

Date Sent January 1, 2023

From League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara

Subject Subject: Happy New Year...and a lot to look forward to in 2023



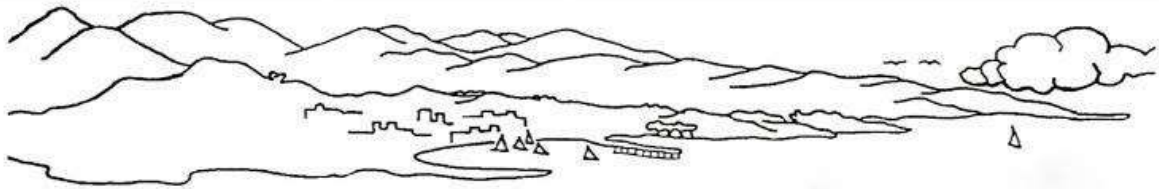
Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.



CHANNEL VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA BARBARA

Serving South Santa Barbara County



January 1, 2023

Happy New Year!



How You Protected Democracy

HOW YOU PROTECTED DEMOCRACY

From LWV President Deborah Turner:

2022 was a groundbreaking year in our democracy.

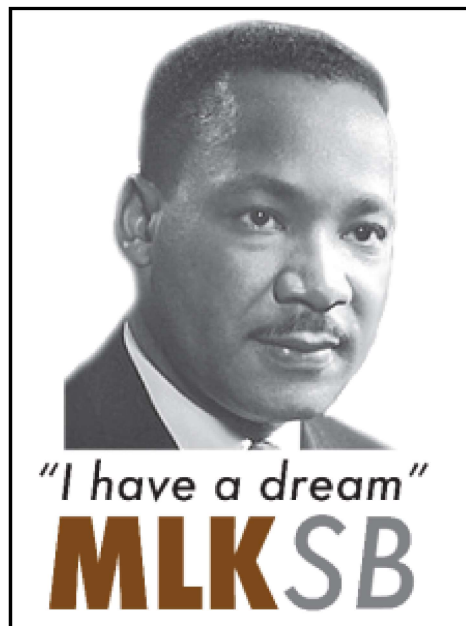
We witnessed:

- a midterm election where voters came out in droves to take a stand against anti-democracy extremists;
- landmark Supreme Court decisions, including overturning the right to abortion.
- the implementation of congressional maps that will define our election systems for the next decade; and
- the appointment of the first Black woman to the Supreme Court.

But that's just the tip of the iceberg. Through it all, you rallied, donated, wrote representatives, registered and educated voters, and voted to defend a democracy in which all voters can safely and fairly make their voices heard.

[Here](#) are the 11 ways you protected democracy in 2022.

Events



Join Us at the 16th Annual Holiday Celebration For Martin Luther King, Jr.

LWVSB supports this celebration, which will take place on Monday, Jan. 16, starting at 9am. It is organized by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Committee of Santa Barbara (MLKSB).

A program from 9 to 10am at de La Guerra Plaza will be followed by a Unity March Up State Street, and then, from 11am – 12:30pm the MLKSB Program at Arlington Theatre, 1317 State Street.

The morning activities will include an opening prayer, music, and school winning Essay/Poetry readings. Join the beat with the World Dance for Humanity Group at the end of the program to get your body ready for the march up State Street. At the Arlington a 90-minute program will feature keynote speaker Dr. Daina Ramey Berry, who is the Michael Douglas Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts at UCSB.

The mission of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Committee of Santa Barbara is to foster positive relationships between many diverse groups in the Santa Barbara community and the surrounding areas; to sponsor programs and events which exemplify the teachings of Dr. King; and to observe, and celebrate the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday. Donate to keep MLK's legacy alive and help underwrite the events and programs of the Committee. For more information and to donate, click [here](#)



MALL MAKEOVER: Dubbed The Neighborhood @ State and Hope, the 685-unit housing project proposed for La Cumbre Plaza would be the biggest single housing development Santa Barbara has ever seen. Above is a rendering of the proposed development's Central Square. |

from the Independent, December 20, 2022, Image Credit: MCP Santa Barbara LLC

New Year's Resolutions for Housing Committee: Be Proactive with a Focus on Equity

On Friday Jan. 6 from noon to 1:30pm, the LWVSB Housing Committee will update our positions related to City and County Housing Element Updates (HEUs) and determine our priorities and schedule for actions over the next six months.

