

President's Message

Hello, League members!

I am **Julie Kelly**, and I will be your League of Women Voters of Humboldt County (LWVHC) President for the next couple of years. I have been a LWVHC board member for several years, with a short hiatus through COVID. I am excited to represent the League, and I am grateful for all the love and support I feel all around.

We have a lot on our plate this coming '24-'25 year. Along with our normal activities, we have the Presidential election as well as LWVUS shifting to a new per-member-payment platform. One of my main goals is to keep you informed, not only on the progress of these things but also on the ways LWVHC works through these transitions.

Our first LWVHC presence will be on the 4th of July with our ever-present voter registration and information booths at the Eureka and Arcata street fairs. **Anne Hartline** has worked hard to find a group of volunteers to represent LWVHC. The North Country Fair in September will be our next big presence, so be ready to volunteer as LWVHC digs into another productive year.

Finally, this month your board will meet at our annual retreat not only to get to know each other but also to set the LWVHC calendar for the coming year. So be on the lookout for membership meetings and KEET forums, as well as other ways to stay informed and get involved. I look forward to meeting each of you and hearing your feedback as the year progresses. Email me at lwvhc.jlk@gmail.com anytime.

Julie Kelly
LWVHC President



New Board Member

For those who don't know me, my name is **Kathy Johanson** and I'm originally from the SF bay area, moving to Humboldt in 2012. My dear friend **Byrd Lochtie** recruited me for voter service mailings, and I didn't look back from there. I'll also add that I met Laura Hennings at Women's International Day first when we had booths next to each other. Until then, I didn't know who the League really was. I credit both of them for my beginnings with our local League.

I've been interested in voter education for many, many years and utilized resources from the state League to develop my understanding of political issues. Most of all, I appreciate our local opportunities to learn via the League and the passion to serve shared by the board and all of you. In past board service, I was your co-President (with **Byrd**), social media director, redesigned the website, helped with voter education in many ways, was on the State of the Community Luncheon committee and more. Today, I'm working at Humboldt Area Foundation, active in several community groups, and looking forward to working with our current board to further our mission in this impactful year.

Please join me! There are many easy ways to contribute even if it's just engaging the public at one of our booths.

Kathy Johanson
LWVHC Director

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.



Eureka City Schools Board of Trustees
June 25, 2024

Dear Trustees:

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. The League is nonpartisan in that it does not support or oppose any political party or candidate; it is political in that it takes positions on selected governmental issues after member study and agreement.

One such member study was conducted by the League of Women Voters of Humboldt County (LWVHC) in 2016. The study, which is part of the LWVHC Government Portfolio and is entitled "Civic Engagement", specifically states that

"All governmental bodies and organizations should:

Facilitate equitable access to current information about all public meetings open or closed. This shall include all information about the meetings, agendas, and reports. This information should be made accessible to the public with reasonably sufficient time for citizen response and/or input.

Ensure that equitable opportunities exist for public input from multiple platforms and provide ample opportunities for citizens to participate in the civic process,

Ensure that sufficient input from citizens is allowed at public meetings and recorded in the minutes, and

Ensure transparency for citizens about all policies, practices, evaluations, and decisions of the organization. "

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County feels very strongly about the need for full and open transparency, as well as opportunities for citizen involvement related to the actions of elected governmental boards and governmental decision-making.

For this reason, we were shocked and concerned by the actions of the Eureka City Schools Board of Trustees on December 14, 2023 when it approved a major real estate transaction with minimal public notification or community input. Our concerns were validated by the recent Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury Report released on June 12, 2024.

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County strongly agrees with the Grand Jury's summary (page 1): "The Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury concludes that the Eureka City Schools Trustees acted hastily and without sufficient due diligence. While apparently literally complying with the technical requirements of the California Government Code (Brown Act) with respect to a real estate transaction, the Trustees violated the law's general intent for public participation and transparency in decision-making."

We also concur with the Deficiencies cited in the report (pages 9 and 10): "There was insufficient time for the ECS Trustees and the public to read, understand, and openly discuss and question the pending deal."

We were additionally shocked to learn that: “Although the “agenda packet” distributed to ECS Trustees approximately 72 hours before the December 14, 2023, meeting included the draft resolution and agreement (17 pages single-spaced), these documents were not available to the public. The publicly announced agenda at the time did not specify the details of the pending transaction.”

