



THE VOTER

The Newsletter of The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County

Vol. 54 No. 2

February 2012

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Past Presidents Byrd Lochtie and Anne Hartline participated in the celebration in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on January 16, 2012.

President's Message

The LWV observes the 92nd anniversary of its founding on February 14, and LWVHC will mark the occasion with a celebration of our own history. On Saturday the 18th, we will introduce the written history of our League as compiled by **Ron Perry** and **Anne Hartline**, with contributions from Past Presidents and others with long memories. Plan to join us for a celebration of more than 55 years of nonpartisan political education and action in Humboldt County.

Looking ahead, our March membership event during Sunshine Week on Saturday, March 17 will feature a presentation about the award-winning Transparency Project, with **Mitch Trachtenberg** and others. This will be a good chance to learn more about the accuracy of the election process in our county.

*-Nan Nieboer
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.

MAKE DEMOCRACY WORK!

Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration

The LWVHC was asked to participate in the celebration in honor of **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.** held at the Adorni Center in Eureka on January 16, 2012. Our charge was to talk about voting rights and the many laws that are currently being passed and proposed that potentially limit access to registration and voting for many minorities.

Anne Hartline and I prepared an informative dialogue, including a timeline that emphasized the pendulum-like changes over the years since 1776. Also addressed were the reasons that government-issued IDs are a problem for some people. Our presentation concluded with the letter written by LWVUS President **Elizabeth McNamara**, followed by a call to action for all those in attendance to defeat the laws that limit access to voting for the poor, the young, the elderly, those with disabilities, and other minorities who often are not able to vote and whose voices are not heard.

We're hoping to make a copy of our presentation available soon at the LWVHC Web site.

*-Byrd Lochtie
Election Service Chair*

Membership News

Join Us: League History Project and 92nd Birthday Celebration

Let's celebrate the League's 92nd birthday! All members are invited to hear a presentation of League history and also learn about our own Humboldt League in its 56th year. **Anne Hartline** and **Ron Perry** will introduce their history of the LWVHC through the decades. Join other members and leaders to share memories and enjoy a potluck lunch.

Join us on Saturday, **February 18**, from 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. at the League Office, 434 7th Street, Eureka.

Program Planning

Twenty League members gathered on Saturday, January 21, to discuss local and national positions and decide what to recommend to our Board. The local positions reviewed were Library Facilities, Land Use Planning, and Housing.

Carol Johnson gave an overview of the Library position and reported on the meeting that she and **Nan Nieboer** had attended with the Humboldt County Library staff. At present there is no state or federal funding available and local government funds are flat. The library looks to donations to help fund materials and supplies. Major donors include: Friends of the Library groups, the Humboldt Library Foundation, and the Humboldt Area Foundation. Also the library is working on a grant application to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for technical support to upgrade internet connectivity at four branches.

Kay Escarda gave an overview of the League's Land Use and Housing policies. She also discussed two recent changes in state law regarding Land Use and Housing: the elimination of Redevelopment Agencies for cities, and state-mandated approval for the building of second units on property with an existing home.

After discussion of three positions to be reviewed, members agreed to recommend retention of all three, with an addition to the Library Facilities position statement. Items for education and advocacy were recommended for the Library and Housing positions. The National program recommendation was to adopt through concurrence the two sentencing policy positions proposed by LWVDC.

-Helen Andrews,
LWVHC Member

Program Recommendations

The following recommendations developed at the Program Planning meeting on January 21 will be submitted to the LWVHC Board, and upon Board approval, submitted to the membership for approval at the Annual Meeting in May 2012. You will receive details of the changes for your consideration in your Annual Meeting Kit.

Local

Positions

Library Facilities: Retain and add LWVHC position summary statement, "Support access by all persons to library services as a major source of knowledge and information necessary for informed, active participation in a democratic society."

Land Use Planning: Retain position with punctuation and spelling corrections.

Housing: Retain position.

Education and Advocacy

Consider designating a League representative to work with the County Librarian to update the County Library's strategic plan.

Monitor the adoption and implementation of the Housing Element and the General Plan update. Continue to advocate for the production and distribution of the General Plan Citizen's Handbook as soon as possible.

