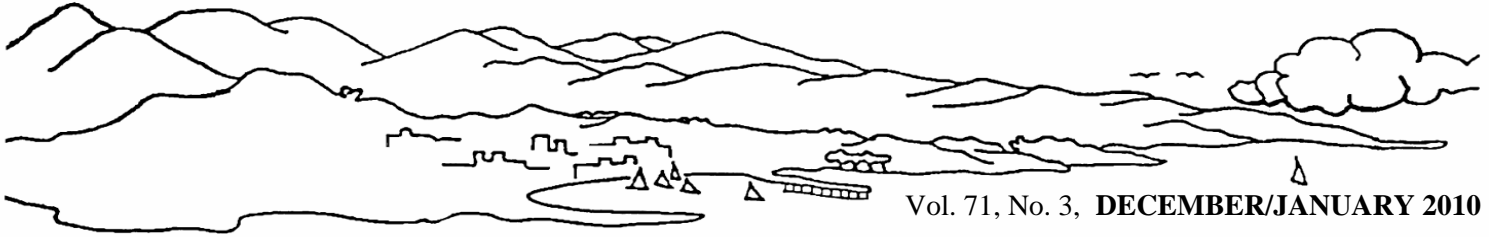




CHANNEL VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA

Serving South Santa Barbara County



Vol. 71, No. 3, DECEMBER/JANUARY 2010

DECEMBER HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

Meet Your Elected Officials!

Wednesday, December 15, 2010, at 12 - 2 p.m., Louise Lowry Davis Community Center
Corner of De La Vina & Victoria Streets

The League has invited members of the Santa Barbara City Council and our three South County Supervisors to join us at our special Holiday Luncheon this year. This will be your chance to get acquainted with them and discuss local issues that interest you. We will be serving our usual flavorful buffet, and parking is free, and easy. We will introduce the officials to you and let them say a little about their future plans. Then we will ask

them to rotate to different tables so they can meet as many members as possible.

Working with government officials is one of the important roles of the League, and we are glad to have their input as often as possible. We hope that you will join us for this very special event. If you have not had a chance to sign up to bring food or make a donation, please call Pat Shewczyk at 964-7506.

Connie Hannah, First Vice-President

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Jean Phillips (off board)

JANUARY COMMUNITY FORUM

Our Global Democracy Program - Watering the Grass Roots Around the World

Wednesday, January 19, 2011, at 12 - 2 p.m., Louise Lowry Davis Community Center
Corner of De La Vina & Victoria Streets

The League has long recognized that it is important not only to develop voter support for an effective foreign policy in the United States, but also to share what we have learned in the process with citizens of other countries who also seek to promote voter education and greater citizen involvement in determining the policies of their governments. Our January Community Forum will focus on what the LWVUS is accomplishing through its Global Democracy Program and how we might participate in its activities. Our speaker will be **Sarah Diefendorf**, an international trainer who has been to eight countries for this program.

(Continued on page 5)

DISCUSSION UNITS

There be no discussion Units in December

JANUARY UNITS - State Program Planning

Do you care about voting? Never miss an election? Then you need to come to our January discussion units!

The League sets its agenda through the Program Planning process. You voted in November because you care about who will be setting our political future; now you need to come make your

(Continued on page 4)

Our national League has been active since the election, trying to achieve some of our priorities for this term during the lame duck session of Congress. Here are some items from the November 18 LWVUS Leaders Update. Please note that more details are available online; go to www.lwv.santabarbara.org and read this VOTER on our website, and the links will be live.



it quits for 2010. This morning at its press conference on Capitol Hill, the League again is urging the Senate to pass the DISCLOSE Act during this "lame duck" session. [See the letter from LWV President Elisabeth MacNamara on page 5 of this VOTER.]

