

POLICY WATCH – September 2018

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This issue shares the good news of NBLC's newest member, Sonoma County Winegrowers. Please read the article to learn more about this amazing organization. We also urge you to register and vote in this important mid-term election. Please check out our endorsements of candidates and ballot measures on the ballot for this November's election.

Tickets are selling fast for the Leaders of the North Bay Awards Luncheon. We are excited that we always sell out this event and hope you will get your ticket before it is too late! This year's teen keynote speaker is not to be missed and the honorees always make you glad you live in the North Bay!

We also include an article about facts, truth and why people believe what they want to believe. It is a fascinating discussion of how our minds work and why we have such a divide in what we believe in our post-truth society.

Best,

Cynthia

Sonoma County Winegrowers Join North Bay Leadership Council

North Bay Leadership Council (NBLC) is pleased to announce that Sonoma County Winegrowers (SCW), a trade group which represents more than 1,800 grape growers and related businesses, has joined NBLC. Sonoma County Winegrowers are family farmers who work hard every day to produce high quality grapes that are the foundation for world class wines.

Craig Nelson, Chair of NBLC and Nelson Family of Companies, said, "SCW farmers are dedicated to sustaining their land for future generations. Like them, NBLC seeks to sustain the North Bay's economic ecosystem for future generations. We are excited to work with a leader like SCW to help this vital part of the North Bay economy thrive."

In January 2014, SCW began the Sonoma County Sustainability Program which helps to preserve agriculture and multi-generational family farms with a goal of becoming the nation's first 100% certified sustainable wine region. SCW takes a triple-bottom line approach to sustainable practices that measure



grape growers' commitment to being socially responsible in their relationships with their employees, neighbors, and community, environmentally conscientious with their farming and winery practices, and economically viable as a business. In January 2016, Governor Jerry Brown recognized the SCW's sustainability commitment and their progress with the awarding of California's highest environmental honor, the Governors Environmental and Economic Leadership Award (GEELA).

SCW made strides last year in its quest to have all local vineyards certified as sustainable by 2019. At the end of 2017, 72 percent of the county's vineyard acreage had been certified as sustainable through an independent audit, up from 60 percent the year before.

More than 85% of Sonoma County's vineyards are family owned and operated and it is estimated that 80% of the county's vineyards are less than 100 acres and 40% are less than 20 acres. There are 495 wineries in the county with 70% of those producing less than 6,000 cases per year.

SCW has moved their offices to Sunnyview Vineyard in Santa Rosa. The new location will allow them to host media, sommelier, marketing and grower education meetings in a vineyard. There are plans to create an onsite Vineyard Adventure walk to aid in educating the public and the media about viticulture practices and sustainability.

Karissa Kruse, president of SCW, said, "SCW looks forward to partnering with NBLC because we share similar goals. We appreciate that NBLC values our industry and will be a good collaborator on - opportunities to support a strong economy, workforce housing, workforce readiness, sustainability and transportation." Kruse will be the member representative. In addition to guiding the implementation of the sustainability program, Kruse spearheaded the relaunch of the Sonoma County Grape Growers Foundation in January 2016 (she is executive director) and the launch of the Sonoma County Center for Ag Sustainability in January 2017.

Kruse's leadership helped the growers, employees and community members during and after the October 2017 wildfires. The California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG) selected Kruse for their 2018 Leader of the Year award, which recognizes an individual whose record of exceptional leadership has benefitted California's wine industry and is an inspiration to others. Kruse has demonstrated an outstanding commitment to issues of significant importance to winegrape growers and has achieved lasting changes to promote and protect the interests of California winegrape growers.

