



THE VOTER

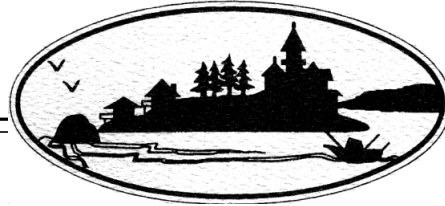
The Newsletter of The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County

Vol. 52 No. 3

March 2010

Inside This Issue

Community Leaders Honored.....	2
Kudos to Callers	2
Pro & Cons	3
Proposition Positions	3
Forums 'R' Us	3
Board Briefs	3
News from the LWVUS	4
News from the LWVC	5



Join us at the Adorni Center! 2010 State of the Community Luncheon

<i>Honorees:</i>	<i>Speakers:</i>
Rose Baker	Clif Clendenen
Humboldt Community Breast Health Project	Chair, County Board of Supervisors
April 23, 2010	Sandra Fitzpatrick
11:30 Seating	Executive Director, California Commission on Aging
\$40 per person	
\$35 LWVHC Members	

President's Message

Spring is in the air! Not only are the daffodils brightening our days, but Sunshine Week, March 15 – 21, shines the light on the importance of government meetings being open to the public—what a concept! On March 3, the Arcata City Council will present a proclamation in honor of Sunshine Week and honor the League's work in supporting the 'sunshine laws'. League meetings are always open to the public and our VOTER is available on-line to everyone.

The invitation to the LWVC council to be held in Sacramento on May 15 and 16 has arrived and LWVHC plans to participate. Each League has only one vote, but additional League members may attend. My first council meeting taught me a lot about League procedures in conducting business; I would encourage new-comers to go.

We are a busy group of citizens. League members have been helping **Byrd Lochtie** with the Bear River election, and many others have been working with **Maggie Fleming** preparing for the State of the Community Luncheon (April 23). **Lorey Keele** is gathering material for the Annual Meeting Kit (May 17), a budget committee has developed a proposed budget for 2010-2011, and still others have reorganized the League office. **Carol Masterson** has already received requests for candidate forums and is holding a training for League members who want to help with the forums (March 22). Join us!

Sincerely,

Dr. Sharolyn Hutton,
President

Making Connections: An Interview With Linda Hill, Assessor

After serving Humboldt County since 1971 and serving as the County Assessor since 2002, Linda Hill is retiring this year. The assessor's office presently has thirty employees, ten of whom work as real property appraisers and four as personal property auditor appraisers. For more detail, see page 4 of *A Citizen's Guide to County Government*.

LWVHC: We who are property owners know your office appraises the value of our property. How do you determine that value and its corresponding tax?

LH: Everything in this office is related to property appraisal. We value at market value, which is difficult to do, so to arrive at the value of a property, we use sales comparability, replacement costs and, additionally on commercial property, an income approach. We tend to use the sales comparables and replacement costs for most properties, but especially for

-continued on page 4

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!

Membership News

Community Leaders Honored

We are pleased to introduce the recipients of this year's Civic Contribution Award: **Rose Baker, Youth Advocate**, and the **Humboldt Community Breast Health Project**. Join us as we honor these community leaders at the 18th annual State of the Community Luncheon on Friday, April 23 at the Adorni Center.

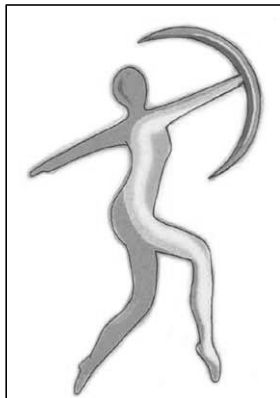


**Rose Baker,
Youth Advocate**

Rose Baker has built her life around helping children and supporting parents. In 2000, Rose was awarded the California State Foster Parent of the Year. In 2006, she founded YouthAbility, a nonprofit that promotes education, training and self-empowerment for at-risk youth. As a certified Love and Logic instructor and a Post Adoptions In-Home Behavioral Specialist, Rose has

trained thousands of parents and professionals. She is the current president of the New Directions of Humboldt Foster Parent Association and is a Humboldt County Juvenile Justice Commissioner. Above all, Rose Baker is a tireless advocate for families, children, foster youth and adoptive parents.

