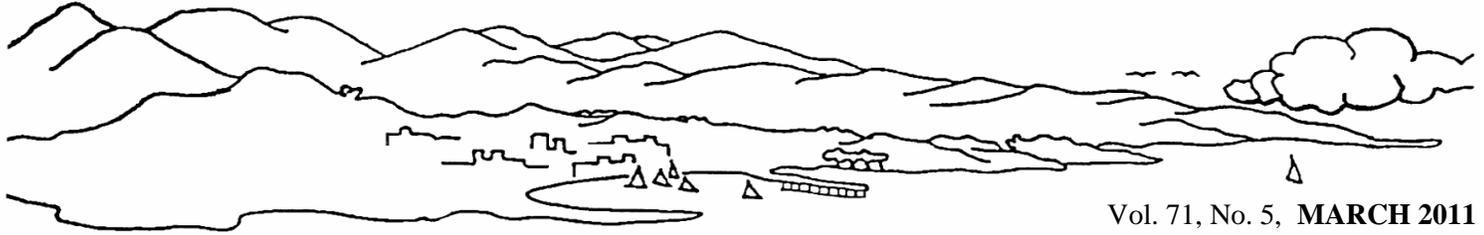




CHANNEL VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA

Serving South Santa Barbara County



Vol. 71, No. 5, MARCH 2011

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MARCH COMMUNITY FORUM

What can be done to fix our State Government?

Wednesday, March 16, 2011, 12 to 2 p.m., Louise Lowry Davis Community Center
De La Vina & Victoria Streets - Free and open to the public.

Over the years, we have seen our state government mired in seemingly unfixable challenges. Our legislators balance the budgets, borrowing and leveraging with smoke and mirrors while our local governments--cities, counties, and schools--are suffering, and our business sector is more and more critical of the way we treat businesses here. What is being done to address our state challenges and re-invent state government.

The March Community Forum will focus on California Forward's efforts to work with citizens to help create better government. They believe they can "revive the California Dream and turn our broken government into an efficient, effective body, focused on performance, accountability and transparency." California Forward wants to get everyone involved. Please come and participate in a process that moves us toward solutions and away from blame and pessimism.

As you know, LWVC sponsored the citizens redistricting process for the state, which is working to put legislators in fairer districts, not so attached to one party or the other. There is hope the legislators will be forced to listen and compromise.

We will hear about California Forward and its solutions for our state from **Bruce A. McPherson** who was the CA Secretary of State (2005-07), a State Senator (1996-2004), and a State Assemblyman (1993-96). He was born in Santa Cruz and worked as editor of the Santa Cruz Sentinel, a newspaper owned by his family.

Government is always a priority for the League. This will be a timely, informative program. Bring your brown bag lunch; cookies and beverage will be provided. Join us on March 16.

Marty Blum, Government Chair

MARCH DISCUSSION UNITS - CLIP AND COME

March unit presenters are us--the attendees. Once again we will have a "Clip and Come" unit discussion. It's always been fun and informative when members *clip* articles from the newspapers and *come* to one of our four units. Bring them to the unit so that we all can share our opinions on the various subjects currently in the news. We don't always have a chance to talk about all our issues--this is a chance.

Sheila Kamhi, Discussion Unit Coordinator

GLOBAL DEMOCRACY UPDATE

After our January Community Forum on Global Democracy, where some of told about the visit of the Russian women to our League in 1991, I received a Christmas card from Ludmilla Zanova, one of the women who stayed with Frank and me. I thought our members would be interested in what she said about her life in Russia today.

Ludmilla received my Christmas card on Christmas Eve, the day she returned from the hospital after treatment for a very painful pinched nerve in her spine. To quote the letter, "When I opened, I realized that me heart began to bead with a happiness/smiling sound! I Felt deep gratitude to heavens that it was destined for us to meet, remember, and keep warm memories toward

each other. Suddenly, it gave me strength to quickly organize lovely Christmas party to my neighbors."

She went on to say that she no longer works. She gave it up when her husband became seriously ill; he has since died. She has one son doing law for a government agency. One son has lost his business "because of the crisis" and is looking for work. Another son is in Washington and her grandson studies computers in the Technological Institute in Washington. She has not seen the two in Washington for seven years.

She concluded with her e-mail address: zanova.mila@gmail.com. Wouldn't it be fun to see what some of you learn from using this address?

Pat Shewczyk

SOCIAL POLICY INTEREST GROUP ACTIVITIES

Pro-Choice Coalition Update

The 38th anniversary of Roe v. Wade celebration event of the Santa Barbara Pro-Choice Coalition, of which the LWVSB is a member, was a great success. This year, we sponsored two showings of the play, "Jane: Abortion and the Underground," at Center Stage Theater (including a focus group after the Sunday show). The show sold out on Saturday and just 12 tickets went unsold on Sunday. The total of 248 tickets sold represent 2-3 times the typical Roe event attendance. The event reached a diverse audience, with 40% of the attendees UCSB students.

