

President's Message

Hello all!

Once again, it's been a busy month with the League of Women Voters of Humboldt County.

Because of the pandemic, the State of the Community Luncheon, the LWVHC's main fundraiser, has not been held. Instead, the board elected to send letters asking for donations from our regular SoCL attendees, as well as members. As of this writing, the effort has been well received! We are very appreciative of the donations that have been sent.

The organizing process in the new office space continues. As the Ink People continue to make themselves at home in the building and complete renovations, we were able to move LWVHC files around, organize further, and get a better idea of the space that we're working with. Thank you to everyone who volunteered to help move things around! We got a lot accomplished.

On November 18, a membership meeting led by Social Policy Co-Director **Sylvia Shaw**, with panel members **Kay Escarda**, **Bonnie Oliver**, and **Lorey Keele** briefed attendees on the upcoming housing position review and provided an excellent and very informative overview of the state of housing in Humboldt County.

The upcoming December 7 board meeting will be a brief one, followed by a virtual gathering that the membership is invited to attend. Watch for the Zoom invite! Catch up with your fellow League members, let everyone know what you're doing for the upcoming holidays, and see how many attendees' cats try to knock the webcams over. In lieu of our traditional in-person holiday parties, Zoom is a good option to keep connected with each other during the unprecedented times. And to meet each other's cats! I'm looking forward to seeing the membership there. Keeping my fingers crossed that we'll be able to gather in person during the next holiday season.

Stay well and enjoy the upcoming holidays!

Jessica Schlachter
LWVHC 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.

Holiday Cheer in December

Announcing a small schedule change. There will be no membership meeting on Thursday, December 16. Instead, members are invited to join the board of directors via Zoom for holiday cheer on December 7. The board will have a brief business meeting starting at 6 p.m. and then we'll meet and greet each other as we honor this season of light. Whether you celebrate Hanukkah (which ends on December 6), Christmas, Winter Solstice and/or Kwanzaa, join in the festivities: Tuesday, December 7 at 6 p.m.

Molly Cate
LWVHC Program Director



Housing Position Membership Meeting 1

Our November 18 membership meeting to update us about the current realities of housing in Humboldt was sobering and promising. Going into winter 2021-22, appropriate shelter in Humboldt will be difficult, at best, for working, low-income, and extreme low-income citizens.

We heard from **Lorey Keele** about incredible efforts through Redwood Community Action Agency to house people who have the most barriers. She told us about other nonprofits on the front lines. **Bonnie Oliver** showed us the long-to-materialize plans to bring housing and business to the Town Center of McKinleyville. **Kay Escarda** talked of the City of Eureka and Humboldt County Housing Authorities who provide subsidized housing via Section 8 vouchers and housing they own.

All our speakers had hope for the grants and innovative planning coming in the near future. However, due to shortages of construction labor and supplies, buildable sites and Not In My Back Yard (NIMBY) attitudes, they foresee continued challenges. Homelessness is growing and though legal parking sites are in the works, solutions appear few and far between. When the much-touted Housing First monies come to the county there will be no sites to house people in with those dollars.

On February 17, 2022, we will have speakers from the City of Eureka Planning Department and explore how we can update our position to be effective in advocating for better meeting housing needs in our diverse county.

Sylvia Shaw
LWVHC Co-Social Policy Director



Vote Humboldt - High School Voter Registration Project

Vote Humboldt had two training sessions on Nov. 9 and 13, 2021. The sessions were done via zoom, and each had the same agenda.

The agenda was a PowerPoint presentation with the major points of interest. Essentially, Vote Humboldt has contacted 22 public and charter schools regarding the High School Voter Registration project. Per request of the schools, the project will start in 2022. Volunteers will be paired and assigned to a specific school. They will work with the school administration and teachers to schedule a training session. The curriculum will include a PowerPoint presentation on the importance of voting and the voter registration process. Additionally, students will register to vote online during the training session. There will be small discussion groups so that the students become more engaged and encouraged to teach their peers about the significance of voting and voter registration.

