

## President's Message

Hello, League members!

Our State of the Community Luncheon was another successful and amazing event. I want to commend **Maggie Fleming** and her team for their hard work and dedication to making our major fundraiser one of the most anticipated community events in Humboldt.

As we roll out of spring, we have a lot to be proud of and a lot to celebrate. Be sure to attend our upcoming Annual Meeting, June 5! While enjoying dinner together, we will review our year, present awards, vote on the positions we have addressed, and approve our budget. We always look forward to catching up with everyone and moving forward with our new board. Thank you, **Becky Simpson**, for all your hard work organizing this meeting for all of us.

I enjoy spring for so many reasons...new life, flowers, and, of course, baseball restarting. I hope you each find joy in the sunshine that comes our way, and I hope to see you soon.

**Julie Kelly**  
*LWVHC President*



### Welcome New Members

**Carol Moore**  
**Meredyth Phillips**  
**Tracy Woods**

## Save the Date! June 5

Hello all you Leaguers,

Coming up on Thursday, June 5 is your Annual Meeting. In order to have a successful Annual Meeting, we need a quorum. Here are a few of the agenda items:

1. Vote on our slate of candidates put forth by the Nominating Committee for the Board.
2. Review Treasurer's report and pass our proposed budget for the coming year of 2025-2026.
3. Take direction from the Membership on what you want the Board to focus on for the coming year.

Save the date and PLEASE RESERVE BY THURSDAY, MAY 29, 2025 FOR OUR QUORUM COUNT

ANNUAL MEETING  
THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 2025  
SEQUOIA CONFERENCE CENTER,  
ROOM B

6:00 p.m. REGISTRATION

6:30 p.m. DINNER \$25

7:00 p.m. BUSINESS MEETING  
(NO CHARGE)

ZOOM IS AVAILABLE FOR THOSE WHO  
CANNOT ATTEND IN PERSON

Thank you..

**Becky Simpson**  
*LWVHC Membership 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.

## ***Information and A Request for Support of the LWVC Action Fund***

Dear LWVHC Members,

You may have received the following information and request as an email, but I want to share it here in case you haven't seen it. The League of Women Voters of California took action by opposing AB 25.

**Leslie R Leach**  
**VOTER Editor**

I want to share a moment that happened in the legislature last week. **Dora Rose**, LWVC Deputy Director, testified in opposition to Assembly Bill 25 (DeMaio), which would have imposed strict voter ID and proof of citizenship requirements on voters.

Swiftly debunking the author's false claims of voter fraud, Dora spoke on behalf of the LWVC:

*"The bottom line here is that California's elections are already secure. We've got signature comparison. We've got ID verification during registration. We've got real time voter roll maintenance. We've got serious criminal consequences for people who do break the law. The idea that voter fraud is a widespread problem has been debunked time and again by courts, by studies, by academics, and by elections officials across the country. AB 25, in fact, mirrors a national coordinated campaign led by the Trump Administration to restrict voting rights under the false flag of election integrity. Americans have fought long and hard to overcome our sordid history of voter suppression. We cannot go backwards, and we should not - we must not - build policy on a bed of lies."*



As pictured Dora delivered the last line while holding eye contact with the author, sending a clear message that the LWVC will not be intimidated and will not back down.

The author's response to Dora's testimony was perhaps not surprising, but it was a stark reminder that sexism and the minimization of women's voices are alive and well. At two separate times, he claimed the opposition was "hysterical" and quipped that challenges to his unnecessary and fear-based policy proposal brought up "absurd issues and questions."

Because of your support for the LWVC Action Fund, Dora sat tall, unfazed as the bill's author disparaged her testimony. Ultimately, Assembly Bill 25 was voted down in committee and will not advance. But the tactics of using fear, misinformation, and bureaucracy to suppress the vote and intimidate historically marginalized communities remain mobilized, well-funded, and a significant threat.