National

Recommend concurrence with the two positions below as adopted by the LWV District of Columbia and the ad hoc committee on sentencing reform formed at Convention 2010, which are proposed for adoption through concurrence at the 2012 LWVUS Convention.

Sentencing Policy:

1. The LWVUS believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime.
2. The LWVUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.

**Participate on June 6
—As a Voter!**

*The Vote-by-Mail application period is from **May 7 to May 29**, and the last day to register (if you are not already registered or have made changes to your name, address or party affiliation) is **May 21**.*



Action

And the Beat Goes On! And On...

Our League has been following the General Plan Update (GPU) which began about twelve years ago. General Plans are commonly expected to last about twenty years. One of the required GPU elements, the Housing Element, is mandated by the state to be updated every five years. If a county does not have a housing element certified as meeting state standards, it is not eligible to receive state housing grants. There has been much controversy over this process which has delayed completion for over a decade.

The first chapters dealt with public participation in the process. Consideration of this section was put off to the end instead of being considered at the beginning. It was discovered that the GPU drafts had reduced the current specific policies regarding public participation (about twenty pages) to a general statement of about one paragraph. Our League, along with several other groups, has been working to get the language and specific policies written back into the GPU draft.

We have written a series of letters to the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission and met with the Planning staff. We reviewed the drafts and submitted specific comments on each revision, most of which have been accepted by the staff and Planning Commission. The final version of Chapters 1, 2, and 3 will come back to the Planning Commission on January 26. If passed by the Commission, it will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors which has the ultimate authority for passage.

We will continue to follow the process and see that public participation is retained and protected in the final document. It is, after all, the PUBLIC'S General Plan for the County of Humboldt!

-Kay Escarda,
Action Chair

Voter Service

There'll Be Some Changes Made

This year, for the first time in this county, each of the three supervisorial district seats up for election has a woman candidate. County Clerk/Recorder **Carolyn Crnich** was kind enough to check her files to confirm this. (The Board of Supervisors had a female majority for a while some years back, but they were not all involved in the same election.) In addition, the three open seats on the Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District Board are at present occupied by women. A few years ago a League button read "50/50 by 2020." Maybe we're on our way.

The League encourages members to be active in campaigns for elective office, and to seek office themselves, and if this is your path in this election cycle we salute you and wish you well. *However*, these activities preclude taking part in Voter Service events, in order to maintain our carefully protected reputation, described in *Magruder's American Government* as "walking the tightrope of nonpartisanship." If you're not on the campaign trail, consider helping with our candidate forums in May on KEET-TV and in the community. We need moderators, question sorters, timekeepers and phone answerers, a crew of nine for each KEET forum. This is what we're best known for, and it's one of the most rewarding jobs in the League.

The new 2nd Congressional District race is in a class by itself, with nine declared candidates and the filing deadline more than a month away. Which brings us to the big change in the June ballot: The Top Two Candidates Open Primary Act and Voter-Nominated Offices, approved by voters in 2010. All candidates for what used to be known as "partisan offices," now known as "voter-nominated offices," regardless of party preference, will be listed on the same ballot in the primary; the top two overall vote-getters will move to the general election.

-Carol Masterson,
Candidate Forums

**Participate on June 6
—As a Candidate!**



*The Candidate Filing Period to run for office in the June 5 primary is from **February 14 to March 9**. This is extended to **March 14** if an incumbent does not file in the race.*



League Positions—Foundations for Action

Topic: Social Policy

This month we conclude our review of the League's positions on Social Policy. This also concludes the series, begun in early 2011, to review the League's national, state and local positions.

The following positions are from *Impact on Issues*, published by the LWVUS.

CHILD CARE

Support programs and policies to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it.

GUN CONTROL

Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.

URBAN POLICY

Promote the economic health of cities and improve the quality of urban life.

DEATH PENALTY

The LWVUS supports abolition of the death penalty.



The following positions are from *Action Policies and Procedures*, published by the LWVC.

CHILD CARE

Position in brief: Support state and local policies, legislation and programs which meet the need for accessible, affordable, and quality child care.

