

President's Message

Hello LWVHC Members,

October has been another activity-filled month for LWVHC, from the beginning with our physical move of office materials to the new location to the well-organized membership meeting to review our Library position on October 21. I will begin with the library meeting.

Our library position statement was last reviewed in 2012, so it was on schedule for review. **Sharrone Blanck** is our Government Director, and **Karen Price** is working with her on all things government, which include our public libraries. Prior to the membership meeting, they met with Chris Cooper, Director of Humboldt County Libraries, Ronda Wittenberg, Operations Manager, and our very own **Jessica Schlachter**, who works in Acquisitions and Technical Services to plan the membership meeting. It was very rewarding to learn from Cooper at that meeting that our position “was a good fit for the Humboldt County Library’s Framework.” After discussion, some rewording, and questions concerning how LWVHC could help the library, members agreed on the amended position. Then a member asked in what ways the library could benefit the League. Cooper mentioned Vote Smart and that the Willow Creek Library served as a voting location in 2020. Look for more information about this extremely interesting meeting in Schlachter’s article in this VOTER.

Speaking of voting, the League of Women Voters California (LWVC) emailed all League presidents to ask if our counties participated in the Voter Choice Act (VCA). I contacted the Humboldt County Elections Office to find out. Humboldt used a hybrid of VCA, as did about half of the counties whose responses to LWVC I have seen. For one thing, being hybrid meant we had four early voting days instead of the eleven required by VCA, but we did have several places throughout the county for voters to safely deposit their ballots, also a requirement. There are several steps involved in participating in VCA, including receiving approval by the Board of Supervisors, and the county is still determining the steps it will take before the June 7, 2022 election. LWVC has a tool kit to help Leagues should our board want to learn more about it and if we would advocate VCA for Humboldt County.

We learned at our October board meeting that to meet our budget we needed to raise \$3,500. We have not had the State of the Community Luncheon, our traditional fundraiser, for two years. We hope that we can have one on April 22, 2022. The board voted to have the two co-presidents write a letter to explain the circumstances and ask for donations. Jessica and I have done that and to save money on postage, we will send the letter to League members via email and to non-League members via the postal service. Several board members have agreed to address and stuff envelopes, and I hope we can do that very soon. Please look for our letter in your email.

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.

And now a long story about a pianette, the LWVHC, and the Ink People. Our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Ink People says we will use space in the kitchen area. Against one of the walls was a small piano that took up space we needed. I played a few notes and thought it had a lovely tone, then learned Ink People had been trying to give it away. Jessica and I asked various friends and groups, including our board, if anyone was interested in taking it. Finally, I heard (continued on p. 2)

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from Bill Ryder, piano technician and singer extraordinaire, that he was interested in checking it out. We met on Friday, October 15, he played the piano, checked its keys and pins, and determined it could be useful to a student. This pianette, a small piano with only 60 or 61 keys, was built by Winter and Company, New York, in 1937 and had been tuned here in 1956 by a local piano technician. Bill said he would contact Julie Fulkerson, violinist and Eureka Symphony member, who finds homes for unwanted pianos. On our way out the door, Monica Topping, Administrative Assistant for Ink People, told us more of the pianette's story. It seems this particular pianette had been made specifically for use on a boat. What a story this instrument could share! A friend of Fulkerson heard about the piano, told her daughter, and on Sunday, October 17, the pianette was picked up and taken to its new home. The end.

Sharolyn Hutton
LWVHC Co-President



Housing in Humboldt

If you are securely housed, count your blessings! Many in Humboldt are not.

Housing talk is everywhere because every economic level, every community, and every age group is struggling to have secure housing.

The LWVHC's extensive housing position reflects study of long-time Humboldt housing issues that still exist, but is it current? Housing is such a big topic we are devoting two membership meetings to it this program year. On **Thursday, November 18 at 7 p.m.**, we will hear from folks involved in what is happening on the ground and in the planning sessions.

On **Thursday, February 17 at 7 p.m.**, we will review the existing ten-year-old position for updating based on what we hear from the folks in the trenches in November. Please join us to hear this background session.

I need League members to help with this position. If you have an interest, please contact me at 1-707-1563 or sls500@yahoo.com.

Ways to help:

Taking the community survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HumboldtCountyHousingSurvey>

Joining our email list by emailing admin@housing-tools.com with the subject line "Humboldt County"

Sylvia Shaw
LWVHC Social Policy Director

Library Position Membership Meeting

On Thursday, October 21, the LWVHC held a Zoom membership meeting, led by **Sharrone Blanck**, in order to review the library position under the government portfolio. Chris Cooper, director of the Humboldt County Library, and Ronda Wittenberg, operations manager of the Humboldt County Library, joined the meeting to answer questions from the membership about the ever-evolving role of the public library in the community. They stressed that the library has become more than checking out books. It's a community hub with programs, broadband access, and multimedia resources.

Everyone agreed that the library is a wonderful community resource that has adapted well during the pandemic and that supporting the HCL through well-crafted position statements is vital. Through the main library, 10 branches, and a bookmobile, the library serves a large variety of Humboldt County, with 81 percent of county residents holding library cards.

