

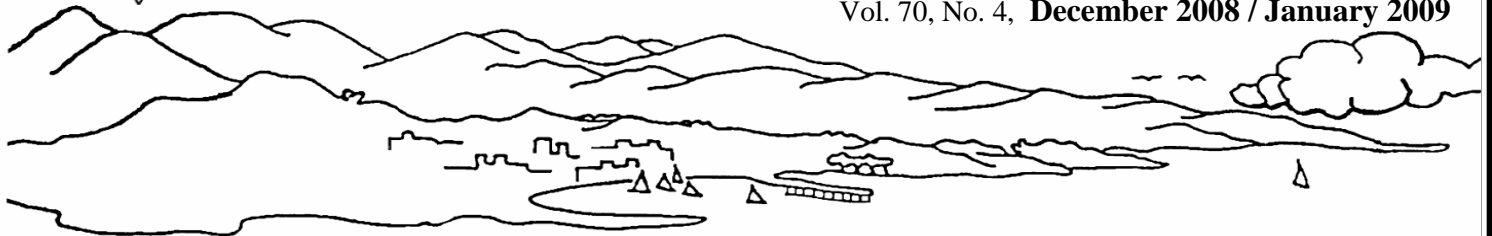


Channel *VOTER*

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA, INC. • 328 A East Carrillo St., Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Serving South Santa Barbara County

Vol. 70, No. 4, December 2008 / January 2009



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DECEMBER HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

COME MEET YOUR ELECTED SCHOOL BOARD OFFICIALS & OUR SANTA BARBARA YOUTH COUNCIL

Wednesday, December 17, 12:15-2 p.m.

Louise Lowry Davis Community Center - De La Vina & Victoria Streets

The December Community Forum is the time to enjoy the company of our fellow League members as well as meeting some of our elected officials informally. If you wish to sign up for finger foods or donations, please call Pat Shewczyk.

We have invited the members of the Santa Barbara School Board and will have a chance to get acquainted with the ongoing and newly elected members. We will also meet members of the Santa Barbara Youth Council who collaborated with the League's Voter Service Committee to co-sponsor the School Board Candidate Forum in October. With their fresh perspective we look forward to interesting conversation as we rotate our guests to different tables so that they can talk with as many of you as possible.

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JANUARY COMMUNITY FORUM

THE COMING YEAR FOR PLAN SANTA BARBARA

Wednesday, January 21, 2009, 12:15-2 p.m.

Louise Lowry Davis Community Center - De La Vina & Victoria Streets

The future direction of the City of Santa Barbara is now being created by the update of the city's General Plan. The League has been working for three years on this update, trying to understand all the issues and providing input at public workshops. **Bette Weiss**, the City Planner, will introduce our forum by outlining the next steps for Plan Santa Barbara, which includes an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the city's resource constraints, and future public workshops. With the League concern for living within our resources, this will be a very important document. Bette will be accompanied by John Ledbetter, Project Planner, and Barbara Shelton, Environmental Analyst, who will be available to answer questions.

They will be followed by City Planning Commissioner **Harwood (Bendy) White**, who will talk about some of the questions that the city has had to answer in determining our future. Our third speaker will be a League member who has worked on Plan Santa Barbara. She will discuss some of the questions the League has raised throughout this long process. The Sustainable Communities Committee has been evaluating the various city proposals from the beginning of the update (see page 4 for background). Come and bring your friends who are interested in what Santa Barbara will look like in the future!

Connie Hannah, First Vice President (Action)

No December units; see p. 2 for January Units.

The fire this time:

"Homeland Security at Home"

As I write this, the Tea Fire has just been declared 100% contained. Over 200 homes were destroyed - entire neighborhoods wiped out. Although I haven't yet heard of any League members who lost their homes, each of us probably knows someone who lost not only their home, but also nearly everything they owned.



Yet we all know that it could have been much worse. This community is far better prepared than most for disasters. While we couldn't prevent the nearly hurricane-force winds, or the drought, many residents made "defensible space" around their houses or designed the buildings themselves to be fire-resistant. Deputy Fire Chief Tom Franklin (by the time you read this, he'll be interim County Fire Chief) considers those homeowners "heroes"; he points out that they helped not only save many of their own homes, but also their neighbors' homes.

And residents had participated in evacuation drills and took the warnings to heart, so the evacuation was very successful. The ultimate both in fire-resistant buildings and in following evacuation plans was, of course, the gym at Westmont College, where students and faculty had been trained to shelter in place. They survived too, in what must have been terrifying circumstances.