Positions:

Policy

1. Support state and local policies committed to the following principles:
 - a. all children are entitled to safe, nurturing care;
 - b. caring for children is a societal as well as a family responsibility;
 - c. quality child care responsive to diverse needs of children and their families should be available to all socio-economic groups on an ability-to-pay basis;
 - d. Job-protected maternity and parental leaves are highly desirable;
 - e. stable funding is a necessary component of policy.

Administration

2. Support a state administrative structure which provides for optimum effectiveness in implementing child care policies, programs, and services by meeting the following criteria:
 - a. the welfare of the child is the primary focus;
 - b. policy is effectively implemented;
 - c. private and public programs are efficiently coordinated;
 - d. responsible agencies work together cooperatively and effectively;
 - e. the administrative staff has training in child development;
 - f. responsible agencies are effective advocates for child care and are responsive to public concerns.

Availability/Accessibility

3. Support measures that ensure availability of accessible, quality child care which is responsive to diverse needs of children and their families.

Support measures that:

- a. provide incentives and encouragement for private providers and employers to expand the supply of child care, e.g. simplify the regulatory process without lowering standards; provide loans for startup costs; offer tax breaks; assure reasonable insurance rates; act as a model employer by offering child care services and benefits to state employees;
- b. facilitate and expand child care programs offered at public school facilities and other public agencies;
- c. ensure the provision of child care programs and services through elementary school years and age appropriate, supervised, enrichment activities available for youth in their teen years;
- d. provide statutory Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs) for all state-funded child care programs and services;
- e. strengthen the Resource and Referral (R&R) agencies' role in recruiting and supporting family day care.

LEGAL AID adopted in 1971, revised in 1983

Position in brief: Support measures that will enable the judicial system of the state to provide for all citizens adequate access to legal services.

Recent uses:

- While we have not used this position for action recently, as fewer legal services are offered in California, we will continue to monitor with this position in mind.



The following position can be found in our Annual Meeting Kit, prepared each year by us, the LWVHC.

CHILD CARE - 1990

Position Summary: Support of city and county policies and programs with incentives for the private sector for programs which meet the need for accessible, affordable, and quality child care.

Positions:

1. Support of local policy committed to the following principles: Caring for children is society's as well as family's responsibility; quality child care should be responsive to the diverse needs of children and their families and available to all socioeconomic groups.
2. Support for a local administrative structure to implement child care policies, programs and services which meet the following criteria: Efficiently coordinates private and public programs; effects cooperation of responsible agencies; advocates for child care; and is responsive to public concerns.
3. Support for diverse community efforts to meet identified local needs for child care services. Support measures that: Explore the needs and services available; provide community wide development, coordination and implementation of child care policies; designate a coordinator for child care services; provide incentives for private providers and employers through such means as fee waivers and simplification of the regulatory process; establish child care benefits and services for private and/or local government employees as a model employer; include child care elements in the General Plan.
4. Affordability—Promote and support: State and Federal assistance for child care needs through reliable and diverse sources of funding; "flex" benefits (with a child care component) by public and private employers; measures to provide child care for all income levels, such as tax credits and grants.
5. Availability/Accessibility—Support the use of public lands and facilities for child care programs. Support efforts to recruit licensed child care providers throughout the County.
6. Quality—Support efforts to provide a variety of information and support services to child care providers, especially family day care providers. Support effective monitoring of child care programs. Encourage child care

providers and staff to provide and maintain quality child care. Encourage family day care homes to become licensed. Advocate for and support increased wages and benefits for child care providers. Support provision of information for parents regarding child care services.

FOSTER CARE - 1991, 1999

Position Summary: Support of services which prevent children from being placed in foster care, and which provide safe and supportive foster care when required.

Positions:

1. The primary goals of foster care in Humboldt County are the physical, emotional, and social protection, care, and growth of each child.
2. Support coordination, cooperation and open communication among all agencies providing services to families and children.
3. Support policies to reduce psychological disruption of the child.
4. Support efforts to ensure compatible matches of child and foster home by increasing the number of licensed foster homes available to children in need.
5. Provide enough emergency placements for the number of children needing placement.
6. Support family reunification when it is in the best interest of the child.
7. Support separate staff positions for recruiting, training, and retaining foster parents.
8. Support public education to inform citizens of the need for foster parents.
9. Support a grievance procedure in which biological and foster parents can address concerns without fear of reprisal.
10. Ensure appropriate implementation of the home study component of the state licensing procedure.
11. Augment state procedures for licensing foster parents with a training component which includes child development.
12. Support respite care, by trained workers, for foster parents.
13. Require biological parents to complete parenting training as part of their service agreement.
14. Special recognition should be given to the needs of elderly foster parents.