Margaret Augustine
LWVHC Voter Service Director

Voter's Choice Act and Humboldt County

In 2020, 15 of California's 58 counties implemented the Voter's Choice Act (VCA) for the Nov. 3, 2020, election. At the present time, there are an additional seven that plan to implement it for the June 2022 elections. Humboldt County hopes to meet all of the requirements in time to implement it for the Nov. 8, 2022, election.

Those requirements are:

There must be an administrative election plan to implement VCA submitted to and approved by the Secretary of State.

Every eligible voter will receive a vote-by-mail ballot with an enclosed postage paid envelope.

Drop boxes for ballots will be available starting 28 days before Election Day.

There must be 10 Vote Centers that serve as full-service satellite election offices with two that must be open 10 days prior to Election Day. More Vote Centers will open three days before Election Day.

Advantages of VCA are :

Voters can vote in person at any Vote Center in the county.

At any Vote Center, voters can vote in person, drop off a completed ballot, get a replacement ballot, vote using an accessible voting machine, and get help and materials in other languages.

Voters can register and vote the same day at any Vote Center -- through Election Day.

Challenges facing VCA's implementation in Humboldt County are:

The Humboldt County Office of Elections is currently recruiting for two openings. Timing in the hiring of replacements will play a role in how quickly the office can move forward with implementation of VCA.

Connectivity for every satellite office is expensive. It is hoped that the state will help provide sufficient funding for this to occur.

The timing of the public service announcements to be followed by public meetings to clarify changes in voting procedures could be a problem.

The county's plan must be approved by the Secretary of State prior to implementation.

Kelly Sanders, who is the Clerk, Recorder & Registrar of Voters for Humboldt County, believes that it will be possible to meet the above challenges and become a VCA county in time for the Nov. 8, 2022, election. Although the recall election changed the county focus from completing the administrative plan as early as she had hoped, she believes VCA is a good fit for Humboldt and that the state will be helpful. Bolstering her belief, is Humboldt County's percentage of vote-by-mail ballots that was over 93% in the November 2020 election and over 89% in the 2021 recall election. According to the state, if the vote-by-mail percentage of voters is at or above 68%, the county should be successful in implementing VCA .

Certain elements of VCA, such as having satellite centers open on Saturday and Sunday, may be necessary for populations that are much larger than Humboldt County's. As a member of the California Association of Clerks and Election Officers (CACEO), Sanders is able to join other similar counties to advocate for changes that would be beneficial for our voters. Secretary of State Shirley Weber meets regularly with CACEO members, as well as with other civic organizations such as LWVC, to promote voting and the VCA.

All of the above information is based on information from Kelly Sanders and from the office of the Secretary of State.

Sharolyn Hutton
LWVHC Co-President



Update on the Behavioral Health Services Study

As you may remember, at last May's annual membership meeting we decided to conduct a study of mental health services in Humboldt County in order to create a new position on the topic. League positions, backed by the formality of a study in depth and constructed of statements selected by consensus, allow us to advocate and educate on a topic.

That decision in May, in turn, came from the members' review meeting, held last February, of our position on public health services. At that meeting, we came to consensus on a revised public health position and concluded that mental health services deserved its own position, leading to the proposal that we conduct the study.

In September, that study got underway with formal approval of the board of directors and a press release seeking community involvement. Nine LWVHC members came forward to serve on the study committee and four non-members. More volunteers may join along the way.

We held our first meeting on October 23. After introductions and some orientation, most of our time was spent in crafting a statement of scope for the study and in deciding whether to call it a mental health study (the original wording) or a behavioral health study. Several committee members knowledgeable about current standards of language made the convincing case that we change the wording in our study title to behavioral health.

The text of our statement of scope, approved by the board of directors at their November 2 meeting, is as follows: "Investigation of access to behavioral health services in Humboldt County from prevention to diagnosis to treatment, and availability to all community members."

The committee's second meeting occurred on November 8. Our objective at this meeting was to begin to amass research sources. The titles of books, articles, podcasts, reports, and videos; the names of organizations and of people we may choose to contact or who might participate in one or more panel discussions are to be placed by any and all committee members in a Google document created for that purpose. The gathering of resources will proceed over a number of weeks or months.

