



THE VOTER

The Newsletter of The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County

Vol. 50 No. 5

May 2008

Inside This Issue

Legislative Interview Summary	2
Bear River Election.....	2
Get 'em While They're Hot!	3
Human Rights Commission Forum.....	3
News from the LWVUS	4
Board Briefs.....	4
And Now, A Word for Our Sponsors	5

President's Message

Not only is the League bustling with Voter Service and Citizen Education events—yes, this May also includes your Annual Meeting! Thanks to **Kay Escarda**, our Membership Chair, for making all the arrangements.

Every member's presence at this meeting is crucial, so be sure to reserve the evening of May 29 on your calendars. Your Annual Meeting Kit has either arrived or will be arriving soon, a vital document to have on hand for the meeting and throughout the League year. We will be voting on the proposed slate of officers, the budget, and the League program for 2008-2009; your Annual Meeting Kit holds all the necessary details.


Just how busy are members of the League in May? Read about the candidate forums, Meet Your Judges, and other activities in this issue, and you will see, once again, the critical role your League plays in our community. It is clear that our members take seriously the League's mission of citizen education.

LWVUS will be holding its 48th National Convention, June 13 – 17, in Portland, Oregon. It is our hope that several of us can attend all or part of the convention. If you are interested, please leave a message at the League office, 444-9252.

I can not conclude this message without once again thanking each person who made the State of the Community Luncheon such a successful event. Thank you.

As always,
Sharolyn Hutton,
 President

LWVHC
Annual
Meeting
2008



Your
League
needs
YOU!

May 29, 2008

<p>5:30 Registration 6:30 Meeting Begins Baywood Country Club 3600 Buttermilk Lane, Arcata</p>	<p>Dinner Catered by: Baywood Country Club \$25 per person pre-registered \$27 at the door</p>
--	--

LWVHC 2008 Annual Meeting

It won't be for a few weeks, but please put it on your calendar now, and make your reservation early, please. This is the only meeting of the year for which we must have a quorum in attendance. We also need to guarantee a dinner count to our caterer, Baywood Golf and Country Club, so advance planning and your cooperation are especially important and appreciated.

By now, you should have received your Annual Meeting Kit in a separate mailing. This is our business meeting information document, so please bring your kit to the meeting. It also comprises our program guide for the coming year.

We will be electing new officers and board members to take us through another successful year. Your Board works valiantly to retain the reputation we have as one of the most outstanding Leagues in California. We want to retain the opinion expressed in *The Northcoast Journal* that we are "the smartest and most chic chapter in the state"! We can't put a burden that great on just 12 board members, can we?

So do your bit: send in your check, attend, participate, support and cheer on our League leaders. After all, YOU ARE THE LEAGUE!

Kay Escarda, Membership Chair

Our Mission Statement...

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

MAKE DEMOCRACY WORK!

Membership News

Legislative Interview Summary

This year's LWVC legislative interview with Assemblymember **Patty Berg** on March 19 dealt primarily with California's budget. Here is a summary of Assemblymember Berg's responses to the questions posed during the interview.

Berg views the 'ten percent across the board' cuts proposed by Governor Schwarzenegger as unfair in that not everyone will feel the pain equitably. "Poor people will bear the greatest burden in many different ways." Berg believes a state-wide discussion on priorities with a "mission statement" of what we want California to be in twenty years should occur and then the budget should be determined based on those priorities. In addition, reapportionment and term limits need to be addressed in order to have a more efficient government. "The budget is everything."

Berg suggests a balanced approach to structuring the budget that would include taxes, but everything would be on the table. In addition to making cuts, she would reverse the motor vehicle fee and feels California should have an oil severance tax. She feels businesses should not be exempt from certain taxes and is for eliminating loopholes in the tax codes.

Assemblymember Berg does not support the Budget Stabilization Act because it would require a constitutional amendment and would give the governor more authority. Unless California addresses the revenue side of the picture, money can't be saved. We are already over constrained without "more gimmicky solutions".

In regards to additional infrastructure bonds at this time, Berg feels that bonds are a necessary evil, but perpetual borrowing is not good. She does not support any of the new bonds at this time. "Prop. 57 in the 2007 election was to help pay off the state deficit from 2004, but the real issue is that revenue streams in the eighth richest economy do not meet the needs of 38 million people and that is not even addressing issues like sustainability, poverty, and overpopulation. We can't get out of the structural deficit by borrowing. We need to set priorities."

