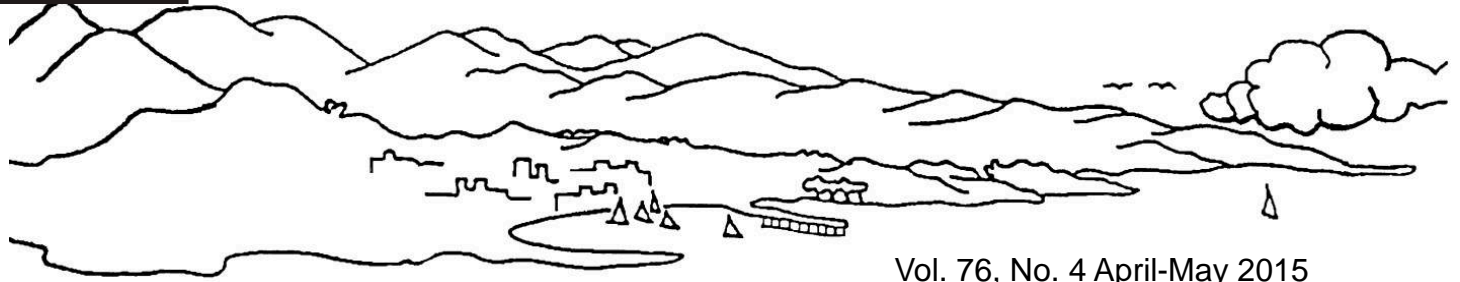




CHANNEL VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA

Serving South Santa Barbara County



Vol. 76, No. 4 April-May 2015

COMING UP:

April Units:

District Elections
Pages 3 & 8

May Units:

Education
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Annual Meeting:

June 13
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Wednesday, April 15 Community Forum:

Is this the Time to Establish a CCA to Provide Local Clean Energy?

A Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) is an agency set up to buy electricity with a high percentage of green energy for the power company to supply to an area's customers. Customers have the ability to choose this source or the power company mix. Our April Forum will explain this new concept.

Our speakers for the forum will include **Jeffery Litten** of the Community Environmental Council, the lead organization in the local CCA effort; **Joe Galliani** of the newest California CCA forming, South Bay Clean Energy, and County Supervisor **Salud Carbajal** or County Supervisor **Janet Wolf**.

There are a number of reasons to be interested in moving now to green sustainable sources of electricity. The major reason for most Americans is to respond to climate change with costs and effects that only increase drastically with time. Local action is especially important given the limited ability of the federal government to respond. Surprisingly a second reason is now economics. Electricity with a high percentage of green energy is now being supplied by California CCAs 4 to 5% cheaper than electricity from the utilities. Cities and ratepayers can save money and at the same time put CCA profits into local jobs in energy efficiency, solar, and green energy projects which are decided upon locally.

California is behind several other states in developing CCAs, but they have now been formed in Marin and Sonoma Counties in the north and are being formed in Lancaster and six coastal towns of Orange and LA counties in the south. The state has mandated that local governments have a plan for reducing greenhouse gases (GHGs) and a first milestone is in 2020. CCAs have been suggested as being an

Continued to Page 2

Wednesday, May 20 Community Forum: Money in Politics

This year one of the priorities of the national League of Women Voters has been to try to stop the flow of secret money into politics. The local League is also concerned about it, and in May we will ask some experts to discuss what the chances are for reducing the amount of money--or at least recording all of it so that the public will know where it comes from.

The state League will send Chris Carson from Burbank to talk about California efforts to control that money. We have invited a representative from the California Fair Political Practices Commission to explain what they are able to do. Our Co-President Susan Shank will moderate the meeting.

OFFICERS

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Membership,
& Community Education
Joanie Jones (2015)

Co-President
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Susan Shank (2015)

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Janice Rorick (2015)
Bonnie Lassen (2015)

Community Forums are held the third Wednesday of the month at Louise Lowry Davis Center, 1232 De la Vina Street, from 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.