Plans are underway to continue to reach out to UCSB in collaboration with the producer of the play, Carly Thomsen, Ph.D. candidate of the Department of Feminist Studies, UCSB and Planned Parenthood Action Fund Board Member.

Homelessness/Housing Action

With the help of Emily Allen and Connie Hannah (many thanks), the LWVSB presented a statement to City Council on Tuesday, January 25, 2011 in support of the use of Redevelopment Agency affordable housing set-aside funds to acquire the 9-unit building at 2904 State Street. The funding request was granted but then called back for another vote. In the second vote, the City Council approved the use of Redevelopment Agency funding to purchase the building but left open the question of providing supportive services. The Council advised that Willbridge, the non-profit agency that would manage the building, take 90 days to engage with the surrounding community on the scope of supportive services to be provided and report back. Stay tuned for updates.

Social Policy Interest Group (SPIG) Meeting Reminder

The LWVSG SPIG meets monthly on the fourth Thursday at 3:30 PM at the League office. All are welcome! If you would like to be added to the SPIG email list, please contact Beth Pitton-August at bpitton@gmail.com.

PROMOTING THE LEAGUE

Look out for the Santa Barbara Channels' "Non-Profit Spotlight," featuring the League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara on Channel 21. The show began airing on January 30 and will air twice daily at 10:00 AM and 9:00 PM for approximately 4 to 6 weeks. It is also available to view via DVD (copies may be checked out at the League office), on YouTube (www.youtube.com/sbtv21) under the title, "NPS: League of Women Voters SB," and on our Facebook page. Share it with friends!

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

Email: info@lwvsantabarbara.org • Web: <http://lwvsantabarbara.org>

WRITING ON RICHARD ROTHSTEIN'S REPORT ON REAUTHORIZATION

By Ellen Wheeler, LWVC Social Policy Director/Ed. Committee Chair LWV Santa Clara County/CSBA member

Renowned education researcher Richard Rothstein gave a talk titled "ESEA Reauthorization: Looking Ahead" at the California School Boards Association annual convention on Dec. 3, 2010. Below is a sketch of his remarks. For a more complete description of the work of Mr. Rothstein and other like-minded education leaders go to www.BoldApproach.org

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is more commonly known to most of us as "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB). Signed into law with high hopes by President George W. Bush with bipartisan support, its reauthorization is complicated by politics and politicians, not to mention principled discussions of educational philosophies and goals.

As an experienced education observer Mr. Rothstein began his talk not about philosophies, but about ...

The politics of it all

The impact of the 2010 election will be felt in ESEA. New Speaker John Boehner was an original supporter of ESEA, while the new chair of the House education committee, Rep. Kline, wants to keep the federal government out of schools. Will Speaker Boehner spend political capital on ESEA reauthorization? This is further complicated by the strange alliances in education. Some Democrats and Republicans are strong supporters of accountability and testing. Others are skeptical of testing and what they see is narrowing of the curriculum. The new Senate ed. chair, Democrat Tom Harkin, strongly supports labor (teachers) and has little interest in testing. But, we may get a coalition for special education funding. However, Republicans are generally opposed to increased spending. If special education gets more funding, what programs would we cut to allow for this?

Special ed. funding has grown by share in education. It's now 23% of all money in education, and the number of children identified is growing (whereas other ed. funding has fallen). **We'd be much better off spending more for high quality early childhood education, says Mr. Rothstein.** (See more below.)

Let's review what NCLB/ESEA does:

[1] Holds schools accountable for basic skills in math and reading, and requires students to pass an annual test on them; [2] Reports scores by subgroups within schools, instead of just by schools (as in the past). Subgroups include Hispanic, African American, Asian, White, low economic status, and special education. [3] Promotes "accountability" by penalizing schools if not all subgroups of students pass the annual tests.

Results of focus on subgroups, testing, and accountability:

1. Narrowing of curriculum, since what's tested (reading and math) is how a school is held accountable. What

isn't tested (subgroups of reading and math, not to mention history, science, art, and music) isn't taught, or at least gets less time.

2. Narrowed focus on individual students that can reach "proficiency" (roughly grade level) with concomitant less attention to students who have already reached proficiency.

"Absurd goal" of 100% proficiency by 2014 and "Closing the Achievement Gap":

This violates everything we know about psychology - to set the same challenging standard for everyone. No educator in his right mind believes we can "close" the Achievement Gap.