We will examine our new reality across the South Coast that has been complicated by state laws and local planning difficulties. We will also look at policies and programs from other parts of the state that could be helpful. In the second or third week of January we will schedule part 2 of this effort which will look more closely at policies and programs specific to the City of Santa Barbara's HEU.

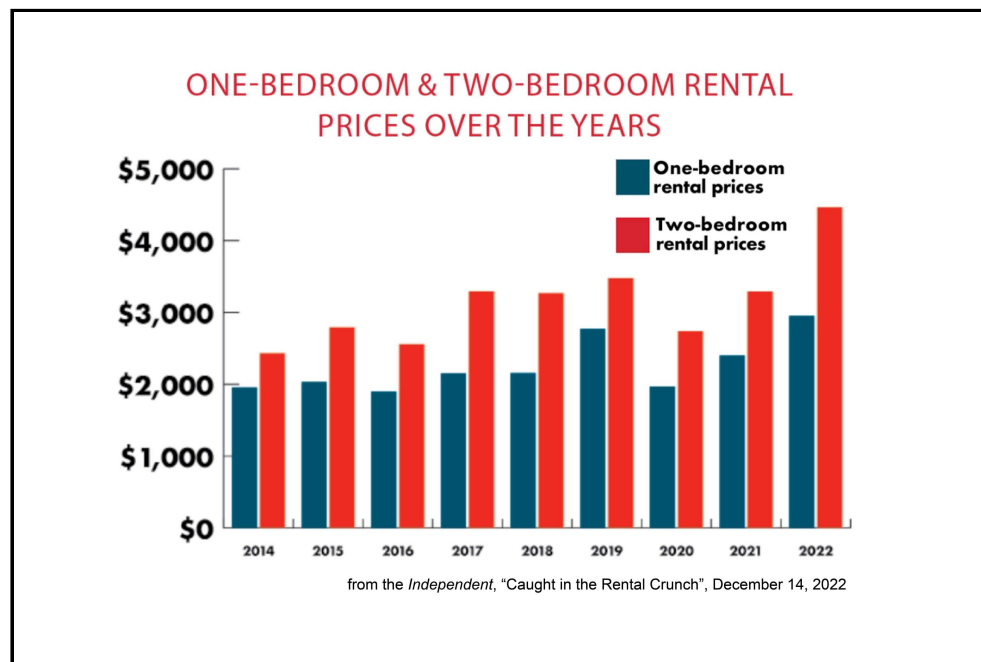
To prepare for these meetings we encourage you to look at the reading list below. There are many important components to the La Cumbre Mall story to unpack including our current Planning Crisis which has been overlaid on top of our local Housing Crisis. The City of Santa Barbara Planning Staff have lost key personnel over the last year and finding \$1 million to fund a specific La Cumbre Plan which is needed to mitigate traffic increases and protect Arroyo Creek, etc. could be difficult during a year that may have a recession. It was eye opening to find that the developer of the Macy's end of the mall can build many

market rate units, perhaps in 74' tall buildings, without much local review. But the bigger concern is that the developer's plan only includes 8% affordable units (56 out of 685)!

So it's "all hands on deck" time for the LWVSB Housing Committee and friends. It is easy for the community to react to what we don't want - tall buildings, increased traffic, proliferation of short term rentals, lots of market rate housing with little affordability, high rents and taxes, etc. But now it's time to decide what we can say 'yes' to in order to achieve a significant amount of housing affordable to low and moderate income households.

Note that this month only the LWVSB Sustainable Communities Committee will meet one week later (see above). That is one reason we are extending the finish time to 1:30 pm on Jan. 6.

