

PRESS ADVISORY

Attention: For Immediate Release

REMINDER: Redwood ACLU to Hold Eureka School Board Candidate Debate

The Redwood Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union is holding a Candidates' Debate on Civil Liberties for the candidates for Eureka School Board, to be held on Wednesday, October 26th from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. on live television -- Access Humboldt Channel 11 -- out of the Community Media Center studio at Eureka High School.

This debate will be held before a televised audience and in cooperation with independent producers working with Access Humboldt it will also be aired several times on public access Channels 11 & 12 and will likewise be available for later viewing on-line.

The debate will be moderated by Redwood ACLU Boardmember and Eureka resident Xandra Manns, and shall be staffed by other members of the Board of Directors of the Redwood ACLU, although any persons who have made any sort of campaign contribution or endorsement of any of the candidates in this year's election are excluded from involvement.

"The debate allows the voters to get a handle on what the candidates have to say in this important election," Redwood ACLU Chair Greg Allen said.

Unlike previous ACLU debates, one of the candidates for this public office has so far indicated their unwillingness to participate. Judy Anderson, the incumbent running for re-election to the Eureka School Board, sent the Redwood Chapter an e-mail indicating her decline of the invitation.

She wrote: "I believe an open format debate with questions coming from a live audience provides a fairer forum," even though, like the League of Women Voter's forums traditionally broadcast live on KEET TV, there will be a live television audience calling in their questions for the candidates.

"To even say that is patently absurd," Allen retorted. "History has shown that the debates we sponsor have been unbiased and impartial."

The Board of Directors of the Redwood ACLU met last week and unanimously determined to hold the debate regardless. There will be a chair held open for Judy Anderson; the other candidate, Susan Johnson, has already agreed to appear and participate without any demands to change the debate format.

The Redwood ACLU held the only televised debate for all candidates for the Northern Humboldt High School District in 2005 at the Senior Room of the Arcata Community Center, and has also presented civil liberties-oriented forums for local city council races over the last seven years. In 2010, the Redwood ACLU hosted two televised debates, in both the primary and general elections, for all of the candidates running for District Attorney of Humboldt County -- the October 2010 run-off debate between Paul Gallegos and Allison Jackson was the first live event to be televised from the Access Humboldt studio at Eureka High School. The Redwood ACLU, based in Eureka with over 850 members across the North Coast, is a non-partisan organization that never endorses or opposes candidates for public office.

The format of the debate will start with opening statements and an airing of the candidate's views on questions posed by the moderator concerning civil liberties issues in Humboldt County. All other questions will be posed by phone-in questions from the television audience, followed by closing statements. Each candidate will have the opportunity to issue rebuttals to the statements of others.

Members of the press or public with questions may contact the Redwood ACLU at (707) 442-4419 or redwoodaclu@hotmail.com, or drop by our office at 917 Third Street in Old Town Eureka.