The LWVC will continue to stand with our many partners and trusted community-based organizations that share firsthand knowledge of how these proposals erode trust in our democracy. And we will continue to "hysterically" present facts about how these policy proposals degrade our trusted election systems.

[But we need your help. Donate to the LWVC Action Fund today.](#)

Hysterically Inspired,

**Helen Hutchison**  
**LWVC Interim Director**

## *California's Voter Participation Gap*

On March 26, the League of Women Voters of California offered a webinar called "California's Voter Participation Gap: Strategies to Promote Engagement and Representation." The LWVC host was Dora Rose, Deputy Director and Chief Legislative Advocate. She was joined by representatives of several organizations partnering with LWVC to address this problem: California Common Cause, Inland Empire United, the Center for Inclusive Democracy at UCLA, and Communities for a New California.

Mindy Romero of the Center for Inclusive Democracy began by presenting current research data on voting in California. Her main points in brief: Voter participation in general is low and not representative of our eligible voting population; those over-represented are older, white, and have higher incomes; only 62% of eligible voters took part in the 2024 general election last November, a nearly 5% decline since 2020. One chart she displayed showed Humboldt County eligible voter turnout averaging between 55% and 70%.

Dr. Romero then discussed some reasons for these numbers, first stating that apathy is not a factor, though often cited as such. She said their research has identified significant disparities in voter registration, mobilization and outreach efforts, and historic disconnections from the political process.

Next, Pablo Rodriguez of Communities for a New California (CNC) reported on their research that showed 39% of respondents feel that their vote has little or no power to change the things that matter to them. He also mentioned that independent and no party preference voters vote in smaller numbers than voters registered to one of the two major political parties. This is particularly important in light of the fact that younger Latino voters (age 18 to 34) have increasingly chosen no party preference for the past two decades, so that now they account for 45% of Latino voters.

To counter this decline, CNC has launched a program called Lucete Latina focused on encouraging and empowering Latina women, noting that one of every six voters in California is Latina. But still, Latina voting rates are lower than for all other groups of women, and candidates invest much less money, time, and other resources in addressing Latinas. Too many candidates only address those they consider likely voters, rather than the full field of eligible voters.

Jala Abner of California Common Cause spoke about AB 868, modeled on successful legislative reform in San Diego County and designed to create a more inclusive, equitable, and representative democracy. The fact that BIPOC and younger voters turn out in much smaller numbers is magnified in many county-level nonpartisan elections. Voters struggle to access information on nonpartisan county contests, and many such contests are decided in low-turnout primaries. AB 868 ensures that these county nonpartisan elections appear on the general election ballot in November instead, aligning them with more available voter information, greater candidate competitiveness, and greater voter turnout.

Finally, Sky Allen of Inland Empire United spoke of strategies for shrinking these gaps. She advises us all to emphasize year-round organizing rather than focusing solely on periods of time near elections. Teach people how voting works, counter disinformation, explain why voting matters and the impact of local elections. LWVC Deputy Director Dora Rose closed out the webinar by encouraging local Leagues to emphasize their nonpartisan status and build strong coalitions with other organizations in the community, especially those representing groups that are underrepresented at the polls. She mentioned several bills to watch: SB 42 and SB 266 strengthen broader voting participation, while AB 25 seeks to restrict voter access.

She recommends that we address the disconnection between what government does and what people think government does. Be mindful of the language we use. For example, when talking about why we vote, don't say it is a civic right or responsibility. That language does not resonate with those who feel their vote does not matter. Say voting is a path to power for their communities.

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## ***California's Voter Participation Gap (continued)***

The webinar ended with hope that we can alter for the better the profoundly unrepresentative electorate we now have. It's all about empowering people. If you would like to watch the entire 90-minute webinar, find it at YouTube: <https://youtu.be/t0zhd97seYU>.

***Molly Cate***  
***LWVHC Program Director***

## ***New Board Member, Tess Coffman***

The League is happy to introduce our new Treasurer, Tess Coffman. Tess is a retired math teacher who lives in McKinleyville. When she's not keeping our finances together, she can be found cooking in her kitchen, gardening, or quilting. She and her husband Kurt have two grown sons who live in Southern California and two dachshunds.



