

Dear League Members:

It's nice to see the sun more often over the last few days, but glad we've gotten a lot more water this year than last.

Congratulations to **Leslie Leach** and **Elaine Weinreb** for organizing the member meeting at the Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District Office on March 17. John Friedenbach, Executive Director of the Water District gave us a good introduction to local water issues. We learned where community water is obtained, and how it is managed. I was pleased to learn that the amount of water in Ruth Lake that is damned and feeds the Mad River was not reduced during the drought last year. We also learned that the new fish farm to be built on the Samoa peninsula will use some of the extra water that used to be used by local lumber mills.

The League's annual State of the Community Luncheon will be held on Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at starting at 11:30 AM at the Adorni Center in Eureka. **Anne Hartline** will be our master of ceremonies and keep us on schedule. Dell'Arte International and Michele McKeegan, a community volunteer, are our honorees this year. In addition, we will hear from Supervisor Rex Bohn and Humboldt Film Commissioner, Cassandra Hasseltine. You can buy tickets online at <https://my.lwv.org/california/humboldt-county/state-community-luncheon-tickets>, or by sending a check to LWVHC, P. O. Box 3219, Eureka, CA, 95502. I look forward to seeing you there.

Also, come and learn about the League's Foster Care Study on April 25<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM in the A1AA building at 434 7<sup>th</sup> Street in Eureka.

All the best for a good month.

Rollin Richmond, 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.

**STATE OF COMMUNITY LUNCHEON  
KEYNOTE SPEAKER FOR 2019**

*"Luckyly, Humboldt County is one of those places where people still really think filming is fun." This is a quote from the Location Managers Guild International website by crew member working on A Wrinkle in Time, a recent Hollywood movie based on the children's classic book. Parts of the film are shot in local locations, including Sequoia Park.*



Cassandra Hasseltine, this year's keynote speaker at the State of the Community Luncheon, is surely part of the reason for the positive image enjoyed by the North Coast as a location for filming. Cassandra, a HSU graduate, has been the Humboldt

-Del Norte Film Commissioner since 2010. The Film Commission offers services to production companies, including caterers, animal handlers, portable toilets, and rock climbers (!) along with numerous other local specialties including a consulting botanist.

According to the Commission's website, our area has been in the movies for 100 years. Most of us are familiar with *Outbreak*, starring *Dustin Hoffman*, and *The Majestic*, with *Jim Carrey*. Parts of two *Star Wars* movies and *ET* also were shot here as well as numerous commercials and documentaries. The Commission aims for world-wide recognition of our area as a great place to make a movie. The list of possible locations they present offers an array of choices including redwoods, beaches, quaint little towns and historic buildings. We look forward to hearing from Cassandra about what it is like to promote Humboldt and Del Norte Counties to the world and to see movie magic being made here.

See you at the Luncheon, April 12 at the Adorni Center in Eureka. Seating is at 11:30. Check your Voter or our webpage for ticket information.

## Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District Presentation: An Overview

*by Leslie Leach, Natural Resources Director*

Ruth Lake filled to capacity every year of the past drought. That's very good news for customers of the Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District (HBMWD). On Sunday, March 17, John Friedenbach, General Manager of the HBMWD gave a comprehensive presentation about the water district. He began with the history, moved to the present, and finished with what the future may bring.

Following are some other positive facts:

- Ruth Lake and the Mad River are the sources of the water managed by the HBMWD.
- That water has a natural filtration system because it passes through 60-90 feet of river bed gravel.
- The HBMWD keeps a percentage of the water for in-stream flow to maintain habitat for fish and other wildlife.

But along with the good news, readers may be interested to know why their water rates went up so much since 2009. It seems logical that if the Louisiana-Pacific and the Simpson lumber mills shut down, there would be more water for domestic use. However, LP and Simpson paid for 75% of the costs of the HBMWD. When those businesses closed, that 75% of costs still needed to be paid, and much of that cost is now covered through increased domestic water rates. If the HBMWD doesn't "use" all that water, their water rights will go to the state of California.

In the future, some new businesses may purchase some of the extra water: One business is the Nordic AquaFarms/ California Marine Investments, LLC. *This fish farm is supposed to be completely land-based.* The second business is Enviva, a company that produces wood pellets.

If you are interested in knowing more about HBMWD, go to the website <https://www.hbmwd.com/>.

If you would like to attend the HBMWD's monthly meetings, they're held the second Thursday of each month at 9:00 a.m. at 828 Seventh Street in Eureka. The time to pay attention to the precious resource, water, is now.

### New League Members

Lisa DeMatteo

Tina Mackenzie

## FOSTER CARE STUDY

### Foster Care Consensus Questions

1. What are the options available for recruiting, training, and retaining social work professionals in Humboldt County?
2. What are the readily-available resources to provide ongoing support for birth and resource families in Humboldt County?
3. What are the resource needs, and what/where do gaps exist?
4. What are the mechanisms in place to locate/address resource gaps in a timely manner?
5. What mechanisms exist to develop partnerships and ensure ongoing collaboration within and among our communities?

### **Background**

- In early 2017 the League of Women Voters Humboldt County (LWVHC) held a membership meeting focusing on foster care in Humboldt County. The LWVHC position on foster care had not been updated since 1999. After discussion, a new study was suggested. At the Annual Meeting in May of 2017, League members suggested the Board review the current position and consider implementing a new study.
- At the LWVHC Board Planning Meeting in August of 2017, a League member presented a proposal for a local study into foster care based in part on the June 2017 Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury Report which concluded “that the safety net for our children critically needs improvement.”
- After discussion, the League agreed to study the issue. A committee was formed to review the current position.
- The committee began work in September of 2017.