In Support of the New START Treaty
Read LWVUS President MacNamara's letter to the editor in the *New York Times* regarding its Nov. 7 editorial, "Plenty of Work for the Lame Duck: And Other

LWVUS Privatization Study Committee

In accordance with direction from Convention 2010, the LWVUS will undertake a study of "Privatization: the policy agenda to transfer government functions, services and assets to the private sector." This study will focus on the impact of privatizing government services on local communities. Committee members will be responsible for developing study materials and consensus questions and reviewing/tabulating responses submitted by participating Leagues. Based on the submitted responses, the Committee will recommend position language to the Board. If you are interested in being a member of the Study Committee, please complete the online application form and submit it along with your resume no later than December 16, 2010.

ADVOCACY

Action Alert on DISCLOSE Act:

Protect Your Vote

In this year's elections, secret money ran rampant. If we're going to cleanse our democracy with a strong dose of transparency that eliminates this kind of spending in our elections then we need action before Congress calls

Urgent Business."

In September, national League President Elisabeth MacNamara sent a letter to the Senate urging them to ratify the new START Treaty which was signed by President Obama and President Medvedev in April 2010. The START treaty is the first arms control agreement between the U. S. and Russia in nearly a decade. It calls for regular inspections and timely exchanges of information regarding nuclear arsenals.

Office of Congressional Ethics under Attack

ABC News cites League's call to Congress not to shut down the Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE) and quotes LWVUS Senior Director Lloyd Leonard in "Are GOP Leaders Quietly Trying to Axe Office of Congressional Ethics?"

Open and Civil

The LWVUS sent an e-mail message recently to members and supporters on the League's continuing efforts to help our fellow citizens discuss the issues in a civil and fact-based way, and fight for transparency, accountability, and disclosure in America's elections.

Linda Phillips, President

Social Policy Interest Group Meeting: Changed Date

The regular meeting of the LWVSB Social Policy Interest Group (SPIG) is postponed to Thursday, December 2 due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. Also, the time has changed to 3:30PM to accommodate those who prefer not to drive in the dark.

As usual, the meeting will take place at the LWVSB office and we will report on/discuss current events and other items of interest related to League Social Policy issues. I will have an update on the Pro-Choice Coalition's Roe Anniversary Event and Jane Honikman will have a report on the AAUW event in Santa Maria.

Please note that this will be our last meeting of 2010, since the December meeting also falls during a Holiday week. We will review how our meetings are going and anything we would like to do differently in the New Year.

Beth Pitton-August

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.

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CALIFORNIA HAILS VOTERS' CONFIRMATION OF REDISTRICTING REFORM

PROPOSITION 27 IS DEFEATED

On November 2, California voters decisively rejected Proposition 27 and the attempt to destroy the far-reaching redistricting reform passed by the voters in 2008. The League of Women Voters hails the election result. Californians understood that Proposition 27 was a politicians' scheme to seize power from the voters and avoid accountability. They saw it for what it was, and stopped it dead in its tracks. Proposition 20, which adds congressional redistricting to the work of the independent Citizens Redistricting Commission, also passed on November 2. The voters have spoken, and while the League opposed Proposition 20 as premature, it is committed to doing the utmost to make the redistricting process—now including congressional districts—to work well for the people of California.

The League remains committed to working with partners in the government reform and voting rights communities to achieve the best possible implementation of the Citizens Redistricting Commission that Californians have so clearly stated they want. League members will continue to monitor the process, educate the public, and engage in grass roots efforts to empower communities and neighborhoods across the state to fully participate in all phases of the mapping process.

With this election behind us, it's time for the Commission and all Californians to get to work and make redistricting reform a reality for California.

For more information, or to sign up for redistricting updates, visit the LWVC redistricting page at <http://lwvc.org/lwvc/issues/redistricting.html>.

REDISTRICTING OBSERVER CORPS AND MEDIA WATCH TRAINING

Wednesday, January 12 from 7 to 7:45pm

Here's your chance to join a great new League project! A key element of the new redistricting process is its transparency; the public will be able to watch and to give input to the Citizens Redistricting Commission at its meetings all across the state.

You can help keep the public informed about how redistricting is being implemented, by joining the new **LWV Observer Corps and Media Watch** group. The goals are to give League members and the public a running account of how the process is working; and at the end, to issue a 'Report Card' about how well it actually worked. Similarly, the Media Watch observers will look at whether, and how, the Commission activities are being reported by the press and other media.

