



Santa Cruz VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

November 2018

Volume 53, Number 4

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Calendar

Tuesday, November 13, 2018
 10 a.m.-noon
 LWVSCC Board Meeting
 Santa Cruz County Bank
 75 River Street
 Santa Cruz, CA

Tuesday, December 11, 2018
 10 a.m.-noon
 LWVSCC Board Meeting
 Santa Cruz County Bank
 75 River Street
 Santa Cruz, CA

Look for more details to come on our 2019 programs:

- January: State program planning
- February: Income inequality
- March: Local program planning
- May: Recycling concerns

Get the facts before you vote and find in-depth information about what's on your ballot at votersedge.org



President's Message

As we look forward to the Thanksgiving holiday, I want to thank all our members who have renewed for the 2018-19 year and welcome our new members as well. Our member roster manager, Laura Grossman, after returning from her trip to Africa, got to work updating our local roster, having the roster proofread, and then distributing it to our members. Members who renew late, or have joined after the roster was sent, will receive their copy and be added right away. Look for another roster update in January.



I would like to thank all our current board members and those filling off-board jobs for keeping the Santa Cruz County League of Women Voters going in these challenging times. Our October 13 program on the state ballot measures, co-sponsored by the American Association of University Women, was thought-provoking and helped clarify the pros and cons of these measures, as well as provide information on the supporters and legislative maneuvers behind some of the initiatives. My gratitude goes to Cecilie Schulze, Eve Roberson, and Sue Becker, the presenters, to the public library staff for their assistance with the room at the Aptos branch, and to the close to 50 people who came to hear the program and participate in the question and answer session.

Our partnership with AAUW continued for the October 20 program on human trafficking of children, with amazingly-honest presentations from survivors combined with what is being done about this alarming problem in the public schools, law enforcement, and social welfare. My thanks to Stephanie Harlan and Karen Smith for providing refreshments and helping coordinate this event.

At the time of this writing, a fifth pros and cons of the ballot measures program is scheduled on October 27 at the Downtown Library. Thank you to Voter Service co-chairs, Dottie Fry and Sue Becker, who have been working with Sandy Warren, Eve, and Cecilie to accommodate the many requests from local organizations for our League's help in understanding the measures before we vote. Thanks also to all our members who have been registering voters and encouraging voting for the November 6 election.

—Barbara Lewis, President, LWVSCC

Membership Report

Welcome to those new members who have joined the League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County in the last year: Ceil Cirillo, Robin Drury, Barbara J. Lawrence, and Colleen Fortis of Santa Cruz; Shirley Marcus and Adele Shediak of Capitola, Cecilie Schulze of Aptos, Jan Dwyer and Cheryl Sopkin of Watsonville, Casey Carlson of La Selva Beach, and Diane Cohan of Scotts Valley. What a great representation of our entire county!

Hearty greetings to all those who renewed their membership as well. Your commitment to the League supports voter registration and voter education in our county, and makes possible all of our informative program meetings. Your membership will insure that you receive the Santa Cruz VOTER, our local League's newsletter, by email. This publication keeps our members informed of programs and issues on the county, state and national level

—*Lydia Nogales Parker, Membership Chair*

Voter Service Report

September and October were busy months for our Voter Service team. In September, 120 people registered to vote at various events throughout the county, and they continued to register new voters at events right through the October 22 deadline. Throughout the month of October, the team informed about 200 community members of the pros and cons of all eleven state ballot measures at five separate events. On October 17, Cecilie Schulze, Lydia Parker and Dottie Fry made a presentation about LWV and voter registration to employees of the Reiter Berry Company at their Watsonville office.

—*Sue Becker, Voter Service Co-chair*

A New Way to Donate to the League

Effective November 19, tax-deductible donations to the League's Education Fund will be administered by our state League office. The LWV of California Education Fund (LWVCEF) offers this service to local Leagues at no cost. Until now, such donations have been handled by the national League of Women Voters Education Fund office in Washington D.C. This change was made to allow us more convenient access to the funds and to better track such donations.

While donations to our League's general fund are not currently tax deductible, donations to the Education Fund, used for our educational programs, can be deducted.