The **Humboldt Community Breast Health Project** (HCBHP) is a client-centered, grass-roots organization that provides support and education for those facing a breast health concern, gynecologic cancer concern, or a diagnosis of breast or gynecologic cancer. The HCBHP promotes healthy survivorship through education, support and hope, enabling each person to become their own best medical advocate. The HCBHP helps and challenges the community to address breast health concerns responsibly and holistically. Services include patient navigation, support groups, information specialists, 'warmlines' volunteers, a resource library and more. Founded by **Dr. Julie Ohnemus**, the HCBHP is currently led by Executive Director **Rose Gale-Zoellick**, and is governed by a volunteer board of directors.



**Humboldt Community
Breast Health Project**

Our keynote speaker this year is **Sandra Fitzpatrick**, Executive Director of the California Commission on Aging, a state entity that advocates for over four million older Californians. Ms. Fitzpatrick served for many years as the Executive Director of the Area 1 Agency on Aging, and currently sits on the Advisory Committee of the Center for the Advanced Study of Aging Services at the University of California, Berkeley. Her speech is titled "What's Age got to do With It?"

Dr. Sharolyn Hutton, LWVHC President, will be the Master of Ceremonies. The state of the community address will be made by the Chair of the County Board of Supervisors, **Clif Clendenen**. Do not miss this year's event!

-Beth Matsumoto,
Vice President

Welcome New Members!

Neal and Kelly Sanders

Kudos to Callers

Once again I am impressed by the quality of person that joins our League. If you attended our Program Planning meeting, I'm certain you feel the same way. We had a wonderful attendance, thanks in part to the hard working Board members who made individual phone calls to encourage members to attend. The comments and thoughts expressed at that meeting only further cemented my relationship to League. We have such great thinkers in our midst.

Our Board members went beyond their job descriptions by making those calls and many found volunteers to take over the job of calling and encouraging other members. I want to thank **Pam Cahill, Michele Fell-Casale, Tracy Jordan French, Anne Hartline, Judi Hedgpeth, Melanie Johnson, Barbara Kelly, Judy McClure, Sara Pillow** and **Kathie Simas** for all becoming official League callers.

If you would like your name added to this list of League stars, contact me and you too can become better informed by being a League caller.

-Judy Bennett
Membership Chair

Voter Service

Pros & Cons

The good news is that there will be only five ballot propositions in June. The other news? There are 80 initiatives in circulation for the November ballot. The LWVC Voter Information Working Group has recommended that improved support be offered to local League ballot measure speakers. An on-line PDF version of the *Pros & Cons* on state propositions will be available (www.lwvc.org) for the June 2010 election, starting in mid-April. Detailed proposition analysis from the Legislative Analyst's Office is expected to be available about 15 weeks prior to the election. Volunteers for our May *Pros & Cons* forum will be receiving more information as it becomes available.

-Nan Nieboer,
Voter Service Co-Director

Advocacy

Proposition Positions

A brief, early look at the June offerings and the League positions on each.

Proposition 13 - Neutral

Property Tax: New Construction Exclusion: Seismic Retrofitting: Although the LWVC generally supports regular, frequent reappraisals for property tax purposes, and this measure excludes certain construction from reappraisal, a case can be made for the public safety benefit of encouraging seismic retrofits.

Proposition 14 - No Position

Elections: Open Primaries (Top-Two Candidate Open Primary Act): The LWVC has never studied political parties, or how they select their candidates, and has no position on this subject.

☆ **Proposition 15 - Support**

Political Reform Act of 1974: California Fair Elections Act of 2008: The LWVC has long been a supporter of public financing and is co-chair of the campaign to pass Prop. 15. Support.

☆ **Proposition 16 - Oppose**

New Two-Thirds Vote Requirement for Local Public Electricity Providers: LWVC positions call for a simple majority vote on revenue and finance measures at both the state and local levels.

Proposition 17 - No Position

Allows Auto Insurance Companies to Base Their Prices in Part on a Driver's History of Insurance Coverage: The LWVC has not studied, and therefore has no position on, insurance issues.

Forums 'R' Us

At long last, we have a new Voter Service Director, a development for which yours truly is exceedingly grateful. **Nan Nieboer** has hit the ground running, recruiting ballot measures presenters and planning an informative meeting in May.