A Message from Co-President Joanie Jones

This April-May issue is our final Channel Voter of the fiscal year, which ends June 30, 2015. It is also our first issue that is being mostly emailed to our members, with the exception of those members who have no email address. This summer you will receive email messages and an occasional letter. We appreciate any updates of your member information by phone, mail or email. Please save the date for our Annual Meeting--June 13. Our Annual Meeting agenda will be mailed around May 1.

Co-President Susan Shank and I wish to tell you again what a pleasure it has been to work with our members and our LWVSB Board for these several years as Co-Presidents. Our League has both experienced and newer members in charge of important areas of study and service. The cooperation of everyone helped make a vibrancy that is unsurpassed.



You will find the League booth at the Earth Day Festival on April 18 and 19 at Alameda Park. Our members will be there to help register voters and have materials on environmental, energy alternatives and climate change public policy positions.

Our website is able to support our Community Forums by showing many of them on video (and on our own YouTube channel) so you can watch them anytime. Please see this extraordinary work at lwvsantabarbara.org 24/7 at your beck and call.

Our League is thriving with the generous donation of your time, talent and financial support. You will note that our annual fundraising letter, the Together Again 2015 Campaign, arrived in your mailbox in mid-March. It is at this time each year that we ask each member to give extra support for our educational, voter service and advocacy work. We cannot continue our many projects without our member and friend support. Please give what you can to support your local League by retrieving your paper letter or printing one from this Channel Voter. Thank you all, both friends and members.

Joanie Jones, Co-President for Administration, Membership & Community Education

May Discussion Units:

Closing the Gap: How Pre-School and Common Core are Meeting the Challenge

At our May Units the Education Committee will update members about two key subjects--Local Pre-School programs and Common Core.

Both federal and state funded pre-school programs have compiled a significant track record of success, although there has been no increase in state funding since 2007-2008. At the same time, the gap in kindergarten readiness between high and low-income families has widened. Since 2002 there have been three major overhauls of K-12 education: Leave No Child Behind, Race to the Top, and now Common Core. All have had the basic goal of providing the same standard of quality education for all students, with a heavy concentration on math and English. All three have proven to be controversial. Accordingly discussion of these topics should provide a lively educational experience, as they have done for your Education Committee.

See Calendar on Page 8 for times and locations of the unit meetings.

Bill Marks, Education Committee Member

April 15 Forum (continued from Page

important part of several plans, but CCAs have not been acted on by either the county or the SB county cities. A stumbling block to a local CCA formation has been the several million dollar setup cost and the need for a vote on a bond to fund this. The existing California CCAs above have been able to pay off the bonds in several years and still supply higher percentages of green electricity at 4 to 5% less cost than the power companies. Is this the time to educate the public and seriously consider a local CCA to meet the 2020 GHG milestones?

Colin Jones, Sustainable Communities Committee Member

The Channel Voter is published four times a year (in September, November, February and March by the League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara. 328 East Carrillo Street, Suite A, Santa Barbara CA 93101.

Email: league@lwvsantabarbara.org; Web: www.lwvsantabarbara.org

Inside the League

Important Annual Meeting Notice

Since the City of Santa Barbara will change to district elections this November, it will be necessary for the League to decide whether to retain their policy of support for at-large elections. That policy position was adopted in the late 1960s, after years of dissatisfaction with the effects of district elections. The League felt that all Council members needed to concentrate on actions that were good for the whole city, and not just their neighborhood. We have now had 45 years of at-large elections to evaluate. During that time, the demographics in the city have been changing, with more minority voters being registered. Some feel that they have not had a fair chance to elect Council members.

The Elections Committee that you asked for at last year's Annual Meeting has been studying this issue for eight months, and following our April Units, and member input, that committee will make a recommendation to you. All members attending will get to vote on that recommendation, or on other options. It appears to us that there are three choices: retain the at-large position, simply remove it for now while we try district elections again, or support district elections as a way to involve more minority voting. Be thinking about these choices before you come to that meeting.

