social, connecting, computer expertise or organizational, are welcome. Join us and put your interest in people to good use while having some fun!

## Observer Corps

Chair: **Jane Benefield**

email: [Observercorps@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:Observercorps@lwvsantabarbara.org)

Observers serve as the eyes and ears of the League for selected government agencies such as the Board of Supervisors, City Councils, Planning Commissions, and School Boards. Observers' reports keep the board alert to possible actions needed to support League positions.

## Social Policy Interest Group

Chair: **Emily Allen**

email: [SocialPolicy@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:SocialPolicy@lwvsantabarbara.org)

We follow issues related to mental health, homelessness, housing, diversity, and immigration policy. We monitor local policy and services, taking action as needed. We are looking for a co-chair.

## Sustainable Communities

Chair: **Connie Hannah**

email: [SusComm@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:SusComm@lwvsantabarbara.org)

This committee studies the problems that affect sustainability on the South Coast, including the lack of affordable housing, density, open space protection, transportation, natural resources and energy issues. We plan statements that the League makes on these issues, based upon the League's existing positions. Learn about the problems facing our area and do something about them! Jean Holmes now leads us in discussing energy issues each month.

## Voter Service

Chair: **Susan Shank**

email: [Voterserv@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:Voterserv@lwvsantabarbara.org)

Whether you want a one-time job or a continuing commitment, this committee supports voter education. Register voters, distribute election information, participate in the Speakers Bureau, assist with the Smart Voter website or help with League's candidate & ballot measure forums.

## Water Issues

Co-Chairs: **Joan Kerns & Pat Shewczyk**

email: [water@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:water@lwvsantabarbara.org)

We deal with local, state, national, and international water issues. Our discussion is

primarily based on newspaper and magazine articles, and reports from State, National and local Leagues.

## Website

Chair: **Bonnie Lassen**

email: [wm@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:wm@lwvsantabarbara.org)

Look at our website: [lwvsantabarbara.org](http://lwvsantabarbara.org). Tell us if you have any ideas for improving it. You don't need to have computer skills to participate, but if you do, that is welcome too.

## The LWVSB Special Events Team

Our local League needs you for short term volunteer work! Send your e-mail address to the office email, [league@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:league@lwvsantabarbara.org), or call League office, 965-2422.

## SmartVoter.org

To assist with SmartVoter website ([www.smartvoter.org/ca/sba](http://www.smartvoter.org/ca/sba)) Please email: [SmartVoter@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:SmartVoter@lwvsantabarbara.org)

### The League is Looking for You!

The League's Nominating Committee is already at work, and would like members to suggest individuals for board membership. Sometimes that person is You--so don't be shy; self-referral is encouraged as well as the referral of others.

Suggestions may be sent to

[Nominating@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:Nominating@lwvsantabarbara.org).