



THE VOTER

The Newsletter of The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County

Vol. 58 No. 1

January 2016

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President's Message

Happy New Year!

I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays. Our League Holiday Party early in December was a delightful time at **Anne Hartline's** home in Bay-side. We had a delicious potluck of specialty foods from everyone's kitchen and a wonderful chance to socialize. We are usually so busy with our work that sometimes we don't have a chance just to get to know one another! And we collected cans of food for Food for People and Christmas gifts for teen-aged girls that were delivered to the Boys and Girls Club of the Redwoods for distribution. Thank you, Anne!

2016 looks to be full of interesting things for Leaguers to do. We have Program Planning for our local League and the National League in January. We will be working more on our Civic Engagement study after approving a summary statement for it, and **Mary Lou Lowry** and her committee are diligently planning our first Annual Community Participation Fair in March. Also in March, we will be conducting the Regular Tribal Election for the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria. Our State of the Community Luncheon on April 22 and our League Annual Meeting in May are already on the calendar, while we will have to fit in Candidate Forums, and perhaps Issues Forums, before the June Primary Election. And of course, there are always

Save the Dates!

Program Planning Meeting

**Thursday, January 14th
at 5:30
474 7th Street, Eureka.**

Community Participation Fair

**Wednesday, March 16th
5pm-7pm Humboldt Bay
Aquatic Center
921 Waterfront Drive,
Eureka**

governmental meetings to observe and actions to take. We will be busy! I'm sure there will be plenty of opportunities for **you** to volunteer!

I hope to see you at the Program Planning Meeting on January 14th.

*-Byrd Lochtie
Co-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.

MAKE DEMOCRACY WORK!

LWVHC Board Briefs

In November and December your Board

- agreed that the summary statement on Civic Engagement be placed in the Annual Meeting Kit,
- gave the Membership chair authorization to subsidize memberships as needed, and
- approved the SOCL committee choices for the 2016 Civic Contributions Awards.

-Patricia-Anne Wintersun
Secretary

Why Don't More Registered Voters Vote in Humboldt County?

Data from the recent November 3rd Humboldt County elections show that only 23.28% of registered voters actually voted. To review these data, visit this web site: <http://www.humboldt.gov.org/DocumentCenter/View/52997>

There are 59, 685 registered voters in our county, but only 13, 897 chose to vote in one or more of the twelve issues before us on November 3rd, 2014. Ryan Burns in an excellent *Lost Coast Outpost* article in November of 2014 <http://lostcoastoutpost.com/2014/nov/12/humboldt-countys-voter-turnout-lousy/> estimated that there are 104,314 eligible voters in Humboldt County. So approximately only 13.3% of the potential voters participated in the November 2014 elections.

The region with the highest proportion of registered voters, 48.5%, was the Fruitland Ridge area near Whitlow and Myers Flat in southern Humboldt. They voted for a fire protection district and governing board members for the district. The region where the fewest registered voters responded was for the Humboldt County Board of Education for Area 4 (Eureka, Samoa and Fairhaven). In this area only 13.96% of the registered voters cast a ballot. Few issues are more important than education for our children in Humboldt County.

Our national democracy is suffering and unless we voters participate in it, we cannot complain about its failures. Here are some questions to consider:

- Is this something we need to study and form a position on, or do we have relevant positions through LWVHC and LWVUS that address this?
- Could the LWVHC do a more effective job of getting people to vote?
- Do we need to provide transportation to polling places?
- Do we provide enough information for voters about the issues so that they feel ready to identify their preferences?
- Do we need to make it easier for people to vote by developing means for people to vote online? It is now possible to register online to vote in California – see <http://registertovote.ca.gov/>.
- Should our local governments provide some sort of incentive for those who vote? If yes, what?
- What do you think YOU could do personally to increase voter turnout?
- What are YOU willing to do in this area?

Your ideas are most welcome.

-Rollin Richmond
Director



“Every election is determined by the people who show up.”