When asked about her personal priorities, Berg responded, "I would suggest that there be no bills introduced this year. We would only deal with the budget."

-Sharolyn Hutton,
President

Bear River Election

It is always a great pleasure to work with the many League volunteers who prepare and conduct the Bear River Tribal Council Election.

We were pleased to be able to provide polling booths for privacy this election, thanks to **Kelly Sanders and the Elections Department of Humboldt County**. Preliminary election results were posted at the Bear River Community Center as soon as the counting was completed after the March 29, 2008 election, and the final results were delivered to the Tribal Council on April 15.

The Bear River Band lets us know they appreciate us and trust us to conduct a fair and impartial election. Performing this service also contributes to our budget; the Tribal Council covers the election costs and makes a donation to the League.

The election process takes more than two months. League members prepare all the materials and mailings. All mailed-in returns come to the League post office box and are kept in a locked safe box until the election. Leaguers conduct the actual election, open and verify signatures for all absentee ballots, count and tally all ballots, and present the results.

We have a dedicated group of experienced volunteers, and we had several new volunteers this year. My very great



Election volunteers at the ballot box (from left to right): Miranda Perry, Phyllis Helligas, Sarah Reed and Helen Andrews

thanks to all of you, as well as those of you who were available to fill in: **Helen Andrews, Pam Cahill, Phyllis Helligas, Sharolyn Hutton, Carol Masterson, Nancy Nieboer, Carolyn Otis, Miranda Perry, Bev Post, Nancy Quintrell,, Sarah Reid, Kathy Sattler, Scott Sattler, and Debby Storre**. We couldn't do this without all of you. Thank you!

-Byrd Lochtie,
Past President

Voter Service

Candidate Forums—June 3, 2008 Election

Community Forums

Second District Supervisorial Race

Wednesday, May 7, 7-8:30 P.M.

Veterans Memorial Building, 483 Conger, Garberville

Thursday, May 15, 7-8:30 P.M.

Van Duzen River Grange, 5250 Highway 36, Carlotta

KEET-TV Channel 13 Forums

First District Supervisorial Race

Monday, May 5, 7-8 P.M.

Third District Supervisorial Race

Monday, May 12, 7-8 P.M.

Second District Supervisorial Race

Wednesday, May 14, 7-8 P.M.

Get 'em While They're Hot!

Many thanks to you early birds who've volunteered for our five candidate forums this month.

For the rest of you, plenty of two-hour volunteer spots remain, so please give us a holler and sign up for one or more for these most lively and unpredictable League events. No experience is necessary for some jobs, and we're all working together to refine and improve this valuable service to the voters. Join us and become well-acquainted with the candidates for the three supervisorial districts!

If you can't come, please call in some questions for the KEET forums. There are no journalists involved this time around, so all the questions will come from viewers. Call 768-3118 and buffy7@suddenlink.net.

*-Carol Masterson,
Voter Service Director*

Citizen Education

Human Rights Commission Forum

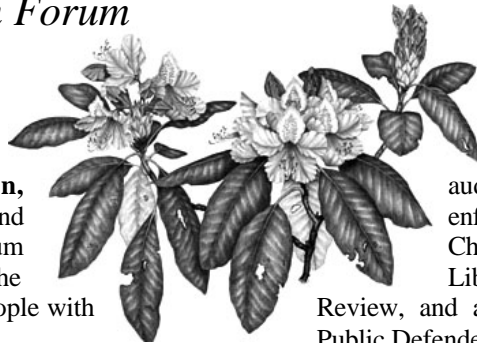
I am SO PROUD to be a member of this League! Thanks to **Carol Masterson** and her dedicated crew of: **Judy Bennett, John Bennett, Sharolyn Hutton, Carol Johnson, Melanie Johnson, Sarah Reid, and Carole Ziskin**. We conducted a forum on an extremely sensitive topic, and the result was a civil discourse between people with many different viewpoints.

The Humboldt County Human Rights Commission co-sponsored the event, and the topic was: "to consider whether a Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement is appropriate in Humboldt County." This was the third and last in a series of public forums presented by the Human Rights Commission on the topic all designed to educate and to give citizens a voice.

Moderator **Carol Johnson's** professionalism and calm, dignified demeanor set the tone for the evening, and the audience responded with respect and excellent questions.