NBLC's Endorsements for November Election



For this midterm election, it is crucially important to voters to show up at the polls. There needs to be a strong voter turnout to send a message that American voters are paying attention, engaged and want their voices heard. NBLC is pleased to announce our endorsements for this November's election:

Candidates:

Santa Rosa City Council – District 2: John Sawyer (Inc.); District 4: Dorothy Beattie; District 6: Tom Schwedhelm (Inc.) – Note that Schwedhelm is running unopposed

Petaluma – Mike Harris for Mayor; Dave King (Inc.) and Michael Regan for City Council

Rohnert Park City Council– Pam Stafford (Inc.); Susan Adams

Santa Rosa Junior College Board: Jeff Kunde

College of Marin Board: Wanden Treanor (Inc.); Diana Conti (Inc.)

Measures:

YES on Measure AA: Transportation Authority of Marin’s (TAM) renewal of existing ½ cent transportation sales tax to fund local transportation improvements and programs for traffic relief

YES on Measure M

YES on Measure N: Santa Rosa Housing Bond

YES on Prop 1: Issues \$4 Billion in bonds for housing programs and veterans’ home loans

YES on Prop 2: Authorizes state to use revenue from Proposition 63 (2004) for \$2 Billion in bonds for homelessness prevention housing

YES on Prop 3: Issues \$8.877 Billion I bonds for water-related infrastructure and environmental projects

YES on Prop 4: Authorizes \$1.5 Billion in bonds for children’s hospitals

NO on Proposition 6: Repeals the 2017 fuel tax and vehicle fee increases (SB 1) to fund road, bridge and highway repairs and requires a public vote on future increases. If passed, it would remove funding for the Marin/Sonoma Narrows, local road improvements and impact safety.

NO on Proposition 10: Repeals the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act and allows local governments to enact rent control. If passed, it would depress future housing construction and worsen the housing crisis. Please remember to vote and encourage everyone you know to register and vote, too!

Tickets for Leaders of the North Bay Awards Luncheon Are Selling Fast!

LEADERS OF THE NORTH BAY AWARDS LUNCHEON



November 2, 2018
11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Embassy Suites Hotel, San Rafael



Keynote Speaker:

Natalie Fox

Winner, NBLC's Youth Power Speech Contest

Natalie Fox thinks every public school should be able to have programs in the arts. A senior at Tamalpais High School, she is interested in the cognitive and emotional health of children. Natalie's solution to helping children in stressful circumstances is to give them access to the arts by teaching them ballet. She teaches ballet at Venetia Valley School to twenty eager 4th and 5th graders. Natalie is changing their lives for the better and is helping build a movement in support of the arts!

\$85 per person or \$680 per Table of 8

Special Thanks to Our Sponsors

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2018 Honorees

United We Stand
Community Building:

**North Bay Fire Relief
Fund Partnership**

Paint the Community Green
Environmental Stewardship:

Dr. Claudia Luke
Sonoma State University

The Light Bulb Went On
Innovative / Entrepreneurial Spirit:

Susan Gilmore
North Bay Children's Center

Empowering the Latino Community
Leadership Within the Latino Community:

**10,000 Degrees
Fellowship Program**

From Red Tape to Red Carpet
Leadership in Government:

**Planning & Economic
Development Department,
City of Santa Rosa**



Register online at:

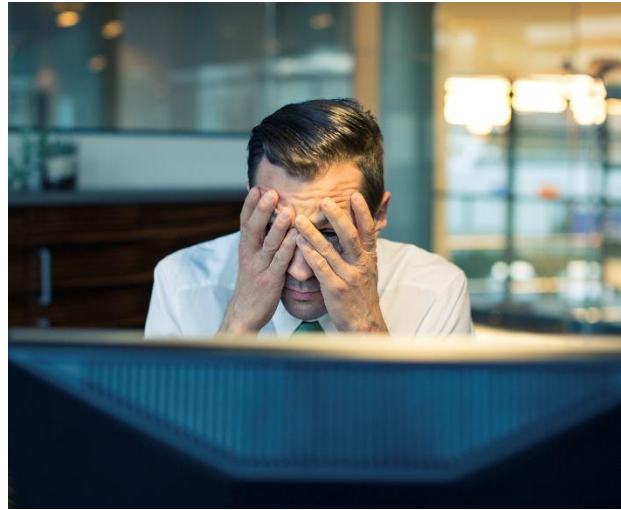
www.northbayleadership.org

Ticket purchase deadline October 26th. Must cancel 72 hours in advance for a refund.