## ***Volunteers Help Our Election Service Director with the Wiyot Election***

On April 5, LWVHC fulfilled another part of our MOU with the Wiyot tribe, monitoring their election from 9 AM to 1 PM and then counting the ballots after the election closed. Most of the votes came in through mailed-in ballots, but a few people came in person to vote — and then to enjoy the wonderful spread of delicious food that the tribe prepared for all of us!

I want to thank **Dottie Riffenberg**, **Mary Ann Bansen**, **Peg Gardner**, and **Janine Randall** for volunteering to give up several hours on a beautiful Saturday to help the Wiyot tribe and to make some money for the League treasury.

I know many people were at the protest that day, (that's where Dottie and Mary Ann went when they finished their shift!) but I really appreciate how willing Leaguers are to help when we have an election.

But now I have a challenge for all the younger people in the League. The AVERAGE age of my crew on April 5 was 79 years. I am hoping that we can lower that average by having a number of our younger members volunteer to help in the fall, when we will be doing this again on the first Saturday in October!

***Byrd Lochtie***  
***LWVHC Election Service Director***



## ***LWVHC Gives Awards at History Day***

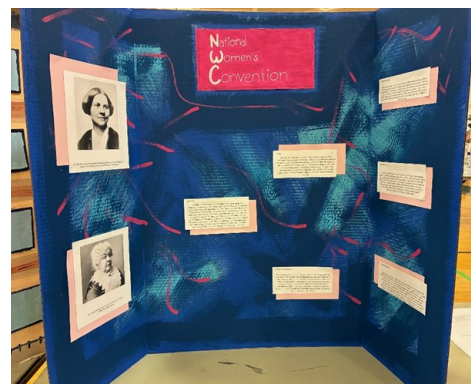
**Bonnie Oliver** and **Peggy Syvertson** judged posters at the Humboldt County Unified School District's History Day at Cal Poly Humboldt. There were many excellent posters regarding women's issues, as well as women and voting. The paring down of the posters to award our gift certificates was difficult! The layout, the thesis statement, background facts, and conclusion were clear on all the posters. And it was clear that a lot of time and effort went into each poster. **Kathy Johanson**, although you could not attend, you were there in spirit when your voice kept telling us "Is there a voter tie-in on the poster?" That helped Bonnie and me narrow the posters considerably—so thank you and hopefully next year you can judge again.

These are the posters that the League awarded:

### **The National Women's Rights Convention**

by Olivia Lane and Grace Pimentel (McKinleyville High School)

Olivia and Grace's interest was in Women's Suffrage, so they decided to focus on the 19th Amendment. They felt that their "theme...relates to the rights that women fought for, the rights they gained after the 19th Amendment passed, and the responsibilities they took on to achieve the goal of equal rights."



### **Alice Paul: Architect of the 19th Amendment**

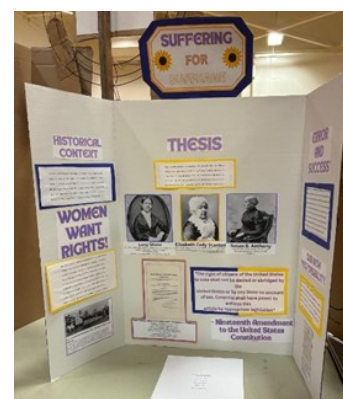
by Sea Tea (McKinleyville High School)

Sea was interested in women's rights, so she focused "specifically on one of the most prominent suffragists of the time, Alice Paul." Her poster shows how Alice's time in England helped to motivate "her to adopt aggressive tactics in the fight for the 19th Amendment."

### **Suffering for Suffrage**

by Maria Melesio (McKinleyville High School)

Maria used yellow, white, and purple on her poster, the color palette of the women's suffrage movement. Lucy Stone, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Susan B. Anthony were honored on the poster for their hard work toward gaining women's voting rights.



