

President's Message

Fellow Leaguers,
With the busy election season over, we are able to slow down and take a breath. However, there is still much work to do this year within the League. This year, we hope to expand our network through education and advocacy. Our program planners, **Judy Bennett** and **Anne Hartline**, have wonderful plans to get the League's programs into action. I would like to thank them for all their hard work in preparing these upcoming events. See page 3 for an upcoming program.

This year, the California State League will be hosting the biennial League conference in June. They will be looking for local Leaguers to participate in this event. I would encourage you to contact us for information on how to get involved.

Finally, there is much turmoil within our country at the moment. We, as League members, have an opportunity to educate and inspire people more than ever. It is my hope that we reach as many people as we can to educate them on the importance of voting, how they can aid in the legislative process to implement change, and how they can become more politically involved for themselves and their children.

I look forward to working with all of you this year.

Best,
Celeste Ruiz
Interim-President

Our Mission Statement...

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

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK!

Save the Dates!

Community Participation Fair

March 16, 2017

5:30-7:00 PM

**Arcata Community Center
321 Martin Luther King Jr. Pkwy.
Arcata, CA**

**State of the Community
Luncheon**

April 7, 2017

Adorni Center

1011 Waterfront Dr,

Eureka

Doors Open at 11:30 AM

Annual Membership Meeting

Date, Time, and Place TBA

Marianne Pennekamp: LWVHC 2017 Civic Contribution Award Recipient by Debbe Hartridge

Marianne Pennekamp's family escaped the Nazis by moving to France when she was a young teen, and then made their way to the US by ship. What followed was a long career both as a professional and volunteer that has demonstrated her belief in the importance of education and community.

Now in the ninth decade of her life, **Marianne Pennekamp** continues to work for and support mental health and children's services, causes that are dear to her heart. A long time and current member of the Humboldt County Behavioral Health Board and the Children and Family Committee, she has been a familiar face in the world of local community services since she moved here in 1982 after working for twenty-five years as a social worker in the Oakland Public Schools and teaching at UC Berkeley and Humboldt State.



She found many ways to be involved after retirement, often behind the scenes, with groups that work to help children and families, such as the 211 Referral Program that took years to get up and running, the Juvenile Justice Commission, the Youth Summits, the Humboldt Community Network, and teen pregnancy prevention programs. She is a member and supporter of several local organizations, including the Unitarian Fellowship, National Alliance on Mental Illness, Access Humboldt, and Planned Parenthood, as well as being an active member of her Freshwater neighbourhood, attending book groups and exercise classes right around the corner.

Next month look for a story and photo about Access Humboldt, a non-profit community media organization that will also be honored as an LWVHC 2017 Civic Contribution Award recipient at the luncheon. If you want to learn all about Access Humboldt, please see the article by **Elaine Weinreb** in the January VOTER.

Board Briefs

by Patricia-Anne WinterSun

In January, your board

Decided to again support students participating in Humboldt County History Day, making available an amount not to exceed \$1500 total. For gift certificates, \$200 was allotted to be awarded to up to eight students at Humboldt County History Day on February 11, and up to \$1200 may be used to assist students with travel expenses to the State History Day Competition in Rocklin, CA. Awards will be given to students who address voting rights or women's rights, in keeping with our LWVHC mission.

Approved an MOU with Amanda Windsor to update the Citizens Guide to Government.

Community Participation Fair

by Mary Lowry

What will you be doing on Freedom of Information Day? It is the perfect time to attend the Community Participation Fair. Once again, the League of Women Voters is sponsoring the Community Participation Fair on Thursday, March 16.

This free, exciting, community-building event brings the citizens of Humboldt County together with public officials and representatives from boards and commissions to facilitate communication and to illuminate volunteer possibilities.

This is your chance to learn what local boards and commissions are doing in your community. Connect with your community on Freedom of Information Day.

Learn More about Foster Care in Humboldt County

by Judy Bennett

This year our local League is reviewing our Foster Care position (see your Annual Meeting Kit 2016 for the full position.) Please join us on Thursday, February 16 at 5:30 PM as we learn more about the Foster Care system in Humboldt County from our panel of experts directly connected with the program.

