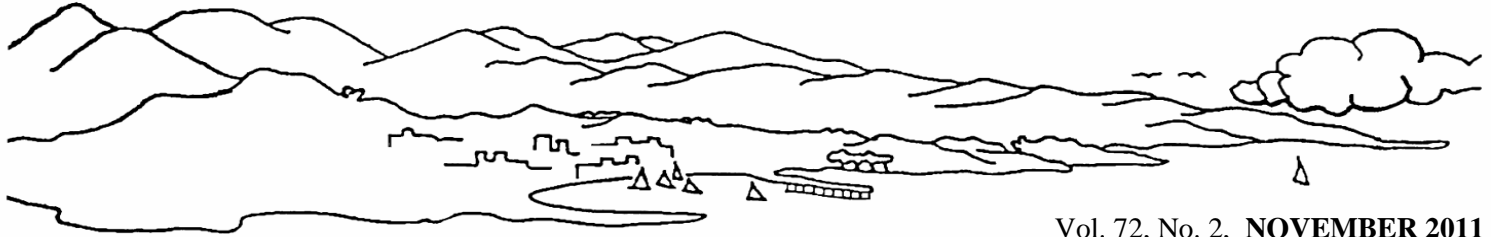




# CHANNEL VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA

*Serving South Santa Barbara County*



Vol. 72, No. 2, **NOVEMBER 2011**

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## November Community Forum: What is the Future of the Tajiguas Landfill? New Options for Our Waste

Wednesday, November 16, 2011, 12 to 2 p.m., Louise Lowry Davis Community Center  
Free and open to the public.

The County of Santa Barbara Department of Public Works, in partnership with the cities of Santa Barbara, Goleta, Buellton and Solvang, is proposing a comprehensive Resource and Recovery Park that would address the challenges of managing these communities' waste. Since the Tajiguas Landfill was last expanded in 2002, the County Public Works staff has been looking into alternatives to landfilling. The Resource Recovery Park proposal is the result of research that has included two feasibility studies, a request for proposals, a proposal review process, and many stakeholder presentations.

The League will introduce these new proposals at our November forum. We have invited two people who have been very involved to explain them to us and answer questions. They are **Leslie Wells, County Manager for Resource Recovery and Waste Management, and Project Leader Carlyle Johnston**. General proposals will go to the county and four cities for consideration this fall. **Everett King, Environmental Services Coordinator for the City of Goleta**, will discuss the role of the cities in choosing a solution.

This is a major project involving a public-private

partnership. As we prepare for the Environmental Impact Report, many questions will be raised. To help us understand what those will be, we have invited **Mike Lunsford, president of the Gaviota Coast Conservancy**, to discuss some of the issues that have already been raised, and League members will have a chance to ask their own questions at the forum.

The communities served by the Tajiguas Landfill have already conducted very successful recycling programs for years, and now recycle 70 percent of their waste. But even with that, they put 175,000 tons of waste in the landfill last year, and the canyon is running out of capacity. As effective as the recycling programs have been, they are faced with waste that can't be recycled, such as paper contaminated with food, or items made of many different materials that can't be effectively separated.

There is a common misconception that all of our trash is sorted through. It isn't—but it could be. At the landfill, they still see high value recyclables like aluminum being buried. With a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) sorting through all of the trash, many materials could be sold for reuse. The remaining trash could then be further treated with anaerobic

*(Continued on page 6)*

## November Discussion Units: Local Program Positions

We will review each position and ask, are they sufficient to address current issues? Do they need to be revised or updated? Is a new study or update study required? The review process begins early this year in direct response to member requests. See Calendar on back page for dates.

*Beth Pitton-August, Co-President*

October discussion units yielded a wonderful array of great ideas to help spark involvement and interest in League. While we will make a complete report available soon, here are some highlights: provide more time for fun and socializing; reinstitute "Go See Tours" to visit sites of interest to League such as the Mental Health Association Center; present special forums on Saturdays or in the evenings at locations such as Santa Barbara City College to draw larger and more diverse audiences; at these new forums, explore "hot topics" such as the pros and cons of fully legalizing marijuana, and the concept of corporations as individuals, including the impact of Citizens United on elections; repackage these League forums as "cocktails and conversation" or ? (maybe another brainstorming session is called for here), and end the discussion with a practical suggestion of what individuals can do to make a difference on the issue. Thank you to all the unit attendees who contributed these and other creative ideas. Please let me know how you will help make these ideas a reality.