### **Late Women's Suffrage Movement**

by Andrea Valladares (Zane Middle School)

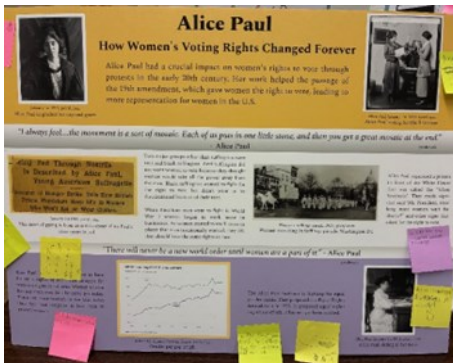
Andrea's poster showed the formation of the American Women's Suffrage Association in 1869. The association was founded by Lucy Stone, Julia Ward Howe, and Thomas Wentworth Higginson and supported the 15th Amendment.

## LWVHC Gives Awards at History Day (continued)

### Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Women's Right to Vote

by Mirabelle Viehweg (Jacoby Creek School)

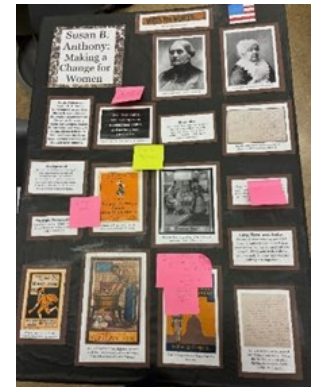
As Mirabelle stated in her Process Paper, "Elizabeth wanted all people to have the RIGHT to vote, and she made it her RESPONSIBILITY to make it happen." Her poster indicates that the right for women to vote was "one of the largest fights in history," and that right was secured.



### Alice Paul: How Women's Voting Rights Change Forever

by Amelia Moschetti (Jacoby Creek School)

Amelia chose Alice Paul as she was the "leading woman in the suffragist movement and helped to pass the 19th Amendment" that makes possible Amelia's right to vote when she is eighteen.



### Susan B. Anthony: Making a Change for Women

by Orah Clark (Jacoby Creek School)

Orah indicated that she was very passionate in knowing her own rights as a girl, and "she looked up to Susan because of how she was brave and stood up for women's rights."

At last night's History Day coaching session, LWVHC representatives **Kathy Johanson**, **Byrd Lochtie**, and **Anne Hartline** decided to award a \$300 travel scholarship to both of these two outstanding students:



Left: Kendra Murrell, Topic: "Abolition of Women's Coverture," Senior Individual Website, McKinleyville High School, Tiffany Bullman (teacher) with **Anne Hartline**

Right: Willow Thompson, Topic: "The Second Wave of Feminism," Senior Individual Website, Arcata High School, Clover Schinke (teacher) with **Anne Hartline** and **Peggy Syvertson**

Both students, along with numerous others, are headed to the California State History Day competition in Sacramento May 2-4, 2025.



**Bonnie Oliver**  
LWVHC Secretary

**Peggy Syvertson**  
LWVHC Government Director



## *A League Volunteer Does More!*

This article is reprinted with permission from Food for People.

### More Than Half-a-Ton of Plastic Diverted

By David Reed, Development Director at Food for People.

While Anne Hartline was at her weekly volunteer stint at Food for People, she noticed that besides food, there was a lot of plastic coming into the food bank. Pallets of food come in wrapped with plastic film, and more pallet wrap is used to keep loads secure when they are delivered to pantries. There are also plastic bags that come in full of donated food and other stretchy plastic coverings on products like cases of water bottles.

Anne has volunteered at Food for People since she retired as a teacher in McKinleyville Union School District in 2017. She currently volunteers doing intake in the Eureka Choice Pantry.

“I heard about a plastic recycling project happening at Morris School, and I was inspired. I noticed all the plastic wrapping around pallets of food in the warehouse, and it seemed to me to be a perfect fit. Why throw away all that plastic when it can be recycled, and why not help out a school project at the same time? It's a win-win!”