Connie Hannah, Co-Chair of the Elections Committee.

Report From the Elections Committee

LWVSB has a longstanding policy of supporting at-large city council elections. At our annual meeting in June 2014, the League voted to conduct a local study of district vs. at-large elections and appointed a committee to do so. Committee members are: Connie Hannah and Amanda Pelch (co-chairs), Susan Shank, Vicki Allen, Lindsey Baker, Marty Blum, Betsy Cramer, and Shane Stark.

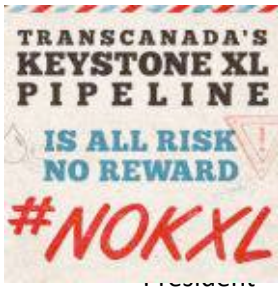
The committee held its first meeting in July 2014 and started by studying the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA) and the California Voting Rights Act of 2001 (CVRA). The latter makes it much easier for plaintiffs to prove discrimination and make a case against at-large elections. Just as the committee was getting underway, the city was sued for violation of the CVRA; the complaint was filed on July 29, 2014. The suit claims that at-large elections violate CVRA and dilute the Latino vote. It requests the court to mandate that the city design and implement district-based elections.

The suit was not a complete surprise. Other California cities (e.g. Visalia and Palmdale) have been sued for CVRA violations and lost. Costs of defending against the suits can be substantial (\$3 million or more). The city did not make an immediate decision (whether to defend in court or to negotiate). The League committee continued to work through the summer and fall. In January 2015, the committee presented a community forum on the question of whether the city should return to district elections. The speakers addressed both sides of the issue. The forum was well attended and covered by the media. It was video and audio taped, and is available on the League website. Committee members also made statements on behalf of the League to the City Council.

On Feb. 24, 2015, the city reached a settlement of the litigation. The city agreed to conduct by-district elections beginning in November 2015. There will be six districts, including two "majority-minority" districts in which Latinos will comprise a voting majority. Boundaries of the new districts were determined by the City Council, with input from the community. While that process was underway, the committee studied the various possible district maps.

The League is devoting its April Discussion Units to this topic. Committee members will lead each unit. We want to hear members' views on what the League should do about our current position that supports at-large elections. Please attend these unit meetings. See Calendar on Page 8 for dates and locations.

Susan Shank, LWVSB Co-President and Elections Committee Member



National Action

[LWVUS Action Alert: Urge the President to Fully Reject the Keystone XL Pipeline](#)

The League of Women Voters is proud to stand behind President Obama's veto of the Keystone Pipeline. But the fight is not over—President Obama and the U.S. State Department must still make a final decision on the Keystone XL pipeline. Click on the above Action Alert link to tell President Obama to put people before polluters by fully rejecting the Keystone XL pipeline.

LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara

League Encourages U.S. Representatives to Cosponsor DISCLOSE Act (NEW)

The League joined [a letter](#) asking members of the U.S. House to cosponsor H.R. 430, the DISCLOSE Act in honor of Sunshine Week.

League Joins Letter to U.S. House on H.R. 425 (NEW)

The League joined [a letter](#) to members of the U.S. House of Representatives encouraging them to support and cosponsor H.R. 425, legislation that would end coordination between Super PACs and candidates.

League Asks U.S. Representatives and Senators to Cosponsor "FRACK Pack" Bills (NEW)

The League signed on to [a letter](#) asking U.S. Senators and Representatives to cosponsor legislation that would help protect the environment and public health from the risks of oil and gas production including hydraulic fracturing. The set of bills is commonly referred to as the "Frack Pack."

League Joins Letter to EPA Regarding Ozone Standards (NEW)

The League joined with more than 85 environment groups, public health advocates, labor allies, environmental justice and civil rights organizations and faith groups [in support of revising](#) the primary National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for ozone to a level of 60 parts per billion (ppb).