Here are some facts about Foster Care to help prepare you for our February meeting. “Foster Care is a system by which a certified, stand-in “parent(s)” cares for minor children or young people who have been removed from their birth parents or other custodial adults by state authority.”

In 2014, the most recent year of recorded statistics, 415,129 children were in Foster Care, nationwide. That same year 264,746 children entered Foster Care, which equates to 1 child entering the program every two minutes throughout the United States. Siblings are most often separated from each other, and children are never allowed to bring their pets with them. Entering Foster Care is a traumatic time for children who often don't understand why it's happening or often think they are responsible for the separation from their parents. Over half of the children placed into Foster Care don't complete high school.

In Humboldt County (our area of concern for our position review), there were 324 children in the program at the end of 2014. Ethnically, this breaks down to 171 White, 124 American Indian or Alaska Native, 19 Hispanic or Latino and 10 African American or Black. Most stay in Foster Care homes for under a year. Over 50% were returned to family homes. Those who remain in Foster Care often live in five or more homes. These statistics are from the Humboldt County website.

In 1978, Congress passed the Indian Child Welfare Act to keep tribal children with tribal families and communities. At the time the act was passed, Native American children were eight times more likely to be placed in Foster Care than non-native children. Today, native children are still three times more likely to be placed into Foster Care.

In 2000-2001, the Yurok Tribe requested the Hum-

boldt County Grand Jury to investigate the placement of Native American children in the County Foster Care program. This information can be found on the Grand Jury website.

In 2015, Attorney General Kamala Harris created the Bureau of Children's Justice. The purpose of the Bureau is to make certain children can reach their full potential, particularly those children that have become part of the justice system, including Foster Care. You can read more about this bureau on the Attorney General's website. Since the creation of the Bureau, the Attorney General's office has subpoenaed five years of Humboldt County welfare child abuse records, many of them related to tribal children in Foster Care. This we learned from a *Times Standard* article this past summer.

All this material reinforces the importance of our League having a current Foster Care position with which we can take action. Please come join us as we learn more about the Foster Care system in Humboldt County from our panel of experts directly connected with the program.

Again, the date is Thursday February 16, 5:30 PM at the Aquatic Center in Eureka. Refreshments will be available. Please plan to be there, learn about Foster Care in Humboldt County, and make your interests and concerns known. Interested guests are welcome.



Successful State and Local Planning Meeting

by Anne Hartline

Our State and Local Program Planning meeting on January 22 was FUN! Eighteen Leaguers and four guests squeezed into the Area One Agency on Aging Conference Room for a lively conversation about the League of Women Voters of California (LWVC) Position summaries and how the positions have been put into action over the last five years. We divided into small groups to analyze which areas we'd like LWVC to focus on for action in 2017 - 2019. We came to consensus about our top three (Energy, Land Use, and Mental Health.) Then we looked at the LWVC "Notes on Ongoing Work and Opportunities" document to see the ways in which LWVC has planned to take up the National goal of "Making Democracy Work." We were pleased that other areas of concern for us (Redistricting and Election Systems) will each be a focus as well. Finally, we evaluated suggestions from League Board Member **Elaine Weinreb** (thank you Elaine) and determined several changes we'd like to recommend that the Board approve to go into the Annual Meeting Kit for 2017 for membership approval.

All in all, the two hours went by quickly, and a lot of information was reviewed and analyzed. It is so great to be part of a multi-layered organization like League because we are assured that our opinions and priorities will be added to those of Leagues around the state as our State Board makes decisions about priorities for the upcoming two years.



We Marched! Now What?

by Kathy Johanson

On January 21, 2017, the world watched as millions of women and men around our country and the world stepped out in a united force to make their voices heard providing both a historic day and a wonderful illustration of action! Locally, thousands participated in peaceful unity, coming together in support of human rights for all. The Women's March brought attention to important issues - but our work is just beginning. Here are some actions you can take RIGHT NOW to make a difference in your community and beyond.

1. Promote the League!

The League is working to make a difference in our community. Do your family, friends, and neighbors know you are a League member? If so, do they know why? Membership demonstrates our strength. We *are* heard in our community – let's build our membership!