If you can't attend a meeting in person, you can watch meetings streamed live on the Internet, or videos posted of the proceedings at [the State Auditor's redistricting Web site](http://theStateAuditor'sredistrictingWeb.site): www.wedrawthelines.ca.gov.

The first 8 members of the Redistricting Commission have just been chosen. The new Commission meetings start November 30, with selection of the remaining 6 members by December 31. Then the Commission will start its work in earnest, drawing the lines.

Learn more about the Redistricting Observer Corps and how to report your observations by participating in an online training session, or "webinar", on **Wednesday, January 12 from 7 to 7:45pm**. Observers will be filing reports online, so this session will explain how to do it.

Register for this free training at the LWVC members-only website (email info@lwvsanta-barbara.org with any questions). If you have any questions or want to join the Observer Corps, contact Chris Carson, LWVC Program Director/Redistricting at www.redistricting@lwv.org.

PLAN SANTA BARBARA DISAGREEMENT STILL UNRESOLVED

On November 23, the Santa Barbara City Council failed to adopt the City's long-debated General Plan Update (Plan Santa Barbara) and said that it would next be considered in February. At that time new Council Member and former Planning Commissioner Bandy White volunteered to work on the Ad Hoc Committee that has been trying to negotiate a compromise between the opposing views on increasing housing density downtown.

When the Council's Ad Hoc Committee broke up after an acrimonious meeting on November 19th, no new progress had been made. League hoped that the agreements worked out in two prior sessions would remain in place, because we had supported them actively. Those changes had removed High Density designations from the historic area downtown and along State Street. They had also added some high density along the Haley-Cota corridor, where land is cheaper and there are some possible sites for building the affordable housing the city wants.

The League had worked with the Citizens Planning Association (CPA), Coastal Housing Coalition and John Campanella to write a letter to the Council supporting the early work of the Ad Hoc committee, and six other major planning groups had signed on to it. This pleased and



astonished the council, and led to hopes that one more negotiating session might prove decisive. However, when the third meeting broke up without further progress it appeared that Plan SB could not be passed at the final council session before the holidays. After that meeting, Councilman Das Williams will leave to be sworn into his new Assembly seat, and the council will remain split 3 to 3 on whether to approve the Plan. Five affirmative votes are needed to pass the general plan update. Whether the prior desirable compromises will be included in the Plan remains to be seen.

One proposal that came up during the last negotiating session was to remove of all High Density (base zoning 27-45 units per acre) from the city, and make those areas all Medium-High Density (12-25 units per acre). The League, CPA and Allied Neighborhood Association could all support that, but the activists who want to see more building permitted probably will not. The Plan calls for a 50% Overlay for rental or employer-sponsored housing, so that for those categories more units would be allowed. The League has been supportive of allowing even greater density for small units in those two categories, but we have been opposed to allowing more density for market rate units.

Connie Hannah, First Vice President

January Units - State Program Planning - (Continued from page 1)

voice heard about what you want the League's future to be.

We'll be discussing League policy and positions at the state level.

Using our current positions, which hot issues do we want to focus on for the next two years? League calls these "issues for education and advocacy". For instance, we advocated for redistricting reform (Prop. 11 in 2008), and then against its repeal (Prop. 27) in the November election. Now we are monitoring and participating in its implementation; we've moved from advocacy to community education on this issue.

Is there an issue League should have been able to act on, but can't? If so, should we undertake a new statewide study, or update an old position? What are the issues of special concern to us here on the South Coast? If you want your voice to be heard, then attend the Program Planning meeting. It's the start of the grassroots process, and the place for each of us to make our opinions heard.

As a reminder, we have four discussion units, but some have changed for the coming year.