Inside the League

April Showers?

There was no "March Miracle," as the one that ended the previous water shortage. Our rainy season is about to end. So there have been many articles about drought for the League's water committee to discuss. We recently talked about how the different water districts have such different water bills. We have also had reports from League member Lindsey Baker about Santa Barbara's water issues and from League member Linda Reimel about Carpinteria's water situation. Both attend our water committee meetings.

Our local League is currently looking for volunteers to attend the Goleta and Montecito water board meetings. If you would like to be notified about the next water committee meeting, contact Co-Chairs Pat Shewczyk, 964-7506, or Joan Kerns, 687-7035. We usually meet in the League office at noon on the last Tuesday of the month.

Pat Shewczyk, Water Committee Co-Chair

LWVSB Letter on District Elections

The League sent a letter to the City Council, expressing our strong support for voting rights. An excerpt from the LWVUS: "Nationally the League has worked to foster civic engagement and enhance access to the vote since we were founded in 1920. Over time our work has evolved from efforts to gain and foster women's suffrage to ensuring that all eligible voters—particularly those from traditionally underrepresented or under-served communities, including first time voters, non-college youth, new citizens, minorities, the elderly and low income Americans—have the opportunity and the information to exercise their right to vote."

The full letter (which also supports even-year elections) is available on our website, along with the video of our community forum on this issue and a legal analysis by Shane Stark (League Education Fund president and study committee member). See maps and videos of workshops and council sessions on the City of Santa Barbara's [website](#).

Inside the League

:WANTED!

RE: HEALTH CARE REFORM: Opportunities abound for Leaguers curious about the results and issues of the recent Affordable Care Act enrollment period and the continuing single payer movement to:

- Track emerging ACA/Covered California analysis in the media
- Interview local resources (SB Co. Public Health Dept., lunch with Tara Dooley of SB Community Health Initiative, local health insurance broker)
- Follow “Quote of the Day,” health policy updates at www.pnhp.org (Dr. Don McCanne of Physicians for a National Health Program)
- Come to a monthly (2nd Thursday) Health Care for All meeting at our League office
- Sign up for a shift at the League’s Earth Day booth/Healthcare corner along with Health Care for All volunteers. (April 18-19)
- Join Carole Marks on a HCR4US conference call with Leaguers from across the country (Sunday, April 23, 4- 5 p.m.)
- Co-host a “Medicare 50th Anniversary Celebration” co-sponsored by Health Care for All - SB and our League. (Thursday, July 30, at 6:45 p.m.; the theater at Valle Verde Retirement Community)
- Contact: carolemarks@cox.net or 805-682-1228

LWVSB to Co-Sponsor TGIF at Environmental Defense Center Friday, May 8 at 5:30 p.m.

Join us in the beautiful courtyard at 906 Garden Street at this popular event. Admission is \$15.

Winter Forums: top, “Why is Housing the First Priority for the Homeless?” and bottom, “Crimes Against Women”