“Prior public notice did not inform that the pending deal involved not just a sale of surplus property but a property exchange bypassing certain provisions of the Education Code.”

“ECS Trustees did not publicly verify the bona fide identity and finances of AMG Communities-Jacobs, LLC. “

In terms of the Grand Jury report’s statement regarding Due Diligence and Decision-making (pages 10 and 11), the League of Women Voters of Humboldt County agrees that: “The public has a right to be informed about pending decisions, to be involved, and to fully participate.”

“The ECS Trustees did not exercise due diligence and did not inquire about the resolution agreement.”

• ...On December 14, 2023, the ECS Trustees in effect “rubber-stamped” the Resolution and Agreement.”

And finally, the League of Women Voters of Humboldt County concurs with the Grand Jury report’s statement on Decision-making (page 12): “• ECS Trustees, administrators, and advisers did not provide sufficient information regarding the agendized Jacobs property transaction at least 72 hours prior to ECS Trustee action, thereby preventing meaningful public participation in the enactment of the Resolution and Agreement.”

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County strongly suggests that the Eureka City Schools Board of Trustees **take the following actions** to address the concerns raised in the Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury report and restore transparency and trust to this important transaction between ECS and AMG Communities-Jacobs, LLC:

Immediately make the details of the Jacobs property negotiations and ongoing status of the transaction known to the public,

Fully disclose the names of all partners in AMG Communities-Jacobs, LLC to establish the bona-fide identity of its members and disclose its financial integrity,

Fully explain the need felt by ECS Board of Trustees, the Superintendent and advisers for the “secretive, last-minute, quick judgment, in an intentionally compressed time-period, without public knowledge, behind closed doors”. (Grand Jury Report Conclusion, page 12)

Now, and in the future, “provide the public with an opportunity to be informed and to question the details of this decision and its potential relationship to other local public policy issues.” (Grand Jury Report Findings, page 13)

Delay the close of escrow on this transaction to allow adequate time to address Items 1-4 above.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sharolyn Hutton, LWVHC Co-President

Anne J. Hartline, LWVHC Board Member

It's Summer, But Election 2024 Will Be Here Soon!

Hello! The 2024 General Election is still a ways away, but your League is already gearing up for voter registration and voter education events in the present and near future.

First, LWVHC was contacted by Haley Foster, a senior at Eureka High School, who sought our support for a small lunchtime voter registration event at her school. I met with Haley, and she arranged for a table to be set up during senior lunch on June 4. Though we only registered five new voters, I had a chance to chat with many of Haley's friends and classmates to discuss the importance of voting in the upcoming election.



Me, Haley & a student registering to vote

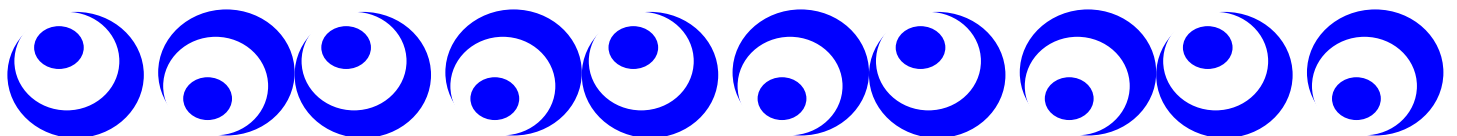
Next are the 4th of July fairs, and as usual, the LWVHC will have a booth at both fairs. Since time was short, I reached out to past volunteers and many of these experienced and intrepid Leaguers agreed to work a shift at one of the fairs and/or to help set up/take down our booths. Our League is a strong and positive presence in our community thanks to our many amazing volunteers!

We will also be staffing a booth at the North County Fair on September 21 and 22, so I will need another crew to help. Also, I plan to embark on voter registration and voter information events at Cal Poly Humboldt and College of the Redwoods once both campuses resume for Fall Semester, and I'll be needing volunteers for those events as well. I also plan to reach out to our local high schools to see what sort of events (including running candidate forums) they are interested in collaborating with the LWVHC this fall.

If any of these opportunities sound exciting to you personally, let me know! I plan to hold a voter information and registration training session in early September for Leaguers who would like to help but are new to the process. Watch for an email blast for updates about training sessions, or contact me directly at annehartline10@gmail.com to let me know your interest.