Anne connected with Kendra Inzer, a fourth-grade teacher at Morris Elementary. Kendra's students collect plastic bags and other polyethylene (PE) plastic (labeled as #2 or #4) as a school project. The plastic is collected and shipped by Safeway to the Trex recycled decking company through their NexTrek program where it is made into boards and outdoor furniture.

Kendra explained how the recycling project started, “I got the idea for this project back in 2019 when I attended an environmental science for teachers course. Each participant created their own unit on a theme that they were passionate about. I chose plastics in the ocean,” Kendra explained, “I developed my unit around teaching students about human actions affecting the environment. What could my students do about it?”

Kendra found that students were particularly concerned about how plastics in the ocean affect marine and bird life and were eager to get involved. Students helped collect more than 1,600 pounds of plastic film last year that was sent to Trex for recycling. In 2023, the school was awarded a bench made from Trex lumber for being the top recycler for their school size.



Anne started collecting plastic at Food for People every Tuesday in January 2024. At first, she'd cram the bags of plastic in the back of her Prius and weigh them at home on her bathroom scale. Now, the Food for People warehouse staff helps get bags collected and weighed for Anne and then she and her friend, Gayle Olson-Raymer, relay them to Safeway in McKinleyville. All the plastic is credited to the Morris school effort.

The week Anne spoke to us, she was hauling home 42 pounds of plastic in several large bags. She reported that, after last month, she has helped Food for People divert 1,201 pounds of plastic from the landfill!

## ***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.

Your membership will be good for 1 year from the date you pay your dues.

Visit [www.LWVHC.org](http://www.LWVHC.org) or mail the form below!

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

A single individual member payment of \$75 is suggested, but you can pay less if you wish, with a minimum of \$20 per member.

I am enclosing for my annual membership renewal:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_



## ***The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County***

P.O. Box 3219, Eureka, CA 95502

[www.lwvhc.org](http://www.lwvhc.org)

[leaguehumboldt@lwvhc.org](mailto: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.....Tess Coffman  
Program Director.....Molly Cate  
Natural Resources Director.....Vacant  
Social Policy Director.....Sylvia Shaw  
Government Director.....Peggy Syvertson  
Election Service Director.....Byrd Lochtie  
Forum Director.....Anne Hartline  
Voter Service Director.....Anne Hartline  
Membership Director.....Becky Simpson  
Social Media Chair.....Jessica Schlachter  
VOTER Editor.....Leslie Leach  
Community Education Director.....Karen Price  
Communications Director.....Jessica Schlachter  
Traditional Media Chair.....Jessica Schlachter  
Website Director.....Leslie Leach  
Director.....Kathy Johanson







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](http://www.lwvhc.org) or call (707) 444-9252.

## ***Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy***

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County (LWVHC), in both its values and practices, affirms its belief and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means there shall be no barriers to membership nor participation in the LWVHC on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, economic status, or political affiliation. LWVHC recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making. LWVHC affirms its commitment to reflect the diversity of the community in its membership, Board, and programs. Discrimination or harassment of any kind will not be accepted within the League, including but not limited to race, socio-economic status, age, ability status, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender identity, or marital status. The League is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and belonging for all people. The League is an organization that respects and values the richness of our community and our members. The collective sum of our individual differences and life experiences represents not only our culture, but our reputation and the organization's mission and achievements as well.

## ***LWVHC Calendar***

Tuesday, May 6 5:30 p.m.	Board Meeting
In person, Babe's Pizza and Pasta, 4015 Walnut Dr., Eureka, CA or on Zoom (Use the link below.)	

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88910627631?pwd=86i5L042DOBrImhiaA9mMj3oBQihil.1>

Thursday, June 5 See p. 1 for details In person or on Zoom	Annual Membership Meeting
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Anytime	LWVHC Webpage LWVHC Instagram LWVHC X Bluesky <a href="https://bsky.app/profile/@lwvhc.bsky.social">@lwvhc.bsky.social</a>
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