News From the Web

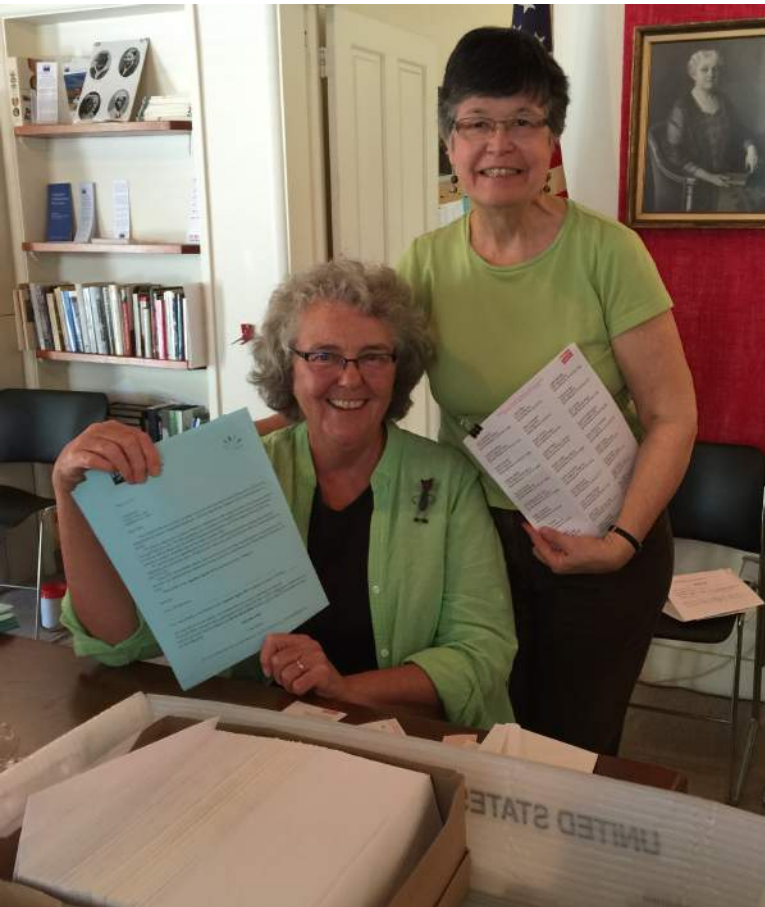
Subscribe to the New LWV Santa Barbara [YouTube Channel](#)

Watch the videos of “Crimes Against Women,” “District Elections,” and “Why is Housing the First Priority for the Homeless?”—our most recent Community Forums. Get email notifications of videos as we post them to the LWV Santa Barbara Channel by subscribing to our channel, which you can do from the link above. And of course you can attend the events live and in person. Check our [events page](#) for future events. You can also view our [calendar](#) for all our meetings and other gatherings.

LWV Santa Barbara Members-Only Website Not Just for Manuals and Handbooks

Want to call a new member, but you are stuck with an old directory? Our updated members directory (password protected) will be posted to our Members-Only Website soon. Board minutes and reports to the board will also be available there. Want to know what is going on inside the League? We are making the website a digital file cabinet of resources as well as creating more transparency. Members-Only website is a complement to, not a duplicate of the public website wsaantabarbara.org, which remains the main source of current public information. Contact me at wm@LWVSantaBarbara.org to gain access to the Members-Only Website.

Bonnie Lassen, Webmaster and Communications Committee Chair



Working on the mailing of annual fundraising letters (left) are Suzanne Brothan and Joanie Jones. Journalist and author Peggy Orchowski, right, speaks on Immigration and Voting at an evening forum.

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 Student \$35

Please send me more information about League 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
*Discounted dues are available for special circumstances: Amanda Pelch, 452-5804.

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 Amount \$_____

Name _____ Address _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____

Membership News: April 2014

Though it seems a bit early, I want to comment on Membership Renewals. As most know we send out our renewals in late July. Since there won't be another Channel Voter until September 2015 I wanted to remind everyone of the process. Our dues year is September through August each year. We send out renewal requests in July with a due date of Sept. 1. There is no dues increase this year.

Per our Bylaws (Article VIII Sec 2), once a member's dues are 60 days late that person will automatically no longer be a member. Please pay your dues promptly. Our treasury will appreciate it, and your name will be included in our directory.

A successful TGIF was held on March 13, 2015 at Bonnie Lassen's home. We reviewed our new YouTube site and talked with multiple perspective members. Two new members joined us from that evening.

Welcome: Ann Marshall, Amy Winslow, Kathleen Crevier and Marsha Omstead.