Once again, our fire and law enforcement agencies worked together extraordinarily well - with fire engines coming from nearby departments and even other counties, sometimes even before they were requested. Helicopter pilots flew all night, in dangerous winds - both Los Angeles' copters and some local ones. This is one of the few places in the world where this is done, and it surely helped

keep the fire from spreading all over town. Police and sheriffs helped with the evacuation, which might have been a horrendous traffic problem on some of those narrow roads, and then patrolled evacuated areas to prevent looting. County Fire Chief Sherrei must surely have planned a more relaxing weekend to celebrate his retirement.

The agencies had even learned some lessons from last summer's Gap Fire, about how to get information out to the public. Not that they were perfect, but they really worked to keep us informed.

Our community also just experienced a man with a gun trying to make a statement - but no one knew at first that he wasn't a terrorist, and that the gun wasn't loaded. We didn't fare as well that day; the impossible traffic when the freeway was shut down suggests we have more lessons to learn. But no lives were lost, and in the end the gunman surrendered peacefully, and it's comforting to know that we have a SWAT team who are not only well trained, but humane.

What does this all have to do with "Homeland Security at Home?" Perhaps it's best summed up in a bill that Governor Schwarzenegger recently signed. AB 38 (by our Assemblyman, Pedro Nava) combined the state Office of Emergency Services with the state's Office of Homeland Security, to make a new department. This new department will put the emphasis back on all-hazards emergency preparedness, as opposed to subordinating everything else under homeland security. Clearly for us the greater threat was the natural (though manmade) disaster, but preparedness for both has common elements, including the perhaps obvious fact that it depends on both our public safety employees and on the public for its success.

Linda Phillips, President

JANUARY DISCUSSION UNITS: STATE LEAGUE PROGRAMMING

We begin the new year with Discussion Units on our suggestions to the California State League (LWVC) board on the issues we think need priority attention in the next two-year period. This is when we activate our grassroots capabilities by choosing the state League's direction.

We'll look at our current state positions and decide whether we wish to retain, update, or drop them. Then we will discuss what issues should be our education and advocacy focus the next two years. On the **state level**, we have been concentrating on Health Care, State Education, and Redistricting these past two years. Do we want to undertake any studies that might lead to new positions? For example, the Exploratory LWVC Prison Study Committee, initiated at last May's LWVC Leadership Council, is pursuing a suggestion to propose a study of the California Prison System for the 2009-2011 period. We need to keep in mind that studies and updates require funding and volunteers, so if you are interested in a selected study program, you will want to consider joining the local study committee.

We hope to see you at whichever unit is most convenient for you. Please join us in making these decisions!

Carole Marks and Connie Hannah, Program Development Committee

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



LWV Vice President Trudy Jarratt spoke about the state League's vision for the future at our November Community Forum at the Cabrillo Pavilion on East Beach (our usual location, the Louise Lowry Davis Center, was being used to assist those who had lost homes in the Tea fire only a few days earlier).

HOW OUR PROGRAM PLANNING PROCESS DEVELOPED

Current League practice is to begin state and national program planning at the grassroots level, but it was not always thus. Since our January units are devoted to state program planning, members may be interested in the following excerpts from a brief historical overview of the League's Program Planning process and Adoption of Program. It was presented to the 2007 National Council by LWVUS Board Member Elisabeth MacNamara. (For the full text, visit the LWVUS Web site, moving from Home to For Members to Training and Resources to League History.)

“The League of Women Voters was initially organized as a national organization consisting of four directors who selected one of their own as president. Convention was an annual event and was attended by delegates from each state league and each congressional district. This structure mirrored the organizational structure of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. From the beginning, the LWV struggled to determine its mission. Was it to educate newly enfranchised women on the political process and civic responsibility? Was it to educate women on the substantive issues that they would confront as they became politically active? Or was it a combination of the two? From the first, League leaders discovered that the civic involvement is inseparable from knowledge of the issues. At the 1927 convention, the second president of the LWV, Belle Sherwin, likened the League of Women Voters to “a university without walls...whose members enter to learn and remain to shape the curriculum.” At its first convention in 1920, prior to the ratification of the 19th amendment, League delegates adopted a program consisting of 60 items covering everything from social policy legislation to electoral reform and consumer protection. The first president, Maud Wood Parks described it as a “kettle of eels” . . .