### **California Statistics**

- In California there are 6 placements for every 1000 people
- In Humboldt there are 11 placements for every 1000 people
- In Alameda County there are 4 placements for every 1000 people

### **Dependent Child**

*According to California Statute*

- Child has suffered or there is a risk that child will suffer serious harm inflicted non-accidentally by parents or guardians
- The child has suffered or there is a risk that child will suffer serious physical harm or illness as a result of parent or guardian to inadequately supervise or protect the child

## **Foster Care of Children**

*According to California Statute*

- Policy of Legislature that foster care is temporary
- Children have a right to a home free from abuse
- Reunification with natural parent or parents or permanent living arrangement adoption or guardianship
- Moving child from one place to another until maturity should be discontinued

## **Family Preservation**

- Family Preservation has a better record for safety than placements
- Poverty is mistaken as abuse and neglect
- Proper supports added for families can stabilize/support before placement
- Trauma caused to child by removal from home
- May lose ties with siblings, grandparents, aunts and other relatives
- Supporting families make financial sense
- Drug Treatment

## **Resource Placements**

- Safety of Children
- County Financial incentives (increased federal dollars for resource families)
- Drug Abuse
- Take child out of poverty
- Err on the side of child
- More supports available for children and families in resource program than in home.

## **Needs**

- The HSU social work program emphasizes rural/indigenous populations, but they need a strong recruiting strategy with respect to tribal governments.
- DHHS/CWS has training available and there is information at the national level through Native American sources but need it at the local level.
- Retention: Not very robust/high staff turnover rates at both county and tribal government level. When asked why staff are leaving the profession, they cite stress, high demands, lack of support.
- Maintain family's stability
- Communications
- Access to the Humboldt County Child Welfare System (CWS) needs a single-entry portal
- Coordination with Native Americans
- Increase state funding for compliance with Indian Child Welfare Act
- Implementation of tracking system for child custody cases of Native Americans (consent decree)

### **Needs Continued...**

- Compliance with child abuse reporting laws
- Respite care for birth families and resource family
- Support systems for birth and resource families
- More Robust Partnerships and Collaborations
- More mechanisms to identify needs and gaps in service
- Identify, support and implement comprehensive services to preserve families
  - Homebuilder Model
  - Homemaker Services
  - Childcare
  - Appropriate mental health and substance abuse treatment
  - Housing support

### **Gaps in Service**

- Retaining and recruiting social work professionals in Humboldt County
- Finding and training resource families
- More resources for resource families and birth families
- Training for therapeutic resource families or training for birth families
- Resources for LGBT children
- Services and programs to support youth aging out of the system
- Resources for Native American to address specific needs of Native American birth and resource families:
  - *The Indian Child Welfare Act created mandates for which inadequate funds were allocated for legal counsel*
  - mental health services
  - Remediation for sex trafficking
  - *Direct outreach between tribal government and County Government*
    - On-site
    - Clear process
    - On-going

### **Mechanism to Identify Gaps/Needs**

- Information Nights
- Support Groups
- Outreach
- Forgotten initiative
- Family Resource Center

### **Partnerships and Collaborations**

- Humboldt State University and College of Redwoods for Social workers and interns
- Foster Parents Association
- Family Resource Center
- California Foster Youth Education Task Force

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## Resources

California's Children 2017(online resource: [www.cwla.org](http://www.cwla.org))

California Code: Welfare and Institutional Code (WIC) Article 6 Dependent Children, Article 13.5 Foster Care of Children

California Evidenced Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare: Homebuilders Program (<http://www.cebc4cw.org/program/homebuilders/detailed>)

County, state reach settlement agreement over child welfare (Department of Health and Human Services posted February 15, 2018)

Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury: Child Welfare in Humboldt: Getting the Door Open (2016-2017)

Humboldt County Civil Grand Jury: Responding in Time to Help Our at Risk Children (2016-2017)

Interview of Virginia Bass Humboldt County Board of Supervisors

Interview of Melanie Gensaw, Director, Department of Social Services, Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria (BRBRR)

Interview of Alison Phongsavath, Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services/Child Welfare Services (DHHS/CWS)

Interview of Steve Volow of CASA of Humboldt County

National Coalition for Child Protection Reform (ISSUE PAPERS: Family Preservation, Foster Care and Reasonable Efforts, Issue Papers1-12, <https://nccpr.org/>)

The Science of Neglect (Center on the Developing Child: Harvard University, Dec.2012)

There's one thing that's plentiful in Humboldt County foster care: Excuses (Times Standard, 9/2/2017, Wexlar)

Understanding the Child Welfare System in California: A Primer for Service Providers and Policy Makers (California Center for Research on Women and Families, 2009)

While Everyone Slept, Congress Did Something Extraordinary for Vulnerable Children (The Intercept, Feb. 11,2018: Chavez and Grim)

### The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County

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

#### 2018-2019 BOARD

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### 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](http://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.

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 \_\_\_\_\_

**FOLLOW US —**  
**WE HAVE SEVERAL WAYS!!**

*WEBSITE = [lwvhc.org](http://lwvhc.org)*

*FACEBOOK = League of Women Voters Humboldt County*

*TWITTER = @LWVHumboldt*



**Join Now!**



P.O. Box 3219  
Eureka, CA 95502

To:

## LWVHC Calendar

- **Board Meeting**                  **Tuesday, 4/9/2019**  
   **530pm**
  
- **State of the Community Luncheon (SOCL)**  
   *Adorni Center, Eureka*        **Friday, 4/12/19**  
   **Noon**
  
- **Foster Care Study**  
   *A1AA 434 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Eureka*    **Thursday, 4/25/19**  
   **530pm**
  
- **Foster Care Consensus**  
   **Meeting**                              **Sunday, 4/28/19**  
   *A1AA 434 7th St, Eureka*         **2pm**