- **Dinner unit** - first Tuesday of the month, 5:30 p.m., Madame Lu's
- **Evening unit** - first Wednesday, 7:30 p.m., alternating between Pat Shewczyk's and Sheila Kamhi's homes
- **Carpinteria unit** - second Wednesday, 10 a.m., Carpinteria Women's Club
- **Valle Verde unit** - second Wednesday, 2 p.m., at Valle Verde

LETTER FROM LWVUS

I couldn't be prouder of the League this election season. During my [travels to nine states](#) before the elections, I saw firsthand the incredible work done by local Leagues and their volunteers registering tens of thousands of new voters, providing nonpartisan information on the candidates through millions of printed and online voters' guides, and holding hundreds of candidate debates seen and heard by thousands over the course of the campaign.

Our examination of this year's election has brought to light two major players during this election season that demand our immediate attention: [secret money and incivility](#).

When the Supreme Court ruled on the *Citizens United* case earlier this year, huge amounts of secret money were turned loose in American politics. Congress' failure to act and pass the DISCLOSE Act only added to this problem.

As a result, not surprisingly, voters were overwhelmed by millions of dollars in negative ads this year but didn't know who paid for many of them. [Leagues across the country have been calling on their elected officials to support the DISCLOSE Act](#), which would require corporations and unions to disclose the dollars they spend in elections.

With the 2012 presidential election season having already begun on November 3, the League will continue to address the other major issue this election season: incivility. The tone of the 2010 campaign exhibited a disturbingly new low in American politics. Not only was this evident in the expensive advertising, but we also saw it in candidate debates and forums and in the public discourse.

As we have for the past 90 years, the League will continue to help our fellow citizens discuss the issues in a civil and fact-based way, and fight for transparency, accountability, and disclosure in America's elections!

Voters, not money, should be at the center of our democracy.

Sincerely, Elisabeth MacNamara, President, LWVUS

January Community Forum - Our Global Democracy Program, *(Continued from page 1)*

The Global Democracy program is the League of Women Voters' program for activists and non-governmental organizations worldwide. Working with groups abroad to increase their voice in stressing transparency, accountability, and good governance in their societies, the League assists in expanding community influence in public policy-making processes while helping citizens build leadership skills through interactive, hands-on training and citizen exchange programs. The League partners with groups such as Friendship Force when League members travel to countries around the world to educate themselves, share information with other women and participate in international training programs. LWVUS is registered as a Private Voluntary Organization with USAID and is part of the Registry of Civil Society Organizations with the Organization of American States.

Diefendorf has been a leader in environmental education and has served from 2006 to 2010 as National

Chair of the LWVUS Climate Change Task Force. She is a former 2nd Vice President of LWVUS, and has a remarkable resume that reflects both her professional and volunteer expertise and experience.

She was highly recommended as a speaker by a member of the San Luis Obispo League, which hosted several Ukrainian women for the Global Democracy Program. The Program, which our local League participated in some time ago, brings democratic activists from other countries to be the guests of local Leagues. The San Luis League not only involved all of their members in the hosting but also enjoyed sharing their visitors with county governmental bodies. This is an activity we in Santa Barbara might consider participating in again, as it is not only an educational experience, but also a very enjoyable way of increasing local knowledge of the long reach of the League.

Lessie Nixon Schontzler, Chair, International Relations

NATIONALLY RECRUITED LOCAL MEMBERSHIP PHASED OUT

Many of our members may be surprised to learn that the League of Women Voters of the US will no longer have or be recruiting individual memberships as of December 31, 2010. The Santa Barbara League will not have your name on its roster if you joined through the National League, unless you choose to renew your membership through our local League.

LWV Santa Barbara invites all of its members to rejoin each September 1st. Membership is \$60 per individual, or \$90 per household, and is subsidized by our League because we send most of this amount as PMP funds (per member payment) to help support the services of the California and national Leagues.

So, if you joined nationally in the last few years and you wish to remain a member of League, **please renew** by sending your membership fee – \$60 single, \$90 household – to Membership, LWV Santa Barbara, 328 E. Carrillo St., Suite A, Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

Also if you are not sure whether or not you have rejoined the Local League for 2010-2011, call 965-2422 or email lwvsb@verizon.net for confirmation.