“The League operated by means of standing committees in the early years. Initially organized around the various social programs that the convention adopted as priorities, the committee structure was continually modified to meet the realities of time and money. Up until the 1950s, program adopted at convention was then prioritized by the national board. Study occurred as the state and local Leagues gathered the information necessary to take action. . . . Program came from the top down. State and local Leagues could remain silent on League program but could not speak out against it. . .

“By the 1950s, the organization had matured. State and local Leagues were actively pursuing program of their own and had become stronger than the national organization in many ways. The League had evolved into a true grass roots organization. . .

“By 1968, the bylaws provided that “Program... shall consist of those governmental issues chosen for concerted study and action.” Program categories consisted of the current agenda which were defined as those “governmental issues chosen for sustained attention and concerted action” and continuing responsibilities consisting of “positions on governmental issues to which the League has given sustained attention and on which it may continue to act.” Program was adopted at convention in much the fashion that it currently is...”

What will your legacy be?

Earlier this year we included the **League of Women Voters** in our estate planning. We made this decision because we believe strongly in the mission and want the League to continue into the future.



Back row: Kyle, Kaiti, Jesse
Front row: Dylan, Frank, Trudy, Kelsie

Our gift is in honor of our grandchildren, to insure they will be informed citizens, are able to enjoy living in a democracy with an open and accessible government, and will benefit from the League's influence on public policy.

Trudy and Frank Jarratt, LWV San Luis Obispo County

LEAGUE COMMENTS FOR PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOPS ON POLICY PREFERENCES FOR PLAN SANTA BARBARA

As background for the January Community Forum there is an excerpt from one of our statements to the Planning Commission:

The League is concerned that much of this document does not reflect what the public said they wanted in many of the original Plan Santa Barbara workshops: maintain Santa Barbara's small town character, protect views and open space, and relieve congestion. The general plan update was to be an exercise in true public participation, yet the public has never said they wanted significantly increased density and significant up-zoning.

Some of our concerns:

- 1) The public has not been given the information necessary to make informed decisions. Information on updated resource constraints has not been updated nor has the true cost of increasing density ever been spelled out. We do not believe that residents want to pay higher taxes for restoring the desalination plant to increase water supply, expand the sewage treatment plant, and increase city services.
- 2) To produce high density along transportation corridors, the city is proposing hundreds more housing units. Single family zones will be changed by the potential of many additional granny units. Multi-family zones, R2, R3, and R4, will be up-zoned to accommodate more units, as long as they are within 1/2 mile of transit corridors. Parking requirements are recommended to be reduced in an attempt to force people out of their cars.

There is no evidence that people will get out of their cars and use public transit just because they are housed near transit corridors. City-certified EIRs for projects on State Street show daily trip generation as

approximately six trips per day for a condo. The parking reductions envisioned by the new policies would require major life-style changes, and the evidence from other communities does not support this. The City of Santa Barbara has to live within its financial resources. There is no evidence that there is the money to provide the vastly improved public transit that these changes would require. Car sharing programs are not in place. Without showing that the mitigations of these proposed policies exist, the city is setting itself up for failure.

- 3) There is no evidence that these new units will be affordable to the workforce that presently must either commute or live in over-crowded housing. If the units are not truly affordable, commuting will increase. Evidence from the south coast region shows that affordability requires subsidies. Developers of mixed-use projects say they must be able to produce luxury units in order to subsidize the required 15% workforce units. In order to get long term rentals with 20% affordable apartments, the City of Goleta was forced to provide the developer a multi-million dollar subsidy. The much acclaimed St. Vincent's project, where the land was already in the possession of the developer, required subsidies from over ten sources to produce truly affordable housing. The city does not have the money to subsidize affordable housing in the amounts required.

The general plan update should not abandon tried and true policies in favor of new ones that will change Santa Barbara. You need to focus on what will preserve and protect the city for its existing and future residents.

Cathie McCammon, Land Use Consultant

NAPLES COALITION UPDATE

The Naples Coalition filed a lawsuit on the Santa Barbara Ranch Project on November 20. This included General Plan, Coastal Plan, Coastal Act, and CEQA issues. The Coalition will also be challenging Santa Barbara County's request for approval of the necessary county Local Coastal Plan amendments for this project by the California Coastal Commission. At the present time the Coalition is awaiting the complete filing by the county of its request. The county's initial request was rejected as incomplete. After this, the Coalition will be challenging all of the Coastal Development Approvals necessary for this project.