Key longitudinal study on language acquisition by babies and toddlers (Hart and Risley):

1. **Children START kindergarten with huge advantages or disadvantages.** Why does Mr. Rothstein believe it's absurd to think we can close the Achievement Gap? Because kindergarteners start school with such a huge differential in normally acquired words. Betty Hart and Todd Risley tape recorded one full hour a month for 2 ½ years in 42 families, categorized as professional, working class, or welfare. By age 3 trends in amount of talk, vocabulary growth, and style of parent/child interaction were well established. Critically, children in professional homes heard 2,000 words per hour in the background, blue collar children heard 1,300 words per hour, and children in welfare homes heard 600 words per hour. Extrapolating this verbal interaction to a year, a child in a professional family would hear 11 million words while a child in a welfare family would hear just 3 million. In fact, by age 3 the *children* from the professional families had a larger spoken vocabulary than the *parents* from the welfare families! These trends continue into elementary school and beyond.
2. **Children START kindergarten with huge differences in their sense of self worth and belief that they can achieve.** Another component of the Hart/Risley study spotlighted the quality of interaction between toddlers and their parents in the 3 groups of homes. 80% of the feedback to children in professional homes was positive. Working class children heard 50% positive comments. And, welfare children heard 80% **negative** comments.

So, what should we be focusing on?

Instead of punishing schools for not getting all students to proficiency, we should:

- Put our attention on high quality parenting and early childhood programs (beginning at or even before birth)
- Help every child get health, dental, and vision care (maybe at school-based health centers) so children can concentrate on their lessons, and
- Help students prepare for careers, not just college.



SUNSHINE WEEK 2011 WEBCAST: THE ROAD FORWARD ON OPEN GOVERNMENT

Friday, March 18, 2011, 9:00 - 10:30 AM (PST)

Participate online at your computer or a friend's.

Why?

The first national "Sunshine Week: Your Right to Know" was launched in March 2005 and will be celebrated in 2011 from March 13-19. Sunshine Week's intent is to raise awareness of the importance of open government to everyone in the community, not just journalists.

Sunshine Week 2011 National Dialogue is brought to you in celebration of Sunshine Week by the American Association of Law Libraries, American Library Association, Association of Research Libraries, Center for American Progress, League of Women Voters, National Freedom of Information Coalition, OMB Watch, OpenThe Government.org, Project On Government Oversight, Sunshine Week, Special Libraries Association, and the Sunlight Foundation.

What?

Two years ago President Obama committed his Administration "to creating an unprecedented level of openness in Government." Toward this end, the Administration has issued policy changes and also has taken steps to make information more available and usable by the public, including setting up Data.gov and requiring agencies to hard-wire openness into the way the government operates. Agencies have taken up the challenge, but more needs to be done.

During this Sunshine Week event, transparency experts from inside and outside government will discuss how these initiatives are being put into practice -- from both a policy and a technical standpoint -- and what more we can and should expect the Administration to do to meet its goal. Panelists will also take questions from the live and viewing audience.

The first panel will cover the policy aspects of the Administration's Open Government Initiative. Invited panelists include David S. Ferriero, Archivist of the United States, Stephen P. Croley, Special Assistant to the President for Justice and Regulatory Policy, White House Domestic

Policy Council, and Gary Bass, Executive Director, OMB Watch.

During the second panel, our panelists will discuss the effect technology has on the way people get and use information, how the government is trying to fill that need, and the strengths and limitations of the Administration's approach. Invited panelists include Todd Park, Chief Technology Officer U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Jennifer LaFleur, Director of Computer-Assisted Reporting at ProPublica (CONFIRMED); Tom Lee, Director of Sunlight Labs at the Sunlight Foundation (CONFIRMED); and Sheila Krumholz, Executive Director of the Center for Responsive Politics (CONFIRMED).

Opportunities will be available for audience questions from all participants.

When and Where?

The event will be held on Friday, March 18, 2011 9:00-10:30am (PST) at the Center for American Progress (1333 H Street, NW), and webcast to sites around the country.

How?

To view the webcast live on your personal computer, no pre-registration is required. Simply visit the Center for American Progress' events page at <http://www.americanprogress.org/events> the day of the event. You can watch the webcast on your own, or with a group. About 24 hours before the event, you will have the opportunity to test the webcast, and call someone to help with any technical difficulties.

The panel discussion will be shown at locally hosted discussions in communities across the country. At this writing, we do not know of any group viewings in our area. Call our office at 965-2422 if you'd like an update on this, or would like to host a group viewing.

If you have questions, including about how to host your own viewing event, please contact: Amy Bennett, *Program Associate*, OpenTheGovernment.org, at afuller@openthegovernment.org or 202-332-6736.



