



Santa Cruz VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

November 2017

Volume 52, Number 3

In this Issue

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>Juvenile Justice Forum</i> ----- | 1 |
| <i>President's Message</i> ----- | 2 |
| <i>Membership Report</i> ----- | 2 |
| <i>Media Influences Committee</i> ----- | 2 |
| <i>What to do When Opioids Fail</i> ----- | 3 |
| <i>SCOPE: Saving Lives One Kit at a Time</i> ----- | 5 |

Calendar

Saturday, November 4, 2017

1:30-3:00 p.m.

Juvenile Justice: Balancing the Scales

Resource Center for Nonviolence

612 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Free and open to the public

Monday, November 6, 2017

11:00 a.m.—1:00 pm

Media Influences Planning Committee

Home of Carolyn Elam

215 Bobs Lane, Scotts Valley, CA 95066

Tuesday, November 14, 2017

Tuesday, December 12, 2017

Tuesday, January 9, 2018

10 a.m.-noon

LWVSCC Board Meeting

Santa Cruz County Bank

720 Front Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Tuesday, January 23, 2018

1:00—3:00 p.m.

National Program Planning

Home of Sandy Warren

150 Scenic Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Saturday, February 10, 2018

Noon—2:00 p.m.

Changes to Proposition 13

Scotts Valley Library

251 Kings Village Rd, Scotts Valley, CA 95066

Tuesday, February 13, 2018

10 a.m.-noon

LWVSCC Board Meeting

Santa Cruz County Bank

720 Front Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Thursday, March 8, 2018

1:00—3:00 p.m.

Local Program Planning

Home of Sandy Warren

150 Scenic Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

JUVENILE JUSTICE: BALANCING THE SCALES

Featuring

Sarah Emmert

Director of Community Organizing,
United Way of Santa Cruz

and

Fernando Giraldo

Santa Cruz County Probation Chief

Saturday, November 4

1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Resource Center for Nonviolence Community Room

612 Ocean Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Free and open to the public



Does Santa Cruz County's juvenile justice system incarcerate some racial and ethnic groups at a higher rate than others? Does an individual's skin color, looks, or speech affect how the justice system treats them? What policy changes can help us move towards equity for all? How does Santa Cruz County treat youth in the juvenile justice system? Are we doing our best to produce good outcomes for both the individual and the community? How are we addressing the root causes of youth violence? Will prevention and early intervention be enough to create long-term change?

Juvenile Justice: Balancing the Scales, a moderated panel discussion, will address those issues and more. Sarah Emmert, director of community organizing at [United Way of Santa Cruz County](#), will moderate. Panelists include; Fernando Giraldo, [Santa Cruz County probation chief](#); Julie Burr, [Youth Violence Prevention Task Force](#) coordinator; and Irene O'Connell, program manager for [FoodWhat?!](#), a local organization that helps low-income and struggling teenagers through sustainable agriculture programs and food justice.

This free, public event is co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County and United Way of Santa Cruz County. For more information: league@lwvsc.org; 831-325-4140; lwvsc.org.

Membership Report

The fall new-member tea, graciously hosted by LWVSCC member Joyce Anderson, was attended by new members Robin Drury and Adele Shediak. Other League members in attendance included President Barbara Lewis, Capitola Mayor Stephanie Harlan, and board members Karen Smith, Dottie Fry, and me. Plans are in the works for another new-member gathering in the spring.

We are pleased to introduce three other new members this month: Barbara Lawrence, Greta Gibson, and Cecilie Schulze. Welcome to all of our new members; we are delighted to have you in the League!

—*Lydia Nogales Parker*
Membership Chair

Media Influences Committee

Interested in how media influences voters? In spring, 2018, the LWVSCC will present a program on the topic, and the next committee meeting to plan the event will be from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm on Monday, November 6 at the home of the committee chair, Caroline Elam, in Scotts Valley. The meeting is open to all interested members. Bring a brown-bag lunch and your ideas!

The address is 215 Bobs Lane in Scotts Valley. That's off Lockwood Lane near Graham Hill Road (look for the wooden street marker with reflectors). The house is located on a side branch of Bobs Lane called Cougar Court. Turn at the yellow fire hydrant. There are several parking places nearby on Cougar Court or on Bobs Lane. For more details, contact Caroline Elam at caroline.elam@gmail.com or (310) 567-0915.