To make a tax-deductible donation to the League, write a check payable to "LWVCEF" (League of Women Voters of California Education Fund). Note on the check that the funds are for LWV of Santa Cruz County. Mail the check to our local League (LWVSCC P.O. Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010) or drop off the check to a League board member or in our donation box at one of our events.

Our League is grateful for all those who support our educational programs as well as for those who donate to our general fund—thank you!

—*Geri McGillicuddy, LWVSCC Treasurer*

California League Celebrates Legislative Wins

An update from our LWVC President

The 2017-18 California legislative session is a wrap! Because you took action, we're celebrating some big wins!

- Clean energy got a big boost with the passage of SB 100. California will continue to lead the country in climate change action—and 100% of your electricity will be from zero carbon sources by 2045.
- The flood of dark money coming into campaigns will be subject to greater transparency with the passage of the Disclose Act, AB 249. And by defeating AB 84 we prevented even more money from compromising our elections.
- We gained greater police accountability with the passage of SB 1421, which expands access to personnel and video records related to officer-involved killings.

To learn more about legislative work to reform elections, expand voting rights, protect California's water supply, combat the housing crisis, and more check out [our wrap-up summary](#).

The new two-year legislative session starts in January, and I hope we can count on you to continue taking action on the League's email alerts. Together, we can see even more progress next year!

—*Helen Hutchison, President, LWVC*

Valuing Our Children:

Taking action against child sex trafficking

Becoming educated about child sex trafficking, learning to recognize it, and taking action were the key points emphasized at the League's October program, co-sponsored with the American Association of University Women. The program began with an informational talk by Beth Edmonds of Shared Hope, an international organization that strives to prevent sex trafficking and help its victims, followed by an address by Cari Hershel, herself a victim of sex trafficking, and ended with a panel discussion about local efforts to prevent it.

Beth Edmonds defined sex trafficking as a person being made to perform a sexual act, such as stripping, pornography, or prostitution, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion. When a child under age 18 is involved, there's no need to prove force, fraud, or coercion; children aren't emotionally or psychologically ready, and no sex is legal at that age.

She pointed out the long history of slavery, rape, and abuse in the Americas from Christopher Columbus to today. While statistics in this area are hard to pin down, it's thought that 100 to 300 thousand children are trafficked in the US every year, with our county being one of the hot spots.

Young teens are especially vulnerable to those looking to exploit children, as they are looking for affection in connection to romance and attachment, while trying to separate from their parents and come into their own identities. Kids as young as age 12 are targeted for recruitment; the age when they are typically rescued or helped is 15 to 17. Traffickers pick out kids, both boys and girls, from all socioeconomic backgrounds that are disconnected, needy, vulnerable, or hurting, especially kids who are homeless, runaways, or in the foster system. These kids are often looking for a protector, someone to look out for them. Traffickers can spot their victims and put them "in the life" in 24 hours.

Gang trafficking is also common; when children are recruited, they often don't realize that they are required to bring in an income, which often means

prostitution. Familial trafficking can happen as well.

Traffickers hire spotters, either adults that appear trustworthy or other teens, to find and study their targets. They scout anywhere kids congregate: at malls, restaurants, arcades. They may use information gained by these spotters to lure the targets in, often using an attractive mid-twenty age male to pose as a romantic partner. Girls are often treated lavishly, gifted with expensive clothes, purses, or jewelry.

Once the relationship is established, the recruiter will seek to compromise the child, either through demands for money (often the recruiter will say he needs money for rent or his car or some other purpose) or with threats to compromise the child through videos or with violence to them or their family. Often girls are started by being asked to "dance" at a strip club.

Why doesn't the child just leave? Because they don't see a safe way out. Often the psychological hold is strong: they feel dependent on their trafficker. Traffickers are master manipulators.

"It's impossible to protect all girls from guys like I was, because that's what we do. We eat, drink, and sleep thinking of ways to trick young girls into doing what we want them to do."

—Ex pimp.