-Larry J. Sabato

Humboldt County Library 20th Birthday November 2015

For many years the public library was in the Carnegie building on F Street in Eureka. The library outgrew that space and was next located in the basement of the courthouse. The community wanted something better than a basement, and the library project was born with a state grant for part of the funding. If you were here in the 80's and early 90's, you will remember the fundraising to collect the remainder of the building costs. You may also remember the disagreements about where the new library should be located and the people who wanted the League to indicate a preference for one place over another. Of course, our positions did not allow that. We supported a library, accessible to all, but we had no basis on which to choose one site over another.

But one amazing League member spent years organizing and leading the library project to raise enough money to build a new county library. **Sally Upatisingha** worked tirelessly to raise money in many unique and innovative ways. In fact, Sally was the first recipient of our State of the Community Civic Contribution Award in 1992. Everyone in Humboldt County owes Sally a huge thank you for all her work. Here, in her own words, Sally reminisces:

Twenty years ago hundreds of people waited for us to cut the ribbon to their new library. Before that happened, however, we were reminded that the new jail represented failure but the new library represented success. No one disagreed.

My favorite memories of the library project involve the many various ways people donated. One day a woman called from the southern part of the county and told me her quilt had just won a second place ribbon at the fair and she wanted to donate it to the library project. She had grown up during the Depression, and she and her mother and siblings walked every week to the library to return books and check out new ones. No, she didn't want any publicity and no, she didn't want to be our guest at the next event. She just wanted to help build the new library. I don't even remember her name, but I remember her beautiful quilt. It was a maple leaf pattern.

A kindergarten class decided to do jobs at home to raise money for the library. Some children made their beds; others hung up their clothes. A few kids set the table for dinner. One little boy, once a week, removed the cushions from the sofa and picked up the coins that had fallen out of men's pockets. Smart little boy!

One day the DMV called with an idea for the library project. Once a month they gathered up all the old license plates that had been turned in and cut them into four pieces and shipped them to the state headquarters for disposal. Perhaps, he told me, a group would take that on as a project and earn money for the library project. A Boy Scout troop took over the job. They worked regularly to get the license plates in quarters and bundled up to ship away to Sacramento. They LOVED using the machine!

A woman left us \$80,000 in her will.

One year we had permission to insert a request for contributions in the property tax bills that were sent to local addresses. We were so successful that the next year we sent inserts to people who didn't live in the county but still paid local taxes. To our surprise we made a fair amount of money.

I spent a year talking about the library project to any organization that would listen. We spent a year writing stories about the library project to every newspaper in the county and to every organization who would include it.

Now we celebrate 20 years of a beautiful and popular building that the people in this county wanted and worked for--and use. One person who thought the whole project was a waste of money once said that if he went to the library he could roll a bowling ball in the building and not hit anyone. My response to him--"Only on Mondays!"

Yes, our library is loved and used. Thank you, Sally!

*-Byrd Lochtie
Co-President*

**25th ANNUAL
STATE OF THE
COMMUNITY LUNCHEON
April 22, 2016
at the Adorni
Center in Eureka.**

This year we'll honor two organizations, **Hospice of Humboldt** and the **Redwood Empire Quilters Guild**. Hospice has provided heartfelt end-of-life care and grief support services for community members for over 30 years. Every year, hundreds of handmade quilts lovingly produced by members of the Redwood Empire Quilters Guild, bring warmth and comfort to diverse recipients including veterans, premature babies, and children in need.

We will also honor **Judith Stoffer**, long-time member of the League. Judith is well known in our community as someone who gets things done. Her dedication and know-how have benefited many local organizations including Hospice, Evergreen Lodge at St. Joseph Hospital, and the Humboldt County Library Foundation, to name a few. Watch your voter for information about ticket purchase and other details. The SOC luncheon is the League's primary fundraiser and a time of inspiration!

LOCC | **Leading Organizational
& Community Change**

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Create desired change at work or in your community.

COURSES START IN JANUARY. Learn more and register:

www.humboldt.edu/locc • (707) 826-3731

Presented by the College of eLearning & Extended Education at Humboldt State University

Would you like to help make positive, effective changes in your community? If so, please consider the program being offered through Humboldt State University. See the flyer on page 5 for more information.