The candidate portion of the June primary ballot is filling up rapidly as well, not unusual for a county primary where some incumbents are not running, leading to numerous requests for the League to conduct candidate forums.

Here's the situation: numerous candidate forums means a need for numerous forum volunteers. How can we continue to serve the voters without sufficient personnel to staff our forums on KEET-TV and out in the community? If you happen to be someone who appreciates what we do for voters but has not yet felt the call to voter service, this is your year! Come to a training/brush-up meeting on March 22 at 6 P.M. at the League office at 434 7th Street in Eureka. Working at forums is a uniquely satisfying way to spend a few hours contributing to the wellbeing of our democracy. Your League and your community will be richer with your participation!

-Carol Masterson,
Candidate Forums

Board Briefs...

From the February Board Meeting:

- ☆ At the Program Planning general meeting it was determined that the LWVHC position statements would all be reviewed to ensure that they include a clear statement promoting public input into government processes, procedures and planning.
- ☆ LWVHC policy positions will be reviewed according to a long-term cycle previously adopted by the Board, beginning in 2010-2011 with Public Health, Hazardous Waste, and Eureka City Government.
- ☆ Treasurer Nancy Kay and President Sharolyn Hutton plan to attend the Annual Investment Review at the Humboldt Area Foundation on March 10.
- ☆ Membership Chair Judy Bennett reported that the LWVHC has 156 members. A calling committee has been established under Judy's direction.

-Peg Gardner,
Secretary

News from the LWVUS

Note from LWVHC President Sharolyn Hutton: *if you have not read or listened to LWVUS President Mary Wilson's testimony in Congress concerning the recent Supreme Court ruling on funding by corporations in political elections, I would encourage you to go to www.LWV.org to read or listen to it.*

This is only one of the areas for which LWV continues to educate and advocate at the national level: the League is taking action on climate change, the environment and universal health care.

Making Connections Interview

-continued from page 1 residential, and by law the purchase price is assumed to be the value unless there is data to support a different value. Using the Consumer Price Index, a maximum increase of two percent in value is used most years as per Proposition 13, with a one percent tax. This year there is a negative CPI so there will be a decrease to Prop 13 values. The State Board of Equalization provides guidance for all county assessors regarding taxation. Recorded properties valued at less than two thousand dollars are not taxed, and the cost to process those properties would outweigh the return.

In addition to residential property, we appraise businesses. Unlike residential property where no personal property is taxed, business personal property is. This office conducts random audits on businesses and is required to audit certain large businesses every four years. These property tax audits help determine the value of the business. In addition, in Humboldt County we appraise thousands of boats and a few hundred airplanes, although not cars. To arrive at the appraised value of those items, we use the blue book value. There are tax exemptions which we are able to apply when appropriate. Some of those are for cemeteries, disabled veterans, and non-profit organizations, which include churches and religious groups, as well as some museums and hospitals.

We reappraise property when there are new owners or new construction.

LWVHC: *Some counties have done a blanket reduction of property values because of the economy. Why hasn't this happened in Humboldt County?*

LH: There are two main reasons. The first is that we have not had as great a reduction in home prices. The

League Participates in Health Care Press Conference

League President **Mary G. Wilson** joined a coalition of groups pushing for health care reform at a press conference this week in D.C. Their message: a comprehensive, system-wide, and sustainable health care reform law can and should be enacted soon. Read Mary Wilson's statement at LWV.org. The League's Lobby Corps is currently on the Hill lobbying in support of action on health care.

Mary Wilson Talks Climate Change in the Carolinas

President Wilson visited the Carolinas this month to discuss climate change with media, community members and Senate staff, holding a press conference at the South Carolina State House with members of the South Carolina Legislative Women's Caucus and co-authors of Oxfam America's report, *Exposed*, on the vulnerability of the U.S. Southeast to changes in climate.

second is that some counties have many subdivisions that have hundreds of homogeneous housing units, so the comparable sales value is fairly easy to determine. That just is not the case in Humboldt. We look at individual properties at the request of the owners.

LWVHC: *How do you maintain a list of current property owners?*

LH: Our office receives a copy of every real estate transaction that is recorded in the county as well as copies of additional construction permits for properties already recorded. When property changes hands, the Assessor's office receives a copy of the deed, which begins the process of reappraisal.