As you can see much is going on and the Coalition needs your financial help more than ever. Please understand and tell your friends not to be depressed by the Board of

Supervisors' approval of the Santa Barbara Ranch project. Coastal Commission approvals are still necessary and everyone expected that this project would end up in litigation. There will be more to report to you in the future.

The Naples Coalition would like to honor and thank Kristen Hoyer who has served as our wonderful volunteer coordinator for many years and wish her well in her studies in Thailand. We also welcome Janet Koed who will be taking Kristen's place and serving as our new volunteer coordinator. Janet has been a faithful, hard working volunteer over the years and we know she will do a wonderful job.

*Cathie McCammon
League Representative to the Naples Coalition*

Government Integrity Reform Agenda for 111th Congress

Brennan Center for Justice • Campaign Legal Center • Common Cause • Democracy 21
League of Women Voters • Public Citizen • U.S. PIRG

November 6, 2008

Statement of Reform Groups Announcing

Government Integrity Reform Agenda for the 111th Congress

The following statement was issued by the Brennan Center for Justice, the Campaign Legal Center, Common Cause, Democracy 21, the League of Women Voters, Public Citizen and U.S. PIRG. (Read the groups' government integrity reform agenda for the 111th Congress here below.)

Our organizations worked hard to pass the landmark ethics and lobbying reforms that were enacted in the 110th Congress. At the time, we said that our next major battle would be to reform the way federal campaigns are financed.

A central theme of the 2008 presidential race was the need to fix Washington. President-elect Obama, for example, said during the campaign, "to fix health care we have to fix Washington."

In order to fix Washington, the fundamental problems caused by the undue influence of contributions over government decisions must be effectively addressed. While other issues on our reform agenda are important, the way Washington works is not going to change until we fundamentally change the nation's campaign finance laws.

In order to accomplish this goal, the overriding priority on our reform agenda for the 111th Congress is to repair the presidential public financing system and to create a new public financing system for congressional races.

The key role that influence-money played in creating the national financial crisis provides just one more example of the enormous costs to citizens and taxpayers that come from federal candidates being dependent on special interest groups, lobbyists, bundlers, and large contributions, for their campaign funds.

It is widely acknowledged that the absence of effective regulation and oversight played a major role in the massive financial crisis that has occurred. Campaign contributions to federal officeholders from the financial sector played a major role in thwarting such effective regulation and oversight.

It is no coincidence that during the past decade, the financial sector contributed \$1.5 billion to federal candidates and their parties, according to the Center for Responsive Politics, with 56% of the funds going to Republicans and 44% of the funds going to Democrats - a bipartisan approach to influence-seeking.

Our organizations call on President-elect Obama and members of Congress to take action to fundamentally reform the nation's campaign finance laws.

The Agenda

Overriding Priority for Fixing Washington

Repair the public financing system for presidential elections and create a new public financing system for congressional elections.

Other Campaign Finance Issues

- Close major campaign finance loopholes: ban joint fundraising committees used by presidential candidates to circumvent candidate contribution limits; prevent presidential candidates from using candidate/party "hybrid ads" to avoid counting full costs of ads against public financing spending limits; curb Leadership PACs;
- Reform and strengthen the Federal Election Commission; press for Commissioners to be appointed by the President based on qualifications and experience;
- Ensure that independent groups making expenditures for TV ads and other public communications to

influence federal elections comply with federal campaign finance laws;

- Strengthen existing bundling disclosure rules to require federal candidates to disclose the total amount raised by each bundler (not just by each registered lobbyist) who raises more than a threshold amount for their campaigns.

Ethics and Lobbying Issues

- Ensure that the new congressional ethics rules and lobbying disclosure law enacted in the 110th Congress are properly interpreted and effectively enforced;
- Ensure that the new Office of Congressional Ethics is properly implemented;
- Reform the Executive Branch Office of Government Ethics; strengthen Executive Branch ethics rules;
- Support "Public Corruption Prosecution Improvements Act" to close loopholes in the public corruption laws and strengthen their enforcement.

HOW SHOULD WE BE ELECTING THE PRESIDENT?

A national League study of the presidential election process resulted in the 1970 position supporting the direct election of the president by popular vote as an essential element of representative government. That position was expanded and updated in 2002 and 2004 to take in the entire presidential selection process. Then at the 2008 National Convention in Portland the delegates voted to adopt a new study called “The Advisability of Using the National Popular Vote Compact among the States as a Method of Electing the President.”