President's Message



This is an exciting year in program. Our Saturday, October 7 collaboration with the American Association of University Women at the Santa Cruz Police Department Community Room, which highlighted the plight of human trafficking victims in our community and what is being and can be done to remedy the problem, drew a large, engaged audience.

Members of our local League of Women Voters were involved in helping with all phases of the program—initiating the co-sponsorship, providing refreshments, reviewing the program content, designing the flyer, publicity, and room set up and cleanup. I would like to give special thanks to Karen Smith, for donating a quantity of healthy refreshments, to Pam Newbury for sharing her designing expertise for the flyer and her writing skill, and to Kathy Van Horn for partnering with the AAUW in doing publicity.

Our program committees are currently at work on exploring topics and planning upcoming events. The committee working on the juvenile justice program to take place Saturday, November 4 at the Resource Center for Nonviolence, co-sponsored by United Way, consists of: Karen Smith, Pam Newbury, Lydia Parker, and Barbara Lewis.

The other committee currently meeting, chaired by Caroline Elam, is planning an April program on the media. As of mid-October, the committee has discussed sources of news, both unbiased and biased, social media, and educating voters on how to do critical thinking. We have also considered possible meeting locations, speakers, and co-sponsors. Current committee members are: Caroline Elam, Dottie Fry, Barbara Lewis, Sue Becker, Eve Roberson, Susan Kettmann, Karen Smith, and Marian Disperati. If you'd like to attend the next meeting on November 6, look for details in the notice on this page.

With so many members who have joined recently, we realize it is important to stay abreast of changes in LWVUS positions and to inform our own members and the groups we work with about our updated National Program, which now includes positions on new topics, such as human trafficking. Since I joined in 1970, the League of Women Voters has been adopting positions on topics for action taken by LWVUS by the study and consensus of our members. We will do our stimulating semi-annual review and take suggestions for National Program on Tuesday, January 23 at the home of Sandy and John Warren. See the Calendar and the next VOTER for more details, and, if possible, be there.

—*Barbara Lewis, President LWVSCC*

Seeking a Different Path: What to do When Opioids Fail

On October 1, Dr. William Morris spoke at the SafeRX community event about how individuals who are negatively affected by opioid use can improve their outcomes. Dr. Morris began by stressing that the patient hasn't failed opioids, rather opioids have failed the patient.

The problem is particularly bad in the US: of all the opioids, including heroine, Dilaudid, morphine, Norco and others, made in the world, the United States uses 99%, even though we are 5% of the world's population. We use a lot of opioids in Santa Cruz: more than the California state average, more than neighboring counties of Santa Clara and Monterey. Santa Cruz usage rates are up there close to San Francisco.

Opioids are strong pain killers that for work well for the short term and for end-of-life palliative care. Since the 90s, the number of prescriptions for opioids has skyrocketed, in part because it's easy for a doctor to write a prescription. Now we realize that opioids are causing serious problems: deaths from prescription drugs are increasing, especially among young adults. Those who die of overdose often have other drugs or alcohol in their system.

Patients who take opioids should educate themselves about the risks versus the benefits of opioid use, as well as the dangers of mixing them with other drugs or alcohol. A small percentage of patients does well on opioids. Others require increasing doses to maintain the same degree of pain relief, but as the dose increases, so do adverse side effects and the risk of overdose. In a large percentage of people, the risks of chronic opioid therapy appear to outweigh the benefits.



Dr. William Morris speaks at SafeRX event.

Opioid Prescriptions Dispensed by U.S. Retail Pharmacies; 1991-2011



U.S. Vector One, from "Prescription Drug Abuse: It's Not what the doctor ordered," Nora Volkow National Prescription Drug Abuse Summit, April 2012. Available: <http://www.slideshare.net/OPUNIT/nora-volkow-final-edits>

To safely utilize opioid therapy for chronic pain, Dr. Morris recommends patients ask their doctor to complete an agreement to establish treatment goals and expectations. The plan should take into account dosage, quality of life, and ability to function. Patients who can achieve a good quality of life and functionality on a low dose can do well on chronic opioid therapy. But if there is no pain control and the patient has a poor quality of life, it's not worth it. Other key elements of the plan should include knowledge of how to safely take the medication, limits on driving, having a Narcan prescription (see article on page 5 for more about Narcan) in case of overdose, and taking steps to keep the medications safe and secure to prevent diversion.