As we discussed what LWVSB can do to increase our ranks and more deeply engage existing members, many people have already stepped up to take on new projects. I would like to recognize and thank them here – and encourage others to join them in any of the activities that interest you (or tell a friend!). Linda Phillips, Pat Shewczyk, and Sheila Kamhi have agreed to form the committee for the LWVUS study on

Privatization. Susan Shank, Jane Benefield, and Sheila Kamhi have formed the committee for the LWVC update study on the Initiative and Referendum process. The Carpinteria Unit has agreed to each invite a friend to attend the November Units and to take the lead on planning our annual Garden Party. Also, Jane Benefield has taken the charge of building our Observer Corps and run with it. Several League members, as well as a new UCSB intern, have stepped up to provide this critical service to League and our community. Congratulations and thanks to Jane and her group! Read more about it in this issue.

*Beth Pitton-August, Co-President*

### LWVSB Co-President Accepts Honor from Board of Supervisors

It was my pleasure to attend the Board of Supervisors meeting at 1:30 on Tuesday, Oct. 4 where our Co-President, Beth Pitton-August, accepted the Resolution celebrating 100 years of women's suffrage in the State of California. I am happy to share Beth's acceptance of this honor:

*"Thank you Supervisor Carbajal and members of the Board of Supervisors. It is my privilege to accept this honor on behalf of the League. As you just heard, California passed the 4th Amendment for Women's Suffrage on October 10, 1911 by a margin of just 3,587 votes out of 246,487 cast. I am pleased to point out that Santa Barbara County was among those voting "YES" with 1,396 YES votes and 1,198 NO, a margin of 198. With such close calls in history, we are reminded of how every vote counts.*

*On this day celebrating a victory for women and for democracy, let us not forget that it took another decade of activism before the promise of women's suffrage in*

*the United States was fulfilled. After the win in 1920, the League of Women Voters was founded on the belief that it is not enough to cast a vote; an informed vote is key. Today, the League of Women Voters remains committed to promoting an informed citizenry. As we follow the footsteps of the suffragists who came before us, the League also remains a place where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to real change. We invite and encourage everyone – men and women – to join us. Thank you."*

Our purpose was well represented by Beth. The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization established to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government. The League never supports nor opposes candidates, but does take action on issues in accordance with League positions arrived at through member study and consensus.

*Joanie Jones, Vice-President, Program*

*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](mailto:info@lwvsantabarbara.org) • **Web:** <http://lwvsantabarbara.org>

## Observer Corps Update

We are growing in our ranks. So far we have six dedicated and watchful members of the observer corps: Susan Shank, Cheryl Rogers, Linda Mayo, Andrea Smith, Gretchen Hayward, Sheila Kamhi and yours truly, Jane Benefield.

Last month we held a training session and agreed to attend the following more or less permanently and other meetings as the agendas dictate: Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors and City Council, Goleta City Council, Carpinteria City Council, Carpinteria Planning Commission and Water District. We still need more people.

To maintain a standard of reporting and tracking, a new, short form has been introduced.

We attend meetings that have urgent decision items. For example—our new intern Gretchen Hayward stepped up and did a yeo-woman's job of attending the

Rental Housing Mediation Task Force at a moment's notice.

Corps members attended the following meetings:

- Goleta City Council
- Board of Supervisors
- Santa Barbara City Council
- Carpinteria City Council; Planning Commission
- Rent Mediation Task Force

Key decisions: Santa Barbara Airport plan was approved, Carpinteria will ban all single use bags—both plastic and paper, Bishops Ranch will remain agricultural, Rental Housing Mediation Task Force will ask SB City Council for needed funding and the Carpinteria Water District is looking for a Board member to be appointed until the next election....more to come.

*Jane Benefield, Director-at-Large, Observer Corps*

## The Privatization Study Wants You

The League's privatization study committee is looking for members. Materials are expected to be available soon, and the consensus is due May 1.