All LWV members are actually members of all three levels - local, state, and national Leagues. This change in LWVUS policy will eliminate confusion about how to become a member.

Amanda Pelch, Membership Director



PLANNING FOR THE 2011 LWVC CONVEN-

The next League of Women Voters of California Convention will be the weekend of May 13, 2011 in Ventura, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. This is the first time Convention has ever been so close to us, and the first time we have had the opportunity to co-host. **We need you** to help plan and staff Convention, to be a delegate or visitor, to participate for the whole Convention or just a few hours. Since Program Planning culminates in the decisions made at Convention, we'll discuss this a little at our January units. Or call the League office at 965-2422 or email info@lwvsantabarbara.org to volunteer, make suggestions, or ask questions. We will be setting up our local League's Convention committee within the next month - **let us know how you'd like to be involved!**

What Happens At The Convention?

In odd-numbered years the LWVC Convention takes place. It offers top-notch guest speakers, fun events, instructive workshops, caucus discussions of hot topics, exciting items for sale in the marketplace, and networking opportunities for everyone. Convention allows members to see how hands-on work leads to real change in our organization, and in our state. We hope you'll attend in May!

As valued members of this grassroots organization, delegates have the opportunity and responsibility to indicate the [issues](#) on which they believe the state League and all local and regional Leagues in California should focus their time, talent, money, and reputation for the next two years. In addition to voting on our issues for emphasis and studies, we also pass the budget, elect the [board](#), pass [resolutions](#), and give advice to the board.

New Directory

Our New Directory is in production. If you have not sent your dues, or have changes in your phone numbers, or e-mail or street addresses, please call 965-2422 ASAP and leave a message for Data Administration about your changes.

New Member:

Alice Edwards

In Memoriam

Olga Ignon, longtime member and big supporter of the LWV of Santa Barbara, died on November 7, 2010 with her family around her. Our sympathy goes out to her family and friends.



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MEMBERSHIP FORM to join LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA

- Here's my annual membership dues of \$60*
- Second member in same household \$30
- Student \$30
- Please send me more information about League
- I can't join right now; here is my contribution of \$_____ to support the League.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

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. Amanda Pelch, 452-5804.*

CALENDAR

DECEMBER 2010

NO DISCUSSION UNITS IN DECEMBER

- 10 **Friday: League Board Meeting**, 10 a.m., League Office, 328 E. Carrillo St.
- 15 **Wednesday: Holiday Luncheon**, 12 - 2 p.m., Louise Lowry Davis Center, corner of De la Vina and Victoria streets. Guests will be Santa Barbara City Council members and our three South County Supervisors. Meet with local officials and League friends, and celebrate the season!

JANUARY 2011

January Discussion Units: State Program Planning

- 4 **Tuesday: Supper Unit meeting**, 5:30 p.m., Madame Lu's Restaurant. Contact Lolly Quackenbush.
- 5 **Wednesday: Evening Unit**, 7:30 p.m., Pat Shewczyk's home, 5044 Walnut Park Drive. Contact co-chairs: Pat Shewczyk and Sheila Kamhi .

- 12 **Wednesday: Carpinteria Unit**, 10 a.m., Carpinteria Women's Club, 1059 Vallecito. Chair: Barbara Godley.
- 12 **Wednesday: Valle Verde Unit**, 2 p.m., North Gazebo, 900 Calle de los Amigos. Contact Joan Kerns.
- 14 **Friday: League Board Meeting**, 10 a.m., League Office at 328 E. Carrillo St.
- 19 **Wednesday: Community Forum: The League's Global Democracy Program**, 12 - 2 p.m., Louise Lowry Davis Center, corner of De la Vina and Victoria streets. Speaker will be Sarah Diefendorf, formerly LWVUS 2nd Vice President.
- 21 **Friday: South Central Coast Environmental Task Force**: items of interest to coastal Leagues, San Luis Obispo to Santa Monica. Meeting at League Office, 9:45 – noon, then out to lunch together. Confirm date with Jean Holmes.

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



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