News from the LWVC

Letter in Support of SB 654

January 21, 2012

The Honorable Darrell Steinberg
President pro Tempore
California State Senate
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94248-0001

Re: SB 654—Support

Dear Senator Steinberg:

The League of Women Voters California supports SB 654, your bill which seeks to protect existing housing funds of dissolving redevelopment agencies. The League supports funding for affordable housing for all Californians. In particular, we support state financial assistance in the form of grants, loans, tax incentives and other means to encourage housing construction and rehabilitation. We have supported use of redevelopment set-aside funds for low and moderate income housing as an important type of this financial assistance.

SB 654 would ensure that existing fund balances in the Low and Moderate Income Housing Fund of a dissolved redevelopment agency would be used for low and moderate income housing by transferring existing funds to the successor housing agency of the sponsoring community.

Redevelopment set-aside funds for low and moderate income housing are the largest source of funding to address affordable housing needs. There is a critical need for development and preservation of affordable housing throughout California. This bill would provide some crucial assistance, and we are pleased to support it.

Sincerely,

Jennifer A. Waggoner

LWVC President

Support SB 810 and SB 654

Please support **SB 810** the California Universal Health Care Act, and **AB 1148**, the California DISCLOSE Act. Both bills are up for key votes in the coming days. Support **SB 654 (Steinberg)** which would protect existing housing funds of dissolving redevelopment agencies. Redevelopment set-aside funds for low and moderate income housing are the largest source of funding to address affordable housing needs. See the full letter above regarding SB 654.

News from the LWVUS

Action: Sign the Petition

Dear League Members,

Let's fight back against the big money pouring into political campaigns this year. **Let's put the SuperPacs out of business.** How? Sign the petition on The White House Web site WhiteHouse.gov urging President Obama to appoint new commissioners to the Federal Election Commission (FEC). NOTE: In order to successfully sign the petition, you will need to create an account on **WhiteHouse.gov** and respond to a confirmation email. If you need guidance on creating this account please use our helpful step-by-step guide: go to LWV.org and look for 'Put SuperPACS out of Business' for more information.

The FEC is supposed to be the government agency that enforces campaign finance laws, but it isn't working and hasn't for a long time. Of the six commissioners at the agency, three simply refuse to enforce the law, and five are serving despite the fact that their terms expired some time ago. It's time to clean house and President Obama needs to do something about it.

We need at least 25,000 signatures of support by **February 10, 2012** in order to get a response from The White House. Don't just sign it yourself; post the petition on Facebook, Tweet about it and forward this message to all of your friends. Together, we can make sure that the votes of millions of Americans are more valuable to our elections than a big pile of money.

In League,

Elisabeth MacNamara

LWVUS President

U.S. Supreme Court Blocks Texas Redistricting Plans

Statement from League of Women Voters of the U.S. and League of Women Voters of Texas

Washington, DC – “The League is disappointed by the Supreme Court’s decision to block the San Antonio federal court’s maps, and urges the federal court to ensure that any new redistricting plans provide the fair representation that Texans deserve,” said LWVUS president **Elisabeth MacNamara**. “We are, however, encouraged that the Supreme Court decision avoids the worst possible outcome—implementation of the state legislature’s original, discriminatory redistricting plans, which clearly violate both sections 2 and 5 of the Voting Rights Act.”

*The League of Women Voters
of Humboldt County*

Save the Date!!

2012 State of the Community

☆ **Luncheon** ☆

*The 21st Annual State of the Community Luncheon
will be held on Friday, April 20, 2012 at the
Adorni Center in Eureka. ☆*

Smartvoter.org

The place for you if you are looking for:

- ★ Nonpartisan election information
- ★ How to Register to Vote
- ★ Information about the voting process
- ★ Your ballot issues
- ★ Your polling place



If You Haven't Already

Join the League! Membership in the League is open to all U.S. citizens of voting age, both women and men. Others may join as associate members.