LWVHC: *What would you like to share with our readers?*

LH: Two things. Every year tax payers have the right to appeal the assessed value of their property if it appears to exceed the market value. The process can be started by requesting an informal review by our office. If the property owner is still not satisfied, they can file an Application for Changed Assessment which starts the formal appeal process. There is no charge for either process. Also, I would like everyone to realize that everyone is under Proposition 13. The base value of the property at the time of purchase is increased by a maximum of 2% per year as dictated by Prop. 13. Personal property is not under Prop. 13 but is subject to reappraisal each year. Real estate is subject to Prop 13 but with some exceptions, such as property under the Williamson Act and Timber Production Zone (TPZ) property.

News from the LWVC

California OneCare Gears Up for the 365 Ad Campaign

On January 28, SB 810 (Leno), the bill to provide single payer universal health coverage in California, passed the state Senate on a 22-14 vote. Thank you to all who contacted your senators and helped the bill move forward.

As S.B. 810 moves through the Assembly, a new 365 Ad Campaign will help the LWVC and others in the California OneCare grassroots movement educate the public and build support for single payer health care in California. Beginning in March 2010, a new 30-second spot will be posted on the California OneCare Web site every day for a full year. The ads will feature celebrities such as Lily Tomlin as well as politicians, activists, and healthcare survivors. They will feature monthly themes, such as information about single payer health care and why medical care providers support single payer. Stay tuned-in.

LWVC Leadership Council Coming May 15-16

The LWVC Leadership Council will be held May 15-16 at the Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza in Sacramento. League leaders from across the state will assemble to pass the LWVC budget and give guidance to the state board on their work. There will be many opportunities to network, as well as leadership skills training through workshops and other events. You don't have to be a League member or a voting delegate to take advantage of the networking and learning opportunities.



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

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County

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

Who's Who in Your League 2009-2010

☆ YOUR LEAGUE BOARD ☆

- President Sharolyn Hutton
- Vice President Beth Matsumoto
- Past President Lorey Keele
- Secretary Peg Gardner
- Treasurer Nancy Kay
- Director Byrd Lochtie
- Director Carol Masterson
- Director Beth Matsumoto
- Director Willa Mauro
- Director Nan Nieboer
- Director Sarah Reid
- Director Amanda Windsor

☆ ACTION ☆

- Government Helen Andrews
- Natural Resources OPEN
- Social Policy Sarah Reid
- Program Director OPEN

☆ ADMINISTRATION ☆

- Financial Development Director Nancy Kay
- Historian Carole Ziskin
- Membership Judy Bennett, Judi Stoffer
- Nominating Committee Chair Nancy Quintrell
- Publications Lorey Keele

☆ FUNDRAISING ☆

- Poll Workers Coordinator Carolyn Otis
- State of the Community Luncheon (SOCL) Committee Co-Chairs Maggie Fleming, Byrd Lochtie
- SOCL Committee Liaison Beth Matsumoto

☆ MEDIA ☆

- Media Chair Amanda Windsor
- Access Humboldt Rep Peg Gardner
- Publicity Director Beth Matsumoto
- VOTER Publication Amanda Windsor
- VOTER Circulation Carolyn Otis
- Webmaster Amanda Windsor

☆ VOTER SERVICE ☆

- Voter Service Director Nan Nieboer
- Candidate Forums Carol Masterson
- Citizen Education Willa Mauro
- Election Service Chair Byrd Lochtie
- Smart Voter Amanda Windsor

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County

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

www.lwvhc.org - vote@lwvhc.org

MARCH						
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			

APRIL						
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

- March 1 **Board Meeting** 6-8 P.M.
League Office, 434 7th Street, Eureka
- March 22 **Voter Service Training** 6-8 P.M.
League Office, 434 7th Street, Eureka
- April 5 **Board Meeting** 6-8 P.M.
434 7th Street, Eureka
- April 23 **State of the Community Luncheon**
Adorni Center, Eureka, 12-1:30 P.M.
1011 Waterfront Drive, Eureka

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

www.lwvhc.org

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County Diversity Policy 2009-2010

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

March 2010

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

Editor: Amanda Windsor

Join Us on April 23

*For the 18th Annual State of the Community Luncheon.
Support the League as we honor local civic heroes.*