Often behavior attributable to trafficking is misidentified as acting out, being uncontrollable, truancy, or promiscuity. It's important for adults to look for and recognize key indicators of trafficking and intervene appropriately. Signs include a significantly older boyfriend, changes in behavior (absences, dress, attitude, lying), changes in lifestyle (having money, material possessions, getting nails and hair done, tattoos—such as a name, barcode, or money), signs of abuse (often where it is covered by clothes). (For more details, download the flyer from Shared Hope at sharedhope.org.)

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Children and youths should be educated not only to recognize possible traffickers, but to recognize signs that their friends are being recruited or trafficked. They should know that covering for a friend who is in that situation is not helping them, and could put their friend in danger.

Cari Herthel, a survivor of child trafficking, told about her realization that, as a minor, the law says she was not to blame for what had been done to her. While at a conference, she had an epiphany: “The law does not say that I made the wrong choices. That was the moment when I understood that we have been making children guilty of something that is not theirs to own. It’s ours.” Throughout most of her life, Herthel had felt herself to be of no value. Understanding the societal nature of the disease of child exploitation and sexual predation helped Herthel to finally move forward. “Social action is what became my missing link, became a way that I could understand that the gift of my woundedness was truly my value.”

As a society, Herthel said, we have lost our connection to our values. We don’t value our environment, our resources, or our children. She emphasized the alarming and urgent nature of the problem and the need to stand up and do something now, “It’s going to take all of us. I name it, I claim it, I own it. We need to engage and have those conversations with children. They are our future.”

According to panelist Michael Mahan, assistant district attorney, in the past 10 years the district attorney’s office filed 35 human trafficking cases. Of those, only 23 actually went forward into the court system. Of those 23, only seven were convicted or pled to human trafficking. The other 16 cases were either dismissed or ended in acquittal, largely because victims don’t cooperate. Many victims don’t realize they’re part of human trafficking, Mahan said, “They have been so psychologically manipulated by the people that are trafficking them that they still think they are loved. They often don’t want the case to go forward to prosecution, and they’re also being coerced by these traffickers.”

While Mahan wants to see justice done, his concern is also for the victims, who are starting from zero when they are pulled out of human trafficking situations, and are often recovering from addiction. Even with the help of victim advocates, it can take years to bring a case to trial; meanwhile, they have to start their lives over and find a place to live, which is not easy in Santa Cruz. Many of the victims are not from this area, having been brought here to be trafficked because the city is a tourist destination, the boardwalk and the Salinas Rodeo being big attractions for the sex trade. Once traffickers leave the county, it’s hard to go forward in those cases.

Continued next page

RESOURCES

If something looks wrong: tell.
It could save a life.

If someone is in immediate danger,
call 911.

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children: the nation's clearinghouse and comprehensive reporting center for all issues related to the prevention of and recovery from child victimization.

missingkids.com

Phone: 1-800-THE-LOST
(1-800-843-5678).

File a report online:
missingkids.org

If you believe you may have information about a trafficking situation report it to the **National Human Trafficking Hotline**. Anti-Trafficking Hotline Advocates are available 24/7 to take reports of potential human trafficking.

humantraffickinghotline.org

Phone toll-free: 1-888-373-7888
Text: 233733.

Live Web Chat

humantraffickinghotline.org/chat

Submit a tip online through their anonymous online reporting form:
humantraffickinghotline.org/report-trafficking

If a child is in urgent need of assistance, contact law enforcement or child protective services to report abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child. Contact the **Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline** to speak to professional crisis counselors who can connect a caller with a local number to report abuse:

1-800-4-A-CHILD
(1-800-422-4453).

childhelp.org/

Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
suicidepreventionlifeline.org
1-800-273-8255

Mahan emphasized his open-door policy for reporting suspected sex crimes, “Reach out if you see anything suspicious. If you help someone, you help everyone.”

Last year, the California legislature passed [AB 1227](#), which requires California public schools to offer students education and training on human trafficking identification, and prevention in order to avert children from being exploited for labor or sex. Panelist Faris Sabbah, from the Santa Cruz County of Education Office, said that Santa Cruz County has some catching up to do compared to Monterey County, where there is higher awareness and more intense resource allocation.