The purpose of the National Study is to identify the parameters and policy issues to be considered in proposals to transfer state, federal or local governmental services or functions to the private sector.

The local committee will start by looking at the conditions in a recent bill signed by Gov. Jerry Brown and sponsored by Assemblyman Das Williams concerning privatization of public libraries.

If you are interested in participating in the study, call me, 964-7506, or co-chair Sheila Kamhi, 682-0757.

Some materials are already available online. To get more information, read the first background paper or sign up for the very active discussion list, go to <http://www.lwv.org>. On the blue menu bar, click on "For Members," and under that, on "Projects and Programs." ("Privatization Study" will be on the list on the right).

*Pat Shewczyk, Director*



It was a full house for the October Community Forum, "Restorative Justice Not Jail for the Homeless."



From left, Ann Detrick, Director, Santa Barbara County Department of Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Services; Sheriff Bill Brown; League Social Policy Director Toni Schultheis; Jeff Shaffer, Common Ground Campaign Leader; and Emily Allen, attorney and League member.

### Report From The Legislature

California's legislative calendar runs for two year sessions, beginning in December of even years. There are several deadlines during the process of passing a bill, and bills that are introduced in the first year, but fail certain deadlines, may become "two year bills". Many of the bills that LWVC supports or opposes are complex or controversial, so they often take two years - or even must be re-introduced in later sessions.

Two-year bills that League supports include two that our members have been particularly interested in: SB 810 (Leno), single-payer health care; and AB 591 (Wieckowski), disclosure of chemicals used in fracking. You'll be hearing more about them next year.

Among the bills signed was AB 459 (Hill), the National Popular Vote compact, which the California League supported in accord with our new national position. Budget reform and tax measures were a mixed bag: two that LWVC supported were signed and two were vetoed.

Governor Brown's veto messages made clear that he does not believe in "one size fits all". LWVC supported the successful bill to charge sales tax to online retailers, the new law that led Amazon to threaten a referendum.

League supported a number of bills to improve the voting process; several were signed and one vetoed because local governments already are authorized to do what it required. Two-year bills on voting issues include a couple that League opposes, including one that would require voter ID at the polls.

This is just a sampling of recent action in the Legislature and at the Governor's desk. Local Leagues were asked to send letters to our legislators, or ask our members to write, on only a few bills. You can get more details at the state League's website, <http://www.ca.lwv.org/> (or [www.lwvc.org](http://www.lwvc.org/)); click on "Act Now!" in the menu on the left.

*Linda Phillips, Director, State & National Action*



Moderator Stacy Shepherd, League Co-President, far left, at forum for Santa Barbara City Council candidates

### Remember to Vote - Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2011



This is an all-vote-by-mail election for three seats on the Santa Barbara City Council. Ballots must be received by 8 p.m. on November 8.

Voter packets included postage-paid envelopes for returned ballots. There are five drop-off centers for those who want to vote in person. They are: Braille Institute, 2031 De La Vina St.; Santa Barbara Municipal Tennis Center, 1414 Park Place; Grace Lutheran Church, 3869 State St.; Pilgrim Terrace, 649 Pilgrim Terrace Dr.; and City Hall, 735 Anacapa St.

The City Clerk's Office is open Monday-Friday, 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. and will be also be open for election-related business on Friday, Nov. 4 and Saturday, Nov. 5, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. Phone: (805)564-5309. More information is available at the City's website: <http://SBCityVote.org> and [www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org).

# **Establishing a Resource Recovery Park at Tajiguas Landfill: Doing Something Different than Landfilling and Getting More Resources from Our Trash**

*By Mark Schleich, Resource Recovery & Waste Management Deputy Director, County of Santa Barbara*

As effective as our many recycling programs are, the County was confronted with the realization that our waste, like many other aspects of our daily life, has a real environmental impact. When our waste decomposes, it creates methane, which, according to the US EPA, is 21 times worse than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas.

We currently have a state-of-the-art methane gas collection system at our landfill that generates enough power for 3,000 homes on the South Coast. This system collects about 75 percent of the methane that is generated by our landfill. The remaining 25 percent that escapes our collection system has the greenhouse gas equivalent to 22,000 cars on the road every year.