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New Member: Gail Reynolds

Amanda Pelch, Membership Chair

New Directory 2011

New Directory will be mailed in March so we hope that we have all changes of phone numbers, addresses and emails. Please let us know anytime you will be out of town, or at your vacation home, or having mail stopped or forwarded. Then we will not send your "Channel Voter" or new Directory to the wrong address and have it returned. Bulk mail is not forwarded. When bulk mail is returned to the office, the League has to pay first class postage for it. Thank you, *Joanie Jones and Suzanne Brothen, Data Administration*

Volunteers Sought for State Convention in Ventura - May 12-15

Our League is providing part of the volunteer staff for the State Convention coming up May 12-15 just down the road in Ventura. A variety of volunteer positions need to be filled including set-up, registration, hospitality, door monitors, marketplace sales staff, parliamentary aides, timekeepers, microphone monitors and pagers. Below is a schedule for volunteer duties:

May 12 Training Session, Time TBA

- Set Up Registration and Register (midday-6 PM) – Duties: Register delegates, hand out welcome and info packets
- Hospitality – greeting delegates, and attendees, direct to locations (registration desk, meals, workshops, restaurants, local attractions)

May 13

- Set Up Registration and Register – Duties: Register delegates, hand out welcome and info packets
- Hospitality (7 AM through Lunch) – Same as above
- Plenary (8 – Noon) – Duties: door monitors, pagers, timekeepers, microphone monitors; parliamentary aides; tellers
- Workshops –Duties: are to assist set up, monitor, pass out evaluation sheets & pick up.
- Marketplace (State League) –Sell state League items, collect funds, write receipts, set up, take down.

May 14

- Set Up Registration and Register (7 AM – noon, afternoon to Banquet start) – Same as above
- Hospitality (7 AM through Lunch) – Same as above; (No group lunch, direct delegates to nearby choices)
- Plenary (8 – Noon) – Same as above
- Workshops (1:30 – 5:30) Same as above
- Marketplace (State League) – AM, Noon, PM for short stints, TBD, duties same as above

May 15

- Continues much the same until Plenary concludes at 3 p.m. Take Down duties are TBD.

MEMBERSHIP FORM to join LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA

<input type="checkbox"/> Here's my annual membership dues of \$60*	Name _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Second member in same household \$30	Address _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Student \$30	_____ Zip _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Please send me more information about League	Phone _____ Fax _____
<input type="checkbox"/> 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. Amanda Pelch, 452-5804.*

CALENDAR

MARCH 2011

- 1 **Tuesday: Supper Unit meeting**, 5:30 p.m., Madame Lu's Restaurant. Contact Lolly Quackenbush, 879-5537.
- 2 **Wednesday: Evening Unit**, 7:30 p.m., Sheila Kamhi's home, 1040 Portesuello Ave. Contact co-chairs: Pat Shewczyk 964-7506 and Sheila Kamhi 682-0757.
- 9 **Wednesday: Carpinteria Unit**, 10 a.m., Carpinteria Women's Club, 1059 Vallecito. Chair: Barbara Godley, 969-9942.
- 9 **Valle Verde Unit**, 2 p.m., North Gazebo, 900 Calle de los Amigos. Contact Jean Kerns at 687-7035.
- 11 **Friday: League Board Meeting**, 10 a.m., League Office at 328 A East Carrillo St.
- 16 **Wednesday: Community Forum: "What can be done to fix our State government?"**, 12 p.m., Louise Lowry Davis Center, corner of De la Vina and Victoria streets. Speaker: **Bruce McPherson**, former California Secretary of State.
- 18 **Friday: Sunshine Week 2011 Webcast: The Road Forward On Open Government** (see p. 4), 9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

- 19 **Saturday: Women Matter: Healthy Mothers Equal Healthy Societies, Fighting Maternal Mortality in the Developing World**, 10:00 a.m. to noon, Faulkner Gallery, Santa Barbara Public Library, 40 East Anapamu St., Santa Barbara, CA. Featuring **Jane Roberts**, co-founder of 34 Million Friends of the United Nations Population Fund. The LWVSB is a co-sponsor with the AAUW, CARE, UCSB's Sociology Department and the Santa Barbara Women's Health Coalition. Contact Jane Honikman, 967-9757 or jane@janehonikman.com

Looking Ahead to Next Month

APRIL

- 10 **Sunday: SAVE THE DATE – Annual Garden Party**. Invitations will be in the mail soon!
- 20 **Wednesday Community Forum: "Health Reform Implementation in California,"** 12 p.m. Louis Lowry Davis Center. NOTE: Airing in March on Santa Barbara Channel 21 will be the video of the September 13, 2010 LWV forum at Franklin Neighborhood Center on "What Health Reform Means to You."

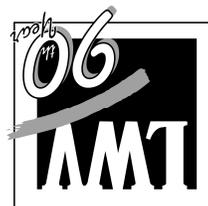
Remember to check the LWVSB web site (<http://lwvsantabarbara.org>) for the latest event information.



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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization of women and men, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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