Most Santa Cruz county schools have implemented health class curriculum for grades 7 and 9. The focus is on prevention and awareness as well as on social media. In developing curriculum, they are working to make sure students feel the information is relevant. Staff also receives training to be aware of signs that a child is being trafficked. When trafficking is suspected, a multidisciplinary team is assigned to provide support to the student.

“It’s a good start,” said Sabbah, “but we need to do more.” They are working to develop a safe-schools framework that includes making sure students are not being trafficked is part of the plan. This includes educating everyone inside and outside our schools, from custodians to principals.

Panelist Mark Stone, a local representative in the California state assembly, spoke about how reforming child welfare systems in California can help make kids in the system safer. In 2015, California launched the Continuum of Care Reform (CCR), an overhaul of the state’s foster care system. The reform replaces group homes, where kids are often given a bed and then are ignored, with a system of care that centers on short-term residential therapeutic programs. When kids are brought into the system, they are provided with short-term therapeutic processes that will prepare them for individualized placement.



Panelists Mark Stone, Faris Sabbah, and Michael Mahan discuss local efforts to prevent child exploitation.

A key tenet of the reform is to start mental health services as soon as the child comes into the system, rather than waiting until their symptoms are acute enough to lead to a diagnosis. “Why we wait until there is a crisis in that child’s life, until they break enough to be diagnosed as needing mental health services before we apply services to them to help them out is beyond me,” said Stone, “but that’s the system we have set up.”

The new system also looks at where the child is coming from. “In almost every case their parents had also suffered trauma and were victims of their trauma or their circumstances. Until we really work on that environment in a more effective way, we can’t solve the problem for that child,” Stone said, emphasizing the importance of trying to solve the family trauma or problems, “...because if the child goes back to that family, we don’t want those problems to repeat.”

Changing a government system with siloed, separated services to one where all the advocates and stakeholders gather around the child and share information has proved a challenge. Their goal is to find better ways to share information that is important for decision making while keeping confidential the data that needs to be protected for the child’s privacy.

Continued next page

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to men and women of voting age who are U.S. citizens. Others are welcome to join the League as associate members.

Send your check payable to League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County or LWVSCC with this form to LWVSCC, Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010-1745.

___ \$65.00 Individual annual membership

___ \$100.00 Two members in a household

___ \$10.00 Student membership

___ Contribution \$ _____

Checks made out to LWVSCC are not tax deductible.

To make a tax-deductible donation, write a separate check to LWV Education Fund.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone: _____

Email _____

Valuing Our Children

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Stone also spoke about breaking down the firewall between the justice system and the welfare system, “We know what to do with the kids who are justice-involved, theoretically. We know what to do with the kid that’s been removed from their home by the child welfare system, theoretically. But if all we do is focus on those two populations, what happens is that kids who are sexual victims, kids who are homeless, kids who don’t fit neatly into one bucket or the other are not being served. If we continue to say that kids who are justice-involved are different from kids that are involved in the child welfare system, we miss the fact that they are the same. They come from the same circumstances they come from the same families, they come from the same communities, and they need the same level of services.” Stone feels we’d better serve kids’ needs by having a system of support for children at risk regardless of how they enter the system.

Hope comes from awareness and action. As Cari Herthel said, “You’ve got to stand up and do something now. Don’t wait.”

—Pam Newbury, *VOTER Editor*

November Ballot Measure Recommendations

Here’s a quick review of the state League’s positions on November’s ballot measures:

YES on Prop 1: The Veterans and Affordable Housing Bond

YES on Prop 2: The Homeless Housing Bond

NO on Prop 3: Water Bond

NO on Prop 4: The Children’s Hospital Bond

NO on Prop 5: Property Tax

NO on Prop 6: Gas Tax Repeal

YES on Prop 10: Repeal Costa Hawkins

For more information on the League’s positions on these measures, go to lwvc.org.

Because League positions do not cover the issues in the following measures, the LWVC takes no stand on Prop 7 (Daylight Savings Time), Prop 8 (Dialysis), Prop 11 (Ambulance Drivers), and Prop 12 (Farm Animals). Prop 9 was removed from the ballot.

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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.