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 am enclosing for my annual membership:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$60 Individual membership | <input type="checkbox"/> I cannot join at this time, but please |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$90 Household membership | <input type="checkbox"/> accept my donation of _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$60 Associate membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Please send me more information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional donation of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> I would like to be contacted by |

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Please make checks payable to LWVHC P.O. Box 3219, Eureka, CA 95502. 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. For more information call 444-9252. **Annual Dues are due each year on June 30.**

434 7th Street, Eureka CA 95501
P.O. Box 3219
Eureka, CA 95502
(707) 444-9252 www.lwvhc.org vote@lwvhc.org

Who's Who in Your League 2011-2012

★ **YOUR LEAGUE BOARD** ★

PresidentNan Nieboer
Vice President Sarah Reid
Past PresidentSharolyn Hutton
Secretary..... Anne Hartline
Treasurer Nancy Kay
Director Judy Bennett
Director Kay Escarda
Director Laura Hennings
Director Byrd Lochtie
DirectorCarol Masterson
DirectorDave Rosso
DirectorAmanda Windsor

★ **ACTION** ★

Action ChairKay Escarda
Program Chair Carol Johnson

★ **ADMINISTRATION** ★

Financial Development DirectorJim Anderson
Historian..... Carole Ziskin
Membership Chair..... Judy Bennett
Nominating Committee Michele Fell-Casale
Publications Lorey Keele
Communications Support..... Sally Upatisringa
.....PA WinterSun

★ **FUNDRAISING** ★

Poll Workers CoordinatorCarolyn Otis
State of the Community Luncheon (SOCL)
CommitteeMaggie Fleming, Byrd Lochtie
SOCL Committee LiaisonByrd Lochtie

★ **MEDIA** ★

Media Chair.....Amanda Windsor
Access Humboldt Rep. Peg Gardner
Publicity Director..... Dave Rosso
VOTER Publication.....Amanda Windsor
VOTER CirculationCarolyn Otis
WebmasterAmanda Windsor

★ **VOTER SERVICE** ★

Voter Service Director.....OPEN
Candidate ForumsCarol Masterson
Citizen Education Chair..... Laura Hennings
Election Service Chair Byrd Lochtie
Smart Voter CoordinatorAmanda Windsor

Looking For a Few Good Leaders!

If you are an experienced leader or would like to gain experience in leadership, the League has a place for you!

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County

434 7th Street, Eureka CA 95501 - (707) 444-9252

www.lwvhc.org - vote@lwvhc.org

County Government

Meetings—Get Involved!

* **Board of Supervisors**
February 7, 14, 21, 28 9 A.M.-5 P.M.
825 5th Street, Eureka

Board of Education
February 8 3 P.M.
901 Myrtle Avenue, Eureka

* **Planning Commission**
February 2, 16 6 P.M.
825 5th Street, Eureka

Humboldt Bay Harbor District
February 9, 23 7 P.M.
601 Startare Drive, Eureka

Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District
February 9 9 A.M.
828 7th Street, Eureka

* *Broadcast LIVE and rebroadcast by
Access Humboldt on Channel 10
See AccessHumboldt.net for schedule
information and archived video*

LWVHC Calendar

February 13 Board Meeting
5:30 - 7:30 P.M. 434 7th Street, Eureka

February 18 92nd Birthday Party
10 A.M. - 1 P.M. 434 7th Street, Eureka
*Anne Hartline and Ron Perry
present their LWVHC history*

March 11-17 Sunshine Week

March 12 Board Meeting
5:30 - 7:30 P.M. 434 7th Street, Eureka

**March 17 Membership Meeting:
Election Transparency
Project**
434 7th Street, Eureka

FEBRUARY						
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MARCH						
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County Diversity Policy 2011-2012

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County, in both its values and practices, affirms its belief in and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means there shall be no barriers to membership nor to participation in LWVHC on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, economic status, or political affiliation. The LWVHC recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making. The LWVHC affirms its commitment to reflect the diversity of the community in its membership, board and programs.

THE VOTER

February 2012

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County
P.O. Box 3219
Eureka, CA 95502

Editor: Amanda Windsor

JOIN US

February 18 at the League office at 10 A.M.
Celebrate 92 years of League History and
the LWVHC History Project.