To address these challenges and move away from landfilling, the County and its partner cities will be proposing new facilities that will pull out any recyclables still left in our trash cans, convert our food waste and organic waste into a compost like material and potentially convert the remaining residual into a gas that can be used to generate electricity. A Materials Recovery Facility would not replace any of our current recycling programs. This facility working in tandem with our existing programs would ensure that we as a community are recycling to the maximum extent feasible.

This MRF will also allow us to sort out our organics, which is the common cause of methane gas generation in landfills worldwide. Once the organic waste is separated from our waste, we can speed up the decomposition process of this material in an airtight container. This is called anaerobic digestion or "AD." This process captures all of the methane potential of our organic material, generates green energy, and greatly reduces our future greenhouse gas impact. The residual from the organics can be cured as a compost that can be used as a soil amendment or a land reclamation project.

Finally, we are considering whether material that is not recyclable or organic be processed by thermal gasification or landfilled. The lack of existing large scale thermal gasification facilities in the U.S. has allowed for a lot of speculation due to an absence of data related to air emissions. Thermal gasification facilities have been used in Europe and parts of Asia, but air emission

regulations are different from U.S. standards and the waste processed at these facilities is different than the waste proposed to be processed in Santa Barbara.

Thermal gasification facilities are often confused with incinerators, however there is a big difference between the two. Although gasification technologies use high levels of heat, this is done in a low or zero-oxygen environment. This lack of oxygen does not allow the material to ignite and instead creates a synthesis gas that can be further processed and used later as fuel. This extra step allows for greater control over potential air emissions. Recent studies by the Los Angeles County's similar conversion technology program support this claim.

Including the recent studies and emerging data, we continue to work closely with the local Air Pollution Control District to make sure that rigorous analysis is performed before a facility like this becomes a part of our proposed resource recovery park. Thermal gasification can reduce the volume and mass of waste by up to 99 percent. In addition, residual from both anaerobic digester and thermal gasification facility are preferable to unprocessed solid waste because they are inert and free of potentially harmful environmental impacts like greenhouse gas emission.

If thermal gasification is not used at this proposed facility an expansion of the existing traditional landfill disposal area may be needed. We are currently scheduled to fill our existing capacity in 2023. Whether or not we need to expand the existing landfill capacity depends on when the Resource Recovery Park opens and our own community's level of trash production.

The EIR process will give us additional opportunity for community feedback and give us a better understanding of the potential benefits and challenges of these different facilities. We developed this proposed Resource Recovery Park using goals and criteria that were based upon community feedback. This project will continue to be publically discussed and defined through community input. A project specific web site that includes contact information and feedback forms, as well as several past reports, presentations and FAQ sheets, can be found at [www.conversiontechnology.com](http://www.conversiontechnology.com).

## For Your Information: Free Training For Appointed Positions Wednesday, Nov. 16, 6-8 p.m. Faulkner Gallery, Santa Barbara Public Library

Join the Santa Barbara Women's Political Committee and elected and appointed officials from Goleta, Santa Barbara, Carpinteria, Santa Barbara County and the State of California for a free training on how you can be appointed to a board or commission.

You'll learn about the role boards and commissions play in the political framework and how you can make and affect policy, advocate for issues and be effective in government and in building and sustaining our community.

### National Action

#### LWVUS Opposes Keystone XL Pipeline

Here is the letter sent to President Obama:

Dear Mr. President:

The League of Women Voters of the United States supports strong regulation to protect our natural environment. Consequently, **we oppose the proposed Keystone XL Pipeline project.**

**Granting a permit for the pipeline would be inconsistent with meaningful action on climate change**, one of the most serious threats to the environment of our nation and our world. The life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions of gasoline produced from Canadian tar sands are significantly greater than those of gasoline produced from conventional sources. The pipeline would encourage production of this "dirty" fossil fuel. Exploiting this vast new source of carbon-intensive fuel would also add to the challenge of meeting U.S. greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets, in keeping with the Copenhagen Accord. Approval of the pipeline would undermine efforts to reduce our dependence on oil and stabilize the climate.