The format of the League's educational forums lends itself to this kind of respectful exchange of ideas. I believe that this is exactly what we need in our communities to move forward with the challenge laid down by our LWVUS President Mary Wilson when she asked us to encourage respectful and civil discourse in our public and political arenas.

Participating on the panel were Humboldt County Sheriff **Gary Philp**, Eureka Police Chief **Garr Nielsen**; **Barbara Attard**, Independent Police Auditor for the City of San



Jose, CA; **Robert Aaronson**, Independent Police Auditor for the Cities of Davis & Santa Cruz, CA, and an attorney familiar with contractual auditing of internal affairs for law enforcement; and **Christina Albright**, Chair of the Redwood American Civil Liberties Union and the Coalition for Police Review, and an attorney with the Humboldt County Public Defender's Office.

Discussed were the history of requests for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement in Humboldt County, the various kinds of oversight practiced in other communities, the role of the Sheriff and Police Chief as the heads of their agencies, the rights of law enforcement as well as the rights of residents, and the need for any oversight program to be specifically designed for our community.

The Human Rights Commission is planning a follow-up report that will include many of the points made by the panelists and that will be made available to the public. Following that, the commission will develop a report to present to the Board of Supervisors with their recommendations on this complex issue.

On April 10, the LWVHC fulfilled that part of our mission that states we "work to increase understanding of major public policy issues." You should be very proud of belonging to this organization. We truly are MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK!

-Byrd Loctie, Past President

Board Briefs...

On April 7, Your Board:

- ☆ Discussed the LWVC request for our participation in this year's Presidents Council.
- ☆ Set the record date for the Annual Meeting to April 20, 2008.
- ☆ Authorized a donation to the Jackie Foote memorial.
- ☆ Agreed that member rosters with addresses and phone numbers will be available at League meetings.

-Lorey Keele, Secretary



Hardworking SOCL Committee Members, from left: Kay Escarda, Lorey Keele, Maggie Flemming, Nancy Kay, and Lois Busey

News from the LWVUS

League Urges House Members to Support National Security Letters Reform Act

April 15, 2008

Hon. John Conyers, Jr., Chairman
Hon. Lamar S. Smith, Ranking Minority Member
House Committee on the Judiciary
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6216

Re: National Security Letters Reform Act, H.R. 3189

Dear Chairman Conyers and Ranking Minority Member Smith:

The Judiciary Committee will soon consider the bi-partisan National Security Letters Reform Act (H.R. 3189). We write to express our support for this legislation.

The PATRIOT Act and Intelligence Authorization Act of FY 2004 drastically expanded the FBI's authority to obtain the business and personal records of Americans by issuing National Security Letters (NSLs). NSLs, which do not require prior judicial approval, can be used to obtain a wide range of documents based upon vague claims that the information is merely "relevant" to a terrorism investigation. Once the FBI acquires the records with an NSL, it can keep them indefinitely, even when it concludes that the subject of those records is innocent of any crime and is not of intelligence interest.

Undeniably, the FBI needs prompt access to some of the types of information currently acquired with NSLs, but the current method of self-policing simply does not work. Reports issued by the office of the Inspector General

of the Department of Justice in March 2007 and March 2008 documented the drastic expansion in the use of NSLs and their subsequent abuse. The IG's reports also show that NSLs are increasingly used to obtain records about Americans, making reform all the more important. The NSL Reform Act appropriately addresses the problems uncovered by the Inspector General's reports by establishing statutory safeguards and judicial oversight while protecting privacy concerns and bolstering national security interests.

The NSL Reform Act includes many beneficial reforms, some of which we summarize below. First, it would protect Americans' privacy by requiring that NSLs only be used to obtain records that pertain to suspected terrorists or spies. Thus, it would re-establish the pre-PATRIOT Act requirement that there be specific and articulable facts giving reason to believe that the records sought pertain to an agent of a foreign power. The bill would also establish reasonable limits on the "gag" that attaches to an NSL, requiring it to be narrowly tailored and limiting it to 30-days, extendable by a court. The bill also provides for a recipient's right to seek judicial review of an NSL issued to it. The bill would require the Attorney General to issue minimization procedures for information obtained with an NSL, and enhance oversight by requiring additional reporting to Congress.