2. Attend a local League event to get involved in our work. The Community Participation Fair on March 16th is a great start. Would you like to help register voters? Would you like to learn about how we form our policies? Would you like to hear from experts about issues that impact our community? Check out our calendar either on the website, Facebook, or each issue of the VOTER. Invite your friends!

3. Call Congress – and call them often!

Elected officials work for the people and need to hear from citizens. Make sure Congress knows YOUR priorities. If you're not sure how to get in touch with your representatives, use this web link for information specific to your zip code.

<http://hq-salsa.wiredforchange.com/o/5950/getLocal.jsp>

Whether you take action in the streets or from your armchair, your voice makes a difference! Together, we Make Democracy Work!



Become a Member!

Membership in the League of Women Voters, the most respected and effective grassroots organization in the country, is open to men and women aged 16 and up.

Our members make a visible difference by serving as community leaders using their experience to create positive, lasting change in our communities.

Membership dues and donations to the LWVHC are not tax-deductible. Donations to the LWVHC-Education Fund, through the Humboldt Area Foundation, are tax-deductible.

Annual Dues are due each year on July 1.

Visit www.LWVHC.org or mail the form below!

Yes! I want to join the League of Women Voters of Humboldt County and become a voice for citizens and a force for change. I am enclosing for my annual membership:

- \$60 Individual membership
- \$90 Household membership
- \$60 Associate membership
- Please accept my donation of _____
- Please send me more information
- I am interested in becoming a board member

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

e-mail _____

Please make checks payable to LWVHC, P.O. Box 3219, Eureka, CA 95502.

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County

434 7th Street, Eureka, CA 95501
P.O. Box 3219, Eureka, CA 95502
www.lwvhc.org vote@lwvhc.org
(707) 444-9252

Who's Who in Your League Board

ADMINISTRATION

President Rollin Richmond
 Vice President..... Celeste Ruiz
 Past President..... Kathy Johanson
 Secretary..... Patricia-Anne WinterSun
 Treasurer..... Deborah Downs
 Director..... Judy Bennett
 Director..... Andrea Enyedi
 Director..... Anne Hartline
 Director..... Nancy Kay
 Director..... Julie Kelly
 Director..... Leslie Leach
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 Director..... Becky Simpson
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 Publicity Chair Andrea Enyedi
 Social Policy Mary Lou Lowry

Governance Chair Byrd Lochtie
 Historian Carole Ziskin
 Membership Becky Simpson
 Nominating Committee Chair Alex Stillman
 Publications Lorey Keele
 Communications Support Kathy Johanson

FUNDRAISING

Marathon Fundraiser Kay Escarda
 Poll Workers Fundraiser..... Carolyn Otis
 State of the Community Luncheon (SOCL)
 Committee Chair Judy Bennett

COMMUNICATIONS

Access Humboldt Rep..... Elaine Weinreb
 Publicity Andrea Enyedi
 Social Media ... Kathy Johanson and Celeste Ruiz

Website Kathy Johanson
 VOTER Publication Leslie Leach
 VOTER Circulation Carolyn Otis

VOTER SERVICE

Voter Service DirectorBecky Simpson

 **Find Us on Facebook!**

LWV of HUMBOLDT COUNTY

THE VOTER

P.O. Box 3219
Eureka, CA 95502

To:

Get Involved!

We all have a unique set of skills to contribute and limited time to afford. Working together we become a viable force for change. Call or email today to say you want to participate.

Visit www.lwvhc.org or call (707) 444-9252.

Our Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making. Not only shall there be no barriers to membership and participation in the LWVHC on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, economic status, nor political affiliation, but also the LWVHC will actively seek to reflect the diversity of the community in its membership, board and programs.

Making Democracy Work!

LWVHC Calendar

Tue., Feb. 7 5:30 PM	Board Meeting League Office 434 7th St., Eureka
Thurs., Feb. 16 5:30 PM	Foster Care Panel Humboldt Bay Aquatic Center 921 Waterfront Drive Eureka
Tue. Mar. 7 5:30 PM	Board Meeting League Office 434 7th St., Eureka
Thurs. Mar. 16 5:30-7:30 PM	Community Participation Fair Arcata Community Center 321 Martin Luther King Pkwy Arcata