

Wednesday, March 18 League of Women Voters Community Forum
Why is Housing the First Priority for the Homeless?

You may have seen the coverage of Housing First on the Daily Show or read about it in a recent article in the Economist. At the March 18 Community Forum you will learn more about solutions for ending homelessness in Santa Barbara County and you will hear the results of the January 2015 Vulnerability Survey that was conducted throughout the county.

Panelists will include Santa Barbara Mayor **Helene Schneider**, who will discuss **the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness**. This challenge is a way to solidify partnerships and secure commitments to end veteran homelessness from mayors across the country.

Other speakers will be: **Tom Sloan** from **Social Venture Partners**, a network of volunteers, parents, community leaders and philanthropists; and **Zahra Nahar-Moore**, representing **The Central Coast Collaborative on Homelessness (C3H)**, a regional collaborative effort focused on housing those without homes that brings together homeless services agencies, government, community based organizations, other local groups, non-profits, foundations, faith communities, street friends, business and community leaders, and individuals.

Also on the panel will be **Alice Villarreal Redit** from the **Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara**, a local public agency created under state law for the purpose of providing safe, decent, and quality affordable housing and supportive services to eligible persons with limited incomes, through a variety of federal, state, local and private resources.

Moderator will be **Emily Allen** of the **Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County** and **Common Ground Santa Barbara County**. Common Ground is dedicated to recruiting, training and educating volunteers to effectively house the most vulnerable individuals and families experiencing homelessness in Santa Barbara County. Legal Aid's mission is to provide high-quality legal services to ensure that low-income persons and seniors have access to the civil justice system in times of crisis—to secure safe, habitable shelter, adequate income, and protection from domestic violence and elder abuse. Allen is also co-chair of the local League's social policy committee.

LWVSB has a long-standing position in support of "appropriate solutions with adequate financing, to respond to both short and long term needs of homeless people," including a government sponsored community-wide task force and joint planning by governmental agencies at all levels with non-profit and private organizations, the business community and private citizens.

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.