If you are interested in joining this study and advocacy effort, contact Linda Honikman at housing@lwvsantabarbara.org



Recommended Reading For Affordable Housing Advocates

If you are interested in getting up-to-date on what is happening in the real world of our local renters and the hurdles of affordable housing production, we recommend that you check out the following:

- The excellent [Independent cover story](#) "Caught in the Rental Crunch" by Ryan Cruz is very comprehensive and is the source of the rent increase chart above the previous article. We hope it stops the narrative that Santa Barbara has always been unaffordable and is like all other communities around the country.
- The [Noozhawk article](#) "La Cumbre Plaza Housing Plan Funding Crumbles..." by Joshua Molina covers the SBCAG (Santa Barbara County Association of Governments) meeting where elected leaders from other County jurisdictions voted against the City of Santa Barbara getting a \$1 million dollar grant to produce a plan for La Cumbre Plaza.
- The [Independent article](#) "Nearly 700 Units of Housing Proposed for La Cumbre Mall" by Nick Welsh gives more details about the developer's plans (and is the source of the graphic above).
- The [Noozhawk article](#) about the Hotel Project at 700-720 State and Ortega by Joshua Molina warns us that the proposed housing units for the same sites were scrapped due to inclusionary requirements.

- The [Independent article](#) “UC Santa Barbara’s Dormzilla Plans...” by Nick Welsh describes the bumpy road forward for UCSB’s much needed student housing.

Sustainable Communities Committee Meeting: A Look at Clean Energy Alternatives

The Sustainable Communities Committee will meet on Friday, Jan. 13 from 11am to noon. This will be a change to the second Friday of the month for this time only. Because of the Holiday crunch, a little more time is needed to prepare for the topic of clean energy alternatives.

In an effort to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, we will consider the benefits of several of the following: solar, battery storage, wind farms, the case for hydrogen, going electric, and revamping local building codes.

All are welcome to join this Zoom meeting. For questions, contact Sandy Grasso-Boyd at SusComm@lwsantabarbara.org

Program Planning for the State League: What Issues Do You Care About?

The League of Women Voters of California wants to hear from us as they plan their next two-year program cycle. Program Planning is your voice in our local League speaking to the state board for this year’s LWVC Convention on May 18-20.

Our League is meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 18 at noon to discuss the issues that we want our state League to explore. We hope you can attend this meeting via Zoom that day. [Here](#) is the link.

At the last LWVC Convention in 2021, we adopted four “Issues for Emphasis” for 2021-23:

- Advancing the Making Democracy Work Campaign including civic education
- Climate Change and Sustainability, including a focus on Water Resources
- Housing and Homelessness
- Criminal Justice Reform

All issues are viewed through the lens of diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI).

Our state League uses the information from the local Leagues to determine its focus for 2023-2025 and develops positions accordingly. This is our opportunity to influence the topics we think are especially important for the state League to explore and support.

For more information regarding this process, please refer to the Channel Voter, December 1 issue, “Program Planning Process.” You may also download the Program Planning Kit and/or read LWVC highlights in the Members Only section of the LWVC website, or watch a recording of the LWVC Program Planning Webinar Dec 15, 2022. To join the discussion online you can join the Program Planning ListServ—a forum where you can connect with other Leagues to learn what issues they are discussing and how they’re managing the process—by emailing Julissa Rodriquez, the contact person, at jrodriguez@lwvc.org

Whether or not you explore this process further, be sure to come to the Jan. 18 League meeting That’s when we determine the issues we want our state League to address in 2023-25.

For Your Information

League Activists Appointed To New Fire & Police Oversight Commission

The Santa Barbara City Council has appointed the newly reconstituted five-member Fire & Police Oversight Commission. Strikingly, the three members who will serve 4-year terms beginning Jan. 1, 2023 are Latina, and two of those - Lizzie Rodriguez and Ana Zepeda - are active in our League, serving on our Criminal Justice Reform Task Force.