This study should begin early in 2009 and will be completed by June. Anyone concerned about the continued use of the electoral college will be very interested in learning how this Compact could work to elect the President of the United States in a really democratic way. Several states have already signed on to this compact, and the California legislature has already begun to consider it. As we did for the 1970 study, LWVSB is forming a committee to study “NPV”. If you would like to participate in this study, please call President Linda Phillips.

Connie Hannah, First Vice President (Action)

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Look for a new edition of our directory, which will be mailed to you in early December.

Please welcome new members:

Andrea Smith

George Ritchey

Angelika Von Roos

Renewed or reinstated:

Denis C. Adler

Change of address and phone number:

Kathryn & Art Halenbeck

Anne and Tom Heck

The Membership Committee is always happy to have help at Community Forums, new member gatherings, directory and membership renewal mailings, data input, and nametag updating.

Now is the time to thank all of you who have renewed your local league membership for the September 1 expiration date. You are supporting a fine organization on the local, state and national levels when you continue your support of the LWV of Santa Barbara.

I encourage those who have not yet put that envelope and/or yellow interest survey in the mail to do so. We are an all volunteer organization and would like to know your interests and level of availability. So as my letter said, "It is that TIME AGAIN!" Please send your renewal of membership, \$60 (\$30/student), to League of Women Voters, 328 A E. Carrillo St, Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

Joanie Jones, Membership Development and Data Administrator

LEAGUE RESOURCE LIBRARY

The League office has a Resource Library consisting of :

- League publications
- Videos of past Community Forums
- Videos of Environmental and Other Issues
- Books about political personalities and issues

These are available for members to borrow, read and enjoy.

The office is not staffed regularly, but if you call me, I will be glad to make arrangements to open the office so that you may take advantage of our Resource Library.

Sheila Kamhi, Office Manager

If you know someone who might be interested in the League, please pass along this form:

MEMBERSHIP FORM to join LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA

Here's my annual membership dues of \$60*

Name _____

Second member in same household \$30

Address _____

Student \$30

_____ Zip _____

Please send me more information about League

Phone _____ Fax _____

I can't join right now; here is my contribution of
\$_____ to support the League.

E-mail _____

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. Contact Joanie Jones.*

CALENDAR - DECEMBER 2008

No Discussion Units this month

- 3 Wednesday "Sick Around the World" documentary sponsored by Health Care for All. 7 to 9 p.m. Singing Springs Clubhouse/Office, 5455 8th Street, Carpinteria. Contact: Joan Hebert.
- 12 Friday Board Meeting: 10 a.m., League office, 328 E. Carrillo, Suite A. Open to all members.
- 17 Wednesday December Holiday Luncheon: Guests are members of the **Santa Barbara School Board** and the **Youth Council**. 12:15 – 2 p.m. Louise Lowry Davis Center, corner of De La Vina and Victoria Streets. Lunch will be provided.

CALENDAR - JANUARY 2009

Discussion Units: State Program Planning

- 6 Tuesday Dinner Unit: 5:30 p.m. Madam Lu's Café, 3542 State St. Contact: Lolly Quackenbush.
- 7 Wednesday Carpinteria Unit: 10:00-11:30 a.m. Carpinteria Woman's Club, 1059 Vallecito Rd., Carpinteria. Contact: Barbara Godley.
- 7 Wednesday Evening Unit: 7:30 p.m. Home of Pat Shewczyk.
- 9 Friday Board Meeting: 10 a.m., League office, 328 E. Carrillo, Suite A. Open to all members.
- 14 Wednesday Afternoon Unit: 2 p.m. Maravilla Clubhouse, 5486 Calle Real, between Patterson and Kellogg. Contact: Marjorie Nefstead.
- 19 Monday Channel Voter deadline for February issue
- 21 Wednesday Community Forum: "The Coming Year for Plan Santa Barbara." 12:15-2 p.m. Louise Lowry Davis Center, corner of De La Vina and Victoria Streets. Speakers: **Bette Weiss**, City Planner and **Bendy White**, City Planning Commissioner. Brown bag lunch. Drinks and cookies provided.

LOOKING FORWARD TO FEBRUARY 2009

- 3 Tuesday Dinner Unit: 5:30 p.m. Madam Lu's Café, 3542 State St.
- 4 Wednesday Carpinteria Unit: 10:00-11:30 a.m. Carpinteria Woman's Club, 1059 Vallecito Rd., Carpinteria.
- 4 Wednesday Evening Unit: 7:30 p.m. Home of Sheila Kamhi.



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
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328 A East Carrillo Street
Santa Barbara, California 93101**

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