The updated position is as follows:

Support of improved library facilities in the Humboldt County Library District.

Position In Brief:

1. Improve quality and quantity of materials.
2. Increase staff to meet the needs of a growing, diverse community to provide learning opportunities and build community connections.
3. Improve broadband and multi-media services to support community needs.
4. Increase accessibility and convenience to the public throughout the county.
5. Apply for local, state, and federal funds available to assist in reaching these goals.
6. Increase financing to provide for present and future needs.

In the interest of transparency, I should mention that I've worked at the Humboldt County Library in the Acquisitions and Technical Services department for the past seven years. This intersection of League and my job was fun!

Many thanks to Sharrone for leading an informative meeting, and to Chris and Ronda for serving as the panel of experts.

Jessica Schlachter
LWVHC Co-President



The League in Action

In August 1994, my husband and I decided to see the Smith River, which had been added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in 1981 at the request of California Governor Jerry Brown. Somewhere between Trinidad and Orick, we heard the news that a tanker truck carrying 1,800 gallons of paint had turned over on a steep bank of the Smith River. The paint quickly ran downhill and into the river, causing ecological damage. My husband and I turned around and drove home, but since then, we have had many occasions to enjoy the beautiful wild and scenic Smith River.

More than 300 miles of the Smith River drainage are designated wild and scenic, making it one of the most complete river systems in the National System. The Smith River flows freely and naturally, without a single dam for its entire length. It is the only major system in California to do so.

The Smith River National Recreation Area (NRA) located in the northwest corner of California and managed by the Six Rivers National Forest, protects the Wild and Scenic Smith River. However, the boundary of the NRA stops at the Oregon border, leaving the North Fork of the Smith River that lies in Oregon and its tributaries unprotected.

Last April, I received a call from Darci Short, Associate Director of the Smith River Alliance. She called to ask if the LWVHC would write a letter of support to U.S. Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden for their bill, the Smith River National Recreation Area Expansion Act. If passed, this legislation will expand the Smith River National Recreation Area by 58,000 acres to encompass the watershed area that extends into Oregon. Furthermore, it will permanently withdraw the North Fork Smith watershed from new mining claims, helping to protect the diverse ecosystems of the watershed and help boost the local fishing and recreation industries that many Oregonian families rely on. It was introduced by Oregon Senators Wyden and Merkley in May 2021 and is cosponsored by Senators Feinstein and Padilla.

I told Darci that I was sure the LWVHC would be supportive, but I urged her to get in touch with the LWV Oregon and to ask them to get in touch with the LWVC. My understanding is that Darci got in touch with both the LWV Oregon and the LWVC.

In September, Jane Wagner-Tyack, Chair of the LWVC Water Committee, sent me an email asking if I would draft a letter from the LWVC supporting the expansion to send to Senators Feinstein and Padilla. I was happy to do so. Jane pointed out that none of the support for the Act that she had seen addressed any of the tribes and how they would be affected. For that reason, the draft letter states that The Tolowa Dee Ni' Rancheria and Elk Valley Rancheria are two recognized nations that depend on the Smith River. Although both rancherias are located in Del Norte County, California, their ancestral lands extended to the area of expansion of the SRNRA. The protection of the North Fork of the Smith River will help to ensure that the tribes' cultural values and economic interests in the Smith River may continue unimpeded by pollution from new mining claims.

I included some additional content, Jane edited the draft I sent, and the letter was approved by the LWVC and the LWVUS and has been sent to Senators Feinstein and Padilla. Finally, Darci informed me that the LWVHC had supported the Smith River Alliance at its inception. This month, I will give thanks for and money to the LWVHC.

Leslie Leach
LWVHC Natural Resources Director



Thank You, Vote Counters! ❤️

Once again, League volunteers have stepped up for me. In fact, I had more than enough people lined up in less than an hour after sending out my email request!

A big thank you to **Ann Diehl** and **Kathy Sattler** who traveled with me to Table Bluff on a sunny Saturday in October to help count ballots for the Wiyot Tribe. This was an easy ballot — only two questions with yes or no choices — because there were no candidates in this election. The Wiyot Tribe holds member meetings twice a year, and part of their procedure includes a ballot to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Candidates appear on the April ballot when members of the Tribal Council are elected.

We are always pleased that the Wiyot Tribe trusts us to receive their mail-in ballots in our election P. O. Box and then to count the ballots at the end of the meeting/election time in the Community Center. Thanks to Fawn Lopez who organizes the election and always makes this so comfortable for us. We enjoy working with the Tribe to promote democracy, and we add a little to our treasury each time we do this.

Byrd Lochtie
LWVHC Elections Service Director

Happy Thanksgiving!



Dan Schlachter doing heavy lifting.



Jessica Schlachter holding the door sign.



Chuck Snowden and **Dave Rosso** helping out.

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, November 2	Board Meeting 6 p.m.
Thursday, November 18	Membership Meeting, 7 p.m.
LWVHC Webpage	Any Time!
LWCHC Twitter	Any Time!
LWCHC Instagram	Any Time!