Rodriguez is the one member with experience on the prior Fire & Police Commission. Appointed in 2018, she became Co-chair in 2020 and Chair in 2021. Ms. Rodriguez earned an MA in Depth Psychology from Pacifica Graduate Institute, Founded the Restorative Community Network, and teaches at SBCC where she serves on the Diversity Inclusion, Equity Resolution Commission.

Both Rodriguez and Zepeda were also among the 15 members of the Community Formation Commission (CFC), tasked with researching oversight modalities and providing recommendations to the Santa Barbara City Council on developing police oversight functions.

Zepeda, who will be the youngest member of the new Commission, co-chaired the CFC for 14 months playing a significant role in the development of oversight recommendations and ensuring information was provided in both English and Spanish. She holds a B.A. in sociology/pre-law from UCSB and is currently an Americorps member serving her term at the South County Public Defender's Office providing housing support for their clients.

Asked what will be different about the new Fire & Policy Commission, Rodriguez explained, "It will have much more specific oversight duties and be more accessible to the public." While privacy laws restrict the commission from hearing cases under active investigation, Commissioners will be able to review whether past cases were thoroughly investigated.

"Most important," Rodriguez added, "the Commission can create an avenue for information to be presented to the public - a neutral body where individuals may bring their complaints when they don't feel comfortable bringing them to the City Council or the Police."

Gail Osherenko, Chair, Criminal Justice Reform Task Force



L-R: Laura Pina, Larry Severance, Gail Osherenko, Susan Horne, Lt. Christopher Gillespie, Sgt, Eric Alexander, Maureen Earls, Peter Brown, and Pam Flynt Tambo. The joint LWVSB/CLUE-SB criminal justice reform group toured Santa Barbara's south county jail on Dec. 16.

League Members Invited To Join New Criminal justice Group

The League of Women Voters of California Criminal Justice Interest Group has held a long-standing desire to facilitate a process to support local Leagues with tools to assure implementation of League supported criminal justice laws, in the spirit intended for the laws. Thus, late this summer discussions commenced to start a sub-group to focus on Sheriff Oversight and Accountability!

The 2022 election year has given some California counties new Sheriffs and District Attorneys by January 2023. Our Jan. 16 meeting will feature a guest speaker to help us better understand navigating new Sheriff transitions in our community education and advocacy work.

Our goal is to encourage and provide tools for local Leagues to facilitate accountability, transparency, and local oversight of Sheriff departments. This includes compliance with criminal justice related laws supported by the League. We aim to identify Board of Supervisors/Sheriff department's best practices, as well as specific areas of statewide public concern. For example, we've begun to prioritise projects, such as reviewing deaths in jails, implementation of state laws and closer examination of AB 109 Realignment effectiveness in reducing recidivism and incarceration rates. As we continue our research of oversight, transparency and accountability, we may identify more priorities that require more capacity,

We need your help! All California League members are invited to join the new Sheriff Interest Google Group for education and advocacy. Our meetings are the third Monday of each month from 5-6:30 pm via Zoom (agenda & how to join). Email criminaljustice@lwvc.org with questions and to learn more.

If you are not yet a League member,

Join Today



An In-Depth Look at Open-Meeting Laws

Hosted by the League of Women Voters of California, the First Amendment Coalition's open-government experts will provide an in-depth presentation on your rights to access public meetings in California. The presentation on Tuesday, Jan. 31 at noon will be 45 minutes, reserving 15 minutes at the end for questions.

The presentation will focus on the Ralph M. Brown Act's open-meeting requirements for local legislative bodies, including recent legislation that affects teleconferencing and decorum rules. It will also address: your right to give public comment and what restrictions government bodies can place on the public; what government business can be done behind closed doors; common complaints from members of the public about accessing and participating in meetings; and where First Amendment speech protections intersect with the government's ability to manage proceedings.

Zoom registration link is [here](#)

Inside the League

Do your New Year's Resolutions Include Getting More Involved in the League?

If so, consider contacting the new 2023 Nominating Committee to let them know you are interested! The Committee is gearing up its work in January to develop the slate of candidates for next year's Board and would really appreciate your suggestions, ideas, and possible interest.