In a large percentage of people, the risks of chronic opioid therapy appear to outweigh the benefits.

Signs of opioid failure include adverse effects, inappropriate use, and failure to meet therapeutic and treatment goals. Adverse effects include respiratory failure, constipation, nausea/vomiting, hyperalgesia (over-sensitivity to pain), sleep disruption, depression, and anxiety, among others. Hyperalgesia in particular can be a problem, as increased sensitivity to pain can cause the patient to think they need more opiates to control it, whereas what's actually needed is to stop taking them to allow the nervous system to swing back into balance.

Continued on page 4

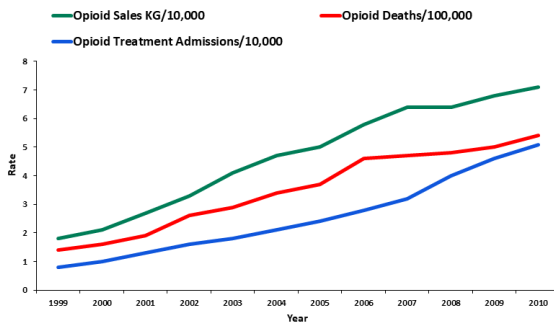
Continued from page 3

Inappropriate use includes illegal activities, addiction, and the absence of an appropriate diagnosis. In some cases, when a patient wants to continue using opioids despite obvious harm, that can be a sign of opioid use disorder.

Ironically, while doctors can prescribe opiates without limitation, they must have eight hours of special training to prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorders

In cases where a patient uses high doses of opioids but has no pain relief and experiences a decrease in functionality, opioids are failing that person and it does not make sense for them to continue. When opioids fail a patient, the patient should slowly wean off the drug, a process that can take several months. At the same time, patients should focus on exercise and alternative therapies, and, when part of the reason for continuing the opioids is pain from life trauma, behavioral health support.

Rates of Opioid Sales, Opioid Overdose Deaths, and Treatment Admission Rates, U.S. 1999-2010



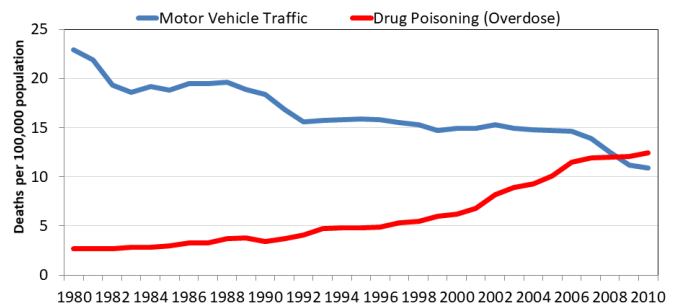
SOURCES: National Vital Statistics System, 1999-2008; Automation of Reports and Consolidated Orders System (ARCOS) of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), 1999-2010; Treatment Episode Data Set, 1999-2009
http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm56e1101a1.htm?_cdd=mm56e1101a1_w updated with 2009 mortality and 2010 treatment admission data

Alternative complimentary therapies for pain relief include acupuncture, massage, and chiropractic care. Unfortunately, lack of insurance coverage can be a barrier with those treatments.

For those who try to cut down but can't, buprenorphine (also known as Subutex) provides a safer method of pain control and may help with weaning off opioids. More commonly used for those who are addicted to opioids, buprenorphine

can also be used for those for whom opioids have failed but aren't clearly addicted. Buprenorphine is safer than opioids, has pain relieving effects, prevents withdrawal, has less effect on the brain so that patients are more alert and less depressed, and may be less constipating. Dr. Morris pointed out that, ironically, while doctors can prescribe opiates without limitation, they must have eight hours of special training to prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorders. This has created somewhat of a barrier to its use, so patients whose doctors don't have this training should be referred to a doctor who does.

Motor Vehicle Traffic, Poisoning, and Drug Poisoning (Overdose) Death Rates United States, 1980-2010



NCHS Data Brief, December, 2011. Updated with 2009 and 2010 mortality data.