Last, and this is really exciting, I had a terrific meeting with Juan P. Cervantes, Humboldt County Registrar of Voters (and County Recorder AND LWVHC member) last week. He supports the League's efforts to register voters whenever and wherever we can, and he appreciates our emphasis on reminding voters that they may need to re-register if their address has changed. Juan and I also talked about the need to look beyond voter registration and really focus this fall on activities that provide accurate, nonpartisan information to voters and to encourage people to actually vote. We talked about things the LWVHC already does (Candidate Forums, Pros and Cons, VOTE411, etc.) and ways in which the LWVHC and County Elections staff can work together to make information about these resources more readily available to the general public. Juan and I plan to meet in July with members of his staff to do some coordinating and planning. I'm thrilled that the LWVHC will get to collaborate with County Elections to maximize voter response for the General Election 2024!

Anne Hartline
LWVHC Voter Service Chair



Program Updates from the Annual Meeting

Grateful thanks to the LWVHC members who attended our Annual Meeting on May 30 at the Sequoia Conference Center! For those who couldn't be there, here's an update on the program recommendations presented at the meeting. We accepted the three positions reviewed during the 2023-2024 LWVHC year.

These newly revised positions are:

The Role of Government in Economic Development in Humboldt County, Adult Detention Facilities and Programs in Humboldt County, and Juvenile Detention Facilities and Programs in Humboldt County.

The following positions proposed to be reviewed in the coming League year were accepted: Civic Engagement and Resources and Development of Humboldt Bay. There was some thoughtful discussion about the decision to review our Humboldt Bay position because it was just reviewed in our 2022-2023 year. But, ultimately the

group decided to accept the will of those members who attended the meeting last October 23 when it was strongly suggested that we revisit this position with a greater focus on climate change.

Another outcome of that membership meeting last October was the decision to review two positions a year instead of three. That is why you see two positions mentioned above.

Several excellent suggestions involving program were made by members in the "Directions to the Board" section of the meeting:

- Hosting a wind energy educational event
- Increasing the utilization of our 19 positions for advocacy
- Forming an Action Committee to spearhead increased advocacy
- Seeing how our housing position relates to current local housing developments such as the Gateway Plan and Valley West
- Establishing an Observer Corps of young people wanting to learn more about local government and the League of Women Voters

Molly Cate

LWVHC Program Director

Welcome New and Returning Members

JoAnn Bauer

John Clark

Teresa Wilmott

Pictures from the Annual Meeting on May 30, 2024



Outgoing Co-Presidents **Sharolyn Hutton** and **Jessica Schlachter** with **Dan Schlachter**



Outgoing Secretary **Maggie Fleming**

Board Members L-R Back Row: **Bonnie Oliver, Julie Kelly, Maggie Fleming, Molly Cate.**
Next Row: **Sylvia Shaw, Becky Simpson, Cindy Humphry, Byrd Lochtie, Sharolyn Hutton,**
and Jessica Schlachter. Front Row: **Anne Hartline, Michelle Vassel, and Leslie Leach**
Not shown: **Karen Price and Peggy Syvertson**



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

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P.O. Box 3219, Eureka, CA 95502
www.lwvhc.org
leaguehumboldt@lwvhc.org

(707) 444-9252

Who's Who in Your 2024-2025 League Board

- President.....Julie Kelly
- Vice President.....Molly Cate
- Secretary.....Bonnie Oliver
- Treasurer.....Michelle Vassel
- Program Director.....Molly Cate
- Natural Resources Director.....Leslie Leach
- Social Policy Director.....Sylvia Shaw
- Government Director.....Vacant
- Access Humboldt Liaison.....Molly Cate
- Election Service Director.....Byrd Lochtie
- Forum Director.....Anne Hartline
- Voter Service Co-Directors.....Anne Hartline
.....and Julie Kelly
- Membership Director.....Becky Simpson
- Social Media Chair.....Jessica Schlachter
- VOTER Editor.....Leslie Leach
- Community Education Director.....Karen Price
- Communications Director.....Vacant
- Traditional Media Chair.....Jessica Schlachter
- Director.....Cindy Humphry
- Director.....Kathy Johanson
- Director.....Bonnie Oliver
- Director.....Peggy Syvertson





P.O. Box 3219
Eureka, CA 95502

To:

Get Involved!

We all have unique skills to contribute and limited time. 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

Saturday, July 20
10 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Board Retreat
TBA

Anytime

LWVHC Webpage
LWVHC Instagram
LWVHC X