**The route of the proposed pipeline over the Ogallala Aquifer poses an unacceptable risk to this critically important water source.** The League of Women Voters has worked steadily since the 1950s to ensure safe drinking water for all Americans and to protect groundwater supplies. The Ogallala Aquifer is an important clean water resource, providing water for drinking and agriculture for millions of Americans. A reading of the U.S. State Department's Final Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed pipeline shows a relatively high risk of leaks. The contamination of the aquifer could be devastating.

**Reducing demand is the best way to improve America's energy security.** The stricter vehicle fuel economy and tailpipe standards recently implemented by your administration are an important step in the right direction. Now is the time to build on this advance and make the transition to a clean energy future.

The need for strong U.S. leadership is clear. It is time to put the U.S. on the path to significant emissions reductions and lead the way in fighting global climate change. Therefore, on behalf of the League's 150,000 members and supporters nationwide, I strongly urge you to deny the permit for the Keystone XL Pipeline and reaffirm your commitment to a clean energy future for our country and for the world.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth MacNamara, President

Linda Phillips, Director, State & National Action

#### October Community Forum *(Cont. from page 1)*

digestion and/or gasification to be reduced still further. (See page 5 for further information about these possibilities.)

Those attending are invited to bring their own lunch, and desserts and beverages will be provided. Parking is free at the center, which is located at De La Vina and Victoria Streets.

Connie Hannah  
Sustainable Communities Committee Co-Chair



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**Membership Renewal Time Was September 1**

I encourage those who have not yet put that Member Renewal envelope and/or yellow Interest Survey in the mail to do so today. We are an all volunteer organization and would like to know your interests and level of availability. Please send your renewal of membership, \$60 per individual, or \$90 for two in household, to LWV of Santa Barbara, 328 E. Carrillo St, Suite A, Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

A second member renewal letter and envelope were sent to those who had not sent renewal by Oct. 10. It is past time to renew. You will soon be receiving a letter that your membership has expired (Nov. 1).

Also, please check your information in the parchment colored Member Directory and make sure that it is correct. Your updated addresses are essential to us, as well as when you are available at each address. Email updates are also very important for current breaking information sent midmonth between Channel Voter publications.

**Changes:**

Typo correction:

New Member – Diane McQuarie

*Joanie Jones, Vice-President, Program*

**How Do You Want To Get Your Channel Voter?**

Please let us know whether you would like to receive the Channel Voter

- Print Only:
- By Email Only:
- Both Print and Email versions:

You can respond to: [info@lwvsantabarbara.org](mailto:info@lwvsantabarbara.org), or 328 A. East Carrillo Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

**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.*

# Calendar

NOVEMBER 2011

NOVEMBER DISCUSSION UNITS:  
LOCAL PROGRAM POSITIONS

- 1 **Tuesday: Supper Unit - 5:30 p.m., Madame Lu's Restaurant**, 3524 State St., Lolly Quackenbush.
- 2 **Wednesday: Evening Unit - 7:30 p.m., Pat Shewczyk's house**, 5044 Walnut Park Dr., Co-chairs: Pat Shewczyk, and Sheila Kamhi.
- 8 **Tuesday: Election Day, Santa Barbara City Council**, ballots must be received by 8 p.m.
- 9 **Wednesday: Carpinteria Unit – 10 a.m., Carpinteria Women's Club**, 1059 Vallecito Rd. Chair: Barbara Godley.
- 9 **Wednesday: Valle Verde Unit – 2 p.m.**, North Gazebo, 900 Calle de los Amigos. Contact Joan Kerns.

- 9 **Monday: Coalition for Global Dialogue Forum – 11:15 a.m.-1:15 p.m., University Club, Santa Barbara Street**, Contact Lessie Nixon.
- 12 **Saturday: LWVSB Board meeting**, 10 a.m., League Office at 328 A East Carrillo.
- 16 **Community Forum: What is the Future of the Tajiguas Landfill? New Options for Our Waste, 12-2 p.m.**, Louise Lowry Davis Community Center, De la Vina at Victoria. Free and open to the public.

### Looking Ahead to December

#### NO UNIT MEETINGS

- 14 **Wednesday: Community Forum/Annual Holiday Party**, 12-2 p.m., Louise Lowry Davis Center. Free and open to the public.

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



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