Dr. Morris encouraged patients for whom opioids are not working to tell their doctor they want a different path and don't want to be on opioids anymore. He concluded with a healthcare apology for a system that has failed those it was trying to help. "You deserve better," he said, "you deserve a life with less pain, less sedation, less side effects, less stigma attached."

—Pam Newbury, VOTER Editor

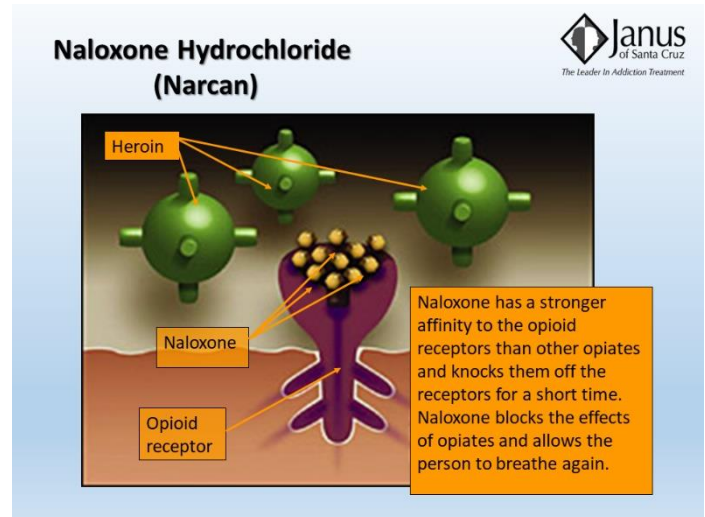
Videos of both [Dr. Morris' talk on opioid safety](#) and [Nancy Krauss' Narcan kit training](#) (see article on following page) may be viewed at lwvsc.org/videos or on the [LWVSCC YouTube channel](#).

SCOPE:

Saving Lives One Kit at a Time

The Santa Cruz Overdose Prevention and Education (SCOPE) Program was created to provide Naloxone (Narcan) to the community to treat opiate overdose. At the October SafeRX event, Nancy Krauss, Ph.D., Medical Services Director Janus of Santa Cruz demonstrated the use of a SCOPE kit for reversing opiate overdose. The SCOPE kit contains two doses of Naloxone and everything needed to administer it.

Of the over 50,000 drug overdose deaths in the US in 2015, 45% involved prescription opioids, not illegal street heroin. Of the 63 % of drug overdose deaths in the US related to opioids, only 4.4% got the drugs from a dealer or stranger. Eleven percent bought them from a friend or relative; 17% were prescribed by a doctor, and 55% received the drugs free from a friend or relative. Of the 49 overdose deaths in Santa Cruz County in 2015, 15% were from heroine, and 22% were prescription opioids.

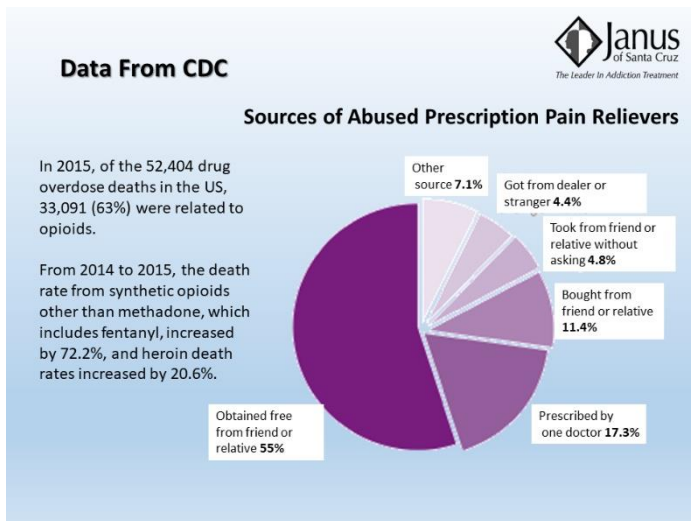


When overdose occurs, administration of Naloxone, a very strong binder on the brain's breathing receptors, will knock opiates off the receptor and take their place. Because the Naloxone does not have any effect on the receptor, effects of the opiate are reversed and breathing can resume. Because Naloxone has no effect on the receptors, it is a very safe drug, having no side effects.