Access Humboldt Report

The Board of Access Humboldt (AH) met recently. There are several new members of the board. A budget for 2016 was adopted and given the finalization of the agreement for the PEG (Public, Educational and Government) fees from Suddenlink, the budget for 2016 will be slightly increased. The Board and Executive Director, Sean McLaughlin, will be developing a new strategic plan for AH over the next few months.

The LWVHC's representative to the AH Board, **Rollin Richmond**, has been assigned to serve on two committees: Board Development Committee and Fund Development and Outreach.

*-Rollin Richmond
Director*

News You Can Use

The Elections Office is migrating to a new voter registration software called VoteCal. The primary feature that distinguishes VoteCal from our current system is its ability to connect all county voter systems in the State of California. Information sharing between counties improves voter registration for everyone.

New Laws: In October 2015 California passed AB 1461, the New Motor Voter Act (NMVA). The NMVA automatically registers citizens to vote when they interact with the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). By automatically registering citizens to vote, barriers that millions of citizens have faced in years past are now removed. California is the third state in America to pass, and second state to enact, automatic registration. AB1461 will go into effect in 2016.

Smartvoter.org

The place for you if you are looking for:

- ★ Nonpartisan election information
- ★ How to Register to Vote
- ★ Information about the voting process
- ★ Your ballot issues
- ★ Your polling place



Looking For a Few Good Leaders!

If you are an experienced leader or would like to gain experience, the League has a place for you!

“Voter apathy is a civic abdication.”
 – Charles M. Blow

If You Haven't Already

Join the League! Membership in the League is open to all U.S. citizens of voting age, both women and men. Others may join as associate members.

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:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$60 Individual membership | <input type="checkbox"/> I cannot join at this time, but please accept my donation of _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$90 Household membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Please send me more information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$60 Associate membership | <input type="checkbox"/> I would like to be contacted by the nominating committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional donation of _____ | |

Name _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____
 Phone _____ e-mail _____

Please make checks payable to LWVHC, P.O. Box 3219, Eureka, CA 95502. 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. For more information call 444-9252. **Annual Dues are due each year on July 1.**

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

Who's Who in Your League Board 2015-2016

- Co-Presidents..... Byrd Lochtie, Kathy Johanson
 Vice President..... Krista Miller
 Past President..... Anne Hartline
 Secretary Patricia-Anne WinterSun
 Treasurer..... Deborah Downs
 Director..... Lilach Assayag
 Director..... Beth Bray
 Director..... Laura Hennings
 Director..... Leslie Leach
 Director..... Carol Masterson
 Director..... Rollin Richmond
 Director..... Kathie Simas
 Director..... Becky Simpson

ACTION

- Action Laura Hennings
 Program Krista Miller
 Natural Resources..... Patricia-Anne WinterSun
 Government Open
 Social Policy Open

ADMINISTRATION

- Historian Carole Ziskin
 Membership Becky Simpson
 Nominating Committee Chair.... Debbe Hartridge
 Publications Lorey Keele
 Hospitality Kathie Simas
 Communications Support Helen Andrews,
 Patricia-Anne WinterSun

FUNDRAISING

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

MEDIA

- Access Humboldt Rep. Rollin Richmond
 Publicity and Social Media..... Lilach Assayag
 Website Lilach Assayag
 VOTER Publication..... Leslie Leach
 VOTER Circulation..... Carolyn Otis

VOTER SERVICE

- Voter Service Director.....Becky Simpson
 Candidate Forums..... Carol Masterson
 Citizen Education..... Judy Bennett
 Election ServiceByrd Lochtie

THE

VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County
P.O. Box 3219
Eureka, CA 95502

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County Diversity Policy 2014-2015

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.

To:

January 2016

LWVHC Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Th	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29					

January 5 Board Meeting
5:30-7:30 PM 474 7th Street, Eureka

January 14 Membership Meeting
5:30-7:30 PM Program Planning
474 7th Street, Eureka

February 2 Board Meeting
5:30-7:30 PM 474 7th Street, Eureka

February 14 Membership Meeting
2:00-4:00 PM 474 7th Street, Eureka