Contact anyone on the Committee to let them know you are interested - and any specific topics you are interested in working on!

The members of the Committee are:

- Revae Moran, Chair
- Dianne Meester Black, Member
- Jane Honikman, Member, and
- Suzanne Cohen, Member

Send an email message to nominating@lwvsantabarbara.org and one of the Committee members will contact you right away to discuss what you would like to help us with in FY 2023!

For Your Calendar



For more information, registration and contact information, click on the event in the website calendar [here](#). Most meetings are via Zoom.

Community Forums are livestreamed on Facebook (@LWVSB) and on our YouTube Channel (link at bottom of this newsletter). Some events are featured in separate articles.

Friday, Jan. 6 - noon-1:30pm - **Housing Committee**

Tuesday, Jan. 10 - 1-2pm - **Communications Committee**

Thursday, Jan. 12 - 11am-12:30pm - **Book Club**

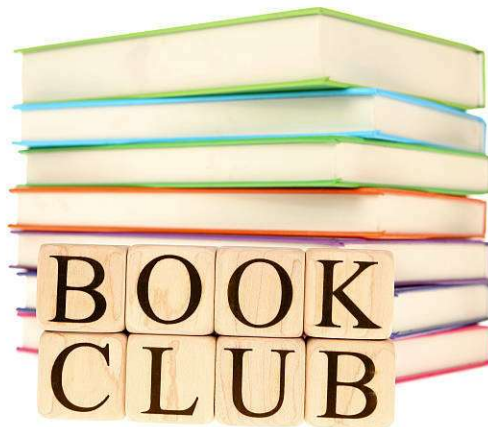
Friday, Jan. 13 - 11am-noon - **Sustainable Communities Committee**

Saturday, Jan. 14 - 10-11:30am - **Board Meeting**

Wednesday, Jan. 18 - noon - **LWVSB Program Planning**

Thursday, Jan. 26 - 3-4pm - **Social Policy Committee**

Tuesday, Jan. 31 - noon-1pm - **Brown Act Webinar**



TITLE: *Invisible Women: Data Bias in a World Designed for Men*

AUTHOR: Caroline Criado Perez

DATE: Thursday, Jan. 12 at 11am via Zoom

Perez argues that there is a “gender data gap” - that the bulk of the world’s data is based on male bodies and male behaviors. The result is a world that not only caters to men but often actively disadvantages women.

TITLE: *Corrections in Ink (a memoir)*

AUTHOR: Keri Blakinger

DATE: Thursday, Feb. 23 at 11am via Zoom

An electric and unforgettable memoir about a young woman's journey from the ice rink, to addiction and a prison sentence, to the newsroom, and how she emerged with a fierce determination to expose the broken system she experienced.

Contact Elaine Rudin, bookclub@lwvsantabarbara.org for Zoom links.

Keep Up to Date on Action Alerts From the State and National League

For LWV, [click here](#).

For LWVC, [click here](#).

Videos



You can watch recordings of forums about candidates, ballot measures and district elections, as well as many past community forums. All videos are in both English and Spanish For these and other Forums, [watch here](#). Subscribe to the channel to be notified of future videos.

Forum Videos are on TVSB

Tune in: TVSB Channels League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara Show.

LWVSB Show - Weekly Spots

League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara Show - English version:

Channel 17, "Voice": on Tuesdays 9:00 p.m. and on Fridays 2:00 a.m.

Channel 71, "Culture": on Wednesdays 9:00 p.m., on Thursdays 7:00 p.m., on Fridays 5:00 a.m., and on Saturdays 10:00 a.m.

League of Women Voters of Santa Barbara Show - Spanish version:

Channel 17, "Voice": on Wednesdays 9:00 p.m. and on Saturdays 3:00 a.m.

Channel 71, "Culture": on Mondays 7:30 p.m., on Thursdays 3:30 a.m., on Fridays 3:30 p.m., and on Saturdays 2:00 a.m.



LWVSB was a sponsor of a recent Coffee with a Black Guy, featuring James Joyce. For more information about these programs, [click here](#)

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK®

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Done