We believe this bill takes significant steps toward achieving a balance between privacy and national security concerns. We ask that the Judiciary Committee consider this legislation and report it favorably as soon as is practicable. For more information, please contact Gregory T. Nojeim at the Center for Democracy & Technology, 202/637-9800 x113.

And Now, a Word for Our Sponsors

Thank you to everyone who attended the State of the Community Luncheon; we are most grateful for your support of the League. We want specifically to thank those contributors that gave us additional donations. Most of these people weren't able to attend the event, but wanted to support the League and honor our award recipients, **Gwynna Morris** and **Dr. Douglas Jager**.

Our thanks to the following generous donors:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Sally Arnot | Brenda Malloy |
| Jean Avart | Nancy Quintrell |
| Evelyn Bennett | Kathy Sattler |
| Kathryn Corbett | Peggy Schmidbauer |
| Tracy Jordan French | Jimmy Smith |
| Thea Gast | Jean Vaughan |
| Graystone Jewelers | Lynne Wells |
| Jan Kraepelian | |

*-Judy Bennett,
Treasurer*

*The League of Women Voters
of Humboldt County*

539 G Street, Suite 103, Eureka CA 95502
Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 3219
Eureka, CA 95502
(707) 444-9252 www.lwvhc.org vote@lwvhc.org

Who's Who in Your League 2007-2008


Your League Board

- President**..... Sharolyn Hutton
Vice President.....
Past PresidentByrd Lochtie
Secretary.....Lorey Keele
Treasurer.....Judy Bennett
Director.....Helen Andrews
Director.....Lois Busey
Director.....Kay Escarda
Director.....Melanie Johnson
Director.....Carol Masterson
Director.....Nancy Quintrell
Director.....Sarah Reid
Director.....Armeda Reitzel
Director.....Amanda Windsor

- Candidate & Issues Forums**.... Carol Masterson
Citizen Education.....Melanie Johnson
Financial Development DirectorLois Busey
Government
Historian..... Anne Hartline
LWVHC Ed-FundKathryn Corbett
Membership.....Kay Escarda, Nancy Quintrell
Natural Resources.....Sarah Reid
Nominating Committee Chair.....Nancy Kay
Poll Workers Coordinator.....Carolyn Otis
Program Director.....Sharolyn Hutton
Publications.....Lorey Keele
Publicity Director.....
Access Humboldt Rep. Helen Andrews
Social Policy.....
State of the Community..... Maggie Fleming,
Byrd Lochtie
VOTER Publication..... Amanda Windsor
VOTER Circulation..... Carolyn Otis
Voter Service Director Carol Masterson
Webmaster Amanda Windsor

Some of the spaces are blank!

Yes they are! Maybe *your* name would look great there. If you are an experienced leader or would like to gain experience in leadership, the League has a place for you!



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"/> \$50 Individual membership | <input type="checkbox"/> I cannot join at this time, but please accept my donation of _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Household membership | <input type="checkbox"/> Please send me more information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Associate membership | <input type="checkbox"/> I would like to be contacted by the nominating committee |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Additional donation of _____ | |

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 or Scholarship Fund, through the Humboldt Area Foundation, are tax-deductible. For more information call 444-9252.

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County

539 G Street, Suite 103, Eureka CA 95502 - (707) 444-9252

www.lwvhc.org - vote@lwvhc.org

MAY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

JUNE						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Calendar

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| May 1 | Meet Your Judges , 6:30-8:30 P.M.
Humboldt County Office of Education |
| May 4 | Avenue of the Giants Marathon ,
Volunteer Opportunity, 10 A.M.-1 P.M. |
| May 5 | Board Meeting, 6-8 P.M.
605 K Street, Eureka |
| May 5,7,12,14,15 | Candidate Forums See Schedule on Page 3 |
| May 19 | Deadline to register for the June 3 election |
| May 29 | ★ Annual Meeting , Registration begins at 5:30,★
Business Meeting 6:30, Baywood Country Club,
3600 Buttermilk Ln., Arcata |
| June 2 | Board Meeting, 6-8 P.M.
605 K Street, Eureka |
| June 3 | Election - VOTE! |

For changes to the calendar and lots of other information
check out our League website at:

www.lwvhc.org

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County Diversity Policy 2007-2008

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County, in both its values and practices, affirms its belief and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means there shall be no barriers to membership or 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

May 2008

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

Editor: Amanda Windsor