We also began the process of choosing who would take responsibility for studying which resources and write a summary of each to present to the full committee at a study meeting. This will save the time it would take for everyone to absorb every resource. These resources and summaries will also be kept as part of the "study kit" (archive) of this study for the use of future League members.

Our next meeting has not been scheduled yet but will probably take place by mid-December. Updated information will be posted here in the VOTER.

Molly Cate
LWVHC Program Director



Holiday Community Giving

The holidays are fast approaching, and when the Board of Directors discussed conducting our annual holiday party via Zoom for a second time, we decided to repeat what we did last year for our traditional annual community gift-giving.

Historically, when our League members gathered for our holiday celebration, we brought a gift for a “tween,” an oft-forgotten group of youngsters between the ages of 10 and 12. These children are usually too old for Toys-for-Tots, but they ARE still children, so we have targeted these kids in the past for gift-giving. We delivered our collected gifts to the Boys & Girls Club of the Redwoods for distribution.

Last year, due to the pandemic, we collected money to deliver to the Boys & Girls Club instead of giving them our gift selections. Collectively we contributed \$800! When we requested that the Club purchase appropriate gifts for the tweens, Monica Rose, the Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Club, asked that, instead of toys, our contributions be used for winter coats for the children. Winter coats! And we were blithely worried about toys. What a reality check!

The Board of Directors would like us to repeat last year’s holiday community giving. It was very successful, and we were all warmed by the thought of those children wearing winter coats.

Please consider mailing a check to the League, and we will collect the checks and present one large check from the League members to the Boys & Girls Club. We will ask that Monica Rose decide exactly how to spend it for the children’s needs.

Mail your checks, payable to LWVHC to PO Box 3219, Eureka, CA 95502. Please note in the memo line that the check is for “Holiday Giving for Tweens.”

Thank you for your generosity.

Nancy Kay
Treasurer, LWVHC



Left: Jessica Schlachter’s cat Juno, Zoom Interrupter Extrordinaire
Middle: Volunteers helping to move the League’s belongings: Michael Anderson, Kay Escarda, Jessica Schlachter, Dan Schlachter, Connie Wolfson, and Sharolyn Hutton.
Right: Michael took the second picture to allow Leslie Leach to be in a picture.

Renew Now or Help Someone Become a LWVHC Member!

Membership in the League of Women Voters, the most respected and effective grassroots organization in the country, is open to men and women of all ages. 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 1st

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

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

Yes! I want to join the League of Women Voters of Humboldt County and become a voice for citizens and a force for change.

_____ \$75 Single Membership

_____ \$115 Family Membership
(2 in same household)

_____ I also want to gift a membership!

Name _____ Phone _____

I am enclosing for my annual membership renewal:

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

e-mail _____



The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County

627 3rd 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 2021-2022 League Board

- Co-Presidents.....Sharolyn Hutton/
Jessica Schlachter
- Vice President.....Molly Cate
- Secretary.....Anne Hartline
- Treasurer.....Nancy Kay
- Program Director.....Molly Cate
- Natural Resources Director.....Leslie Leach
- Social Policy Directors.....Molly Cate/
Amy Moffat/Sylvia Shaw
- Government Directors.....Sharrone Blanck/
Karen Price
- Fairs Director.....Becky Simpson
- Access Humboldt Liaison.....Molly Cate
- Election Service Director.....Byrd Lochtie
- Forum Director.....Carol Masterson
- Voter Service Director.....Maggie Augustine
- Membership Director.....Becky Simpson
- Social Media Chair.....Jessica Schlachter
- VOTER Co-Editors....Dave Rosso/Leslie Leach
- Community Education Directors.....Nancy Kay/
Amy Moffat
- Communications Director.....Deborah Downs
- Traditional Media Chair.....Jessica Schlachter
- Director.....Eddie Morgan





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, Equity, and Inclusion Policy

The League of Women Voters is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.

There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity

LWVHC Calendar

Tuesday, December 12/7 Board Meeting 6 p.m.

LWVHC Webpage Any Time!

LWCHC Twitter Any Time!

LWCHC Instagram Any Time!