A patient can be taking the drug completely as prescribed, but inadvertently take a double dose, or combine it with another sedative or alcohol, which can lead to accidental overdose.

A key risk factor for opiate overdose is a change in tolerance after reducing dosage, then taking the same amount previously taken, which is now too much. Other risk factors include mixing drugs with sedatives or alcohol, taking a different quality, potency, or type of the drug, failing physical health, and using when alone. It's important to note that it's not just illicit users who overdose. A patient can be taking the drug completely as prescribed, but inadvertently take a double dose, or combine it with another sedative or alcohol, which can lead to accidental overdose.

Continued on page 6



Opioid overdose occurs when a person takes a toxic amount of opioids, sometimes in combination with alcohol or other sedatives. Opiates bind to receptors in the brain that control breathing. Breathing slows and eventually stops, causing the brain to be deprived of oxygen and the heart to stop. Unconsciousness, coma, and possibly death can follow. Those revived from an opioid overdose may sustain long-term brain damage.

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to men and women of voting age who are U.S. citizens. Others are welcome to join the League as associate members.

Send your check payable to League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County or LWVSCC with this form to LWVSCC, Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010-1745.

____ \$65 Individual annual membership
 ____ \$100.00 Two members in a household
 ____ \$30.00 Student membership
 ____ Contribution \$ _____

Checks made out to LWVSCC are not tax deductible.

To make a tax-deductible donation, write a separate check to LWV Education Fund.
 Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

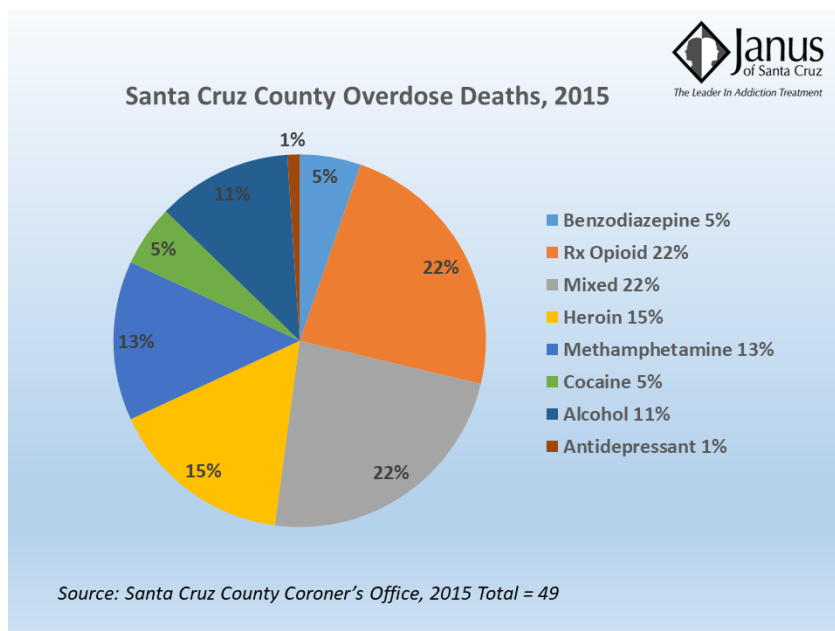
Telephone: _____

Email _____

League of Women Voters
 of Santa Cruz County
 PO Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010
 (831) 325-4140
 Editor: Pam Newbury
 President: Barbara Lewis
 Membership: Lydia Nogales Parker
league@lwvsc.org lwvsc.org

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.

Continued from page 5



Anyone who believes they may encounter an opiate user or who knows an opiate user, whether or not the use is illicit or properly prescribed, is encouraged to get a SCOPE kit to have on hand. The only requirement is to take the 15-minute training course. Kits are available at any Janus location in Santa Cruz. Contact Janus at (831) 462-1060 to inquire about obtaining a SCOPE kit.

—Pam Newbury, VOTER Editor

Drug overdose is now the leading cause of accidental death in the US.

There were over 50,000 drug overdose deaths in the United States in 2015.

45% involve prescription opioids

49 Overdose Deaths in Santa Cruz County in 2015