Thank you,
Amanda Pelch, Treasurer

In Memoriam: Virginia Chennel

Dear Members and Friends,

The League of Women Voters is a great way to stay informed and to make a difference in civic life by doing hands-on work to safeguard democracy. Like any organization, doing the work of the League costs money.

We hope to inspire you to make a financial contribution to the League at whatever level you can afford. Your gift helps to cover LWVSB operating costs, including our Channel Voter newsletter and Community Forums on critical issues such as District Elections, Immigration, and Crimes against Women. We also continue to conduct candidate forums and ballot measure talks.

We are focusing on expanding the diversity of our membership and outreach using media through videotaping and translating many of these events; these are posted on both our [website](#) and YouTube.

Your LWV Santa Barbara Board asks you to join us in giving financial support to our programs. You can show you understand the importance of our mission by contributing now. Please help us to continue our work.

Please make your **Together Again 2015** contribution today. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Your LWVSB Board



Yes! I am making a contribution to the **Together Again 2015** campaign to support LWVSB, \$_____

You may also go to our [website](#): to make your donation via PayPal.

Your gift will be processed as an undesignated gift to the LWVSB, a 501© 4 organization. Contributions are used for advocacy and accordingly are **not tax deductible**. However, gifts to the LWVSB Education Fund are tax deductible.



**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
Web: www.lwvsantabarbara.org

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Co-Presidents: Susan Shank
Joanie Jones
Voter Editor and Production: Vicki Allen

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.

Printed on recycled paper.

CALENDAR

APRIL 2015 DISCUSSION UNITS: District Elections

- 6 Monday: Valle Verde Unit, noon-2 p.m. (Special meeting, changed to first Monday)** Community Room, 900 Calle de los Amigos, Brown bag lunch. Contact: Joan Kerns, 678-7035.
- 7 Tuesday: Madam Lu's restaurant Unit, 5:30 p.m.,** 3524 State St. Contact Jane Honikman, 967-9757.
- 8 Wednesday: Carpinteria Unit, 10 a.m. Carpinteria Women's Club,** 1059 Vallecito Rd. Contact: Jane Benefield, 684-6086, or Charlene Little, 969-2956
- 11 Saturday: LWVSB Board Meeting, 10 a.m.** League Office, 328 East Carrillo St., Suite A
- 15 Wednesday: Community Forum: Is This the Time to Establish a CCA to Provide Local Clean Energy?, noon-2 p.m.,** Louise Lowry Davis Center, 1232 De La Vina St. Brown bag lunch; free and open to the public.
- 18 Saturday: Earth Day, 11 a.m.-7 p.m.,** Alameda Park. Visit the LWVSB table
- 19 Sunday: Earth Day, 11 a.m.-6 p.m.,** Alameda Park. Visit the LWVSB table

MAY 2015 DISCUSSION UNITS: Closing the Gap: How Pre-School and Common Core are Meeting the Challenge

- 5 Tuesday: Madam Lu's Restaurant Unit, 5:30 p.m.,** 3524 State St., 5:30 p.m. Contact Jane Honikman, 967-9757.
- 9 Saturday: LWVSB Board Meeting, 10 a.m.** League Office, 328 East Carrillo St., Suite A
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- 13 Wednesday: Carpinteria Unit, 10 a.m.** Carpinteria Women's Club, 1059 Vallecito Rd. Contact: Jane Benefield, 684-6086, or Charlene Little, 969-2956
- 20 Wednesday: Community Forum: Money in Politics, noon-2 p.m.,** Louise Lowry Davis Center, 1232 De La Vina St. Brown bag lunch; free and open to the public.

COMING UP:

May 14-17: LWVC Convention in San Diego. Theme: "Let the Sun Shine In." For more information, [visit the state league's convention site.](#)

June 13: LWVSB Annual Meeting, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

This will be the last Channel Voter until September 2015. To stay in touch during the summer, check the LWVSB website (lwvsantabarbara.org) and look for "News From LWVSB" emails for the latest event information.