This Article Won't Change Your Mind - The facts on why facts alone can't fight false beliefs

In a fascinating article by Julie Beck, [This Article Won't Change Your Mind - The facts on why facts alone can't fight false beliefs](#) (The Atlantic, Mar 13, 2017, [Link](#)), we learn that, "There are facts, and there are beliefs, and there are things you want so badly to believe that they become as facts to you."

Beck writes, "A man with a conviction is a hard man to change," Festinger, Henry Riecken, and Stanley Schacter wrote in [When Prophecy Fails](#), their 1957 book. "Tell him you disagree and he turns away. Show him facts or figures and he questions your sources. Appeal to logic and he fails to see your point ... Suppose that he is presented with evidence, unequivocal and undeniable evidence, that his belief is wrong: what will happen? The individual will frequently emerge, not only unshaken, but even more convinced of the truth of his beliefs than ever before."



Understanding cognitive dissonance is important in discussing our post-truth world. Beck says, "This doubling down in the face of conflicting evidence is a way of reducing the discomfort of dissonance and is part of a set of behaviors known in the psychology literature as "motivated reasoning." Motivated reasoning is how people convince themselves or remain convinced of what they want to believe—they seek out agreeable information and learn it more easily; and they avoid, ignore, devalue, forget, or argue against information that contradicts their beliefs."

What information people allow to breach their belief systems matters. Beck says, "In a 1967 study, researchers had undergrads listen to some pre-recorded speeches, with a catch—the speeches were pretty staticky. But, the participants could press a button that reduced the static for a few seconds if they wanted to get a clearer listen. Sometimes the speeches were about smoking—either linking it to cancer or disputing that link—and sometimes it was a speech attacking Christianity. Students who smoked were very eager to tune in to the speech that suggested cigarettes might not cause cancer, whereas nonsmokers were more likely to slam on the button for the antismoking speech. Similarly, the more-frequent churchgoers were happy to let the anti-Christian speech dissolve into static while the less religious would give the button a few presses."

Beck says, "People see evidence that disagrees with them as weaker, because ultimately, they're asking themselves fundamentally different questions when evaluating that evidence, depending on whether they want to believe what it suggests or not, according to psychologist Tom Gilovich. "For desired conclusions," he writes, "it is as if we ask ourselves 'Can I believe this?', but for unpalatable conclusions we ask, 'Must I believe this?'" People come to some information seeking permission to believe, and to other information looking for escape routes."

According to the author, Lee McIntyre takes a similarly moralistic tone in his 2015 book [Respecting Truth: Willful Ignorance in the Internet Age](#): "The real enemy of truth is not ignorance, doubt, or even disbelief," he writes. "It is false knowledge."

Beck warns, “Still, all manner of falsehoods—conspiracy theories, hoaxes, propaganda, and plain old mistakes—do pose a threat to truth when they spread like fungus through communities and take root in people’s minds. But the inherent contradiction of false knowledge is that only those on the outside can tell that it’s false. It’s hard for facts to fight it because to the person who holds it, it feels like truth.”

This resistance to truth because it impacts your sense of self and perhaps, more importantly, sense of community, is potent. Becks says, “Though false beliefs are held by individuals, they are in many ways a social phenomenon...because beliefs were tethered to a group they belonged to, a group that was deeply important to their lives and their sense of self.”

In the U.S. today, we see that “one of the groups that people have most intensely hitched their identities to is their political party. Americans are more politically polarized than they’ve been in decades, possibly ever. There isn’t public-opinion data going back to the Federalists and the Democratic Republicans, of course. But political scientists Keith Poole and Howard Rosenthal look at the polarization in Congress. And the most recent data shows that 2015 had the highest rates of polarization since 1879, the earliest year for which there’s data”

And, that polarization has gotten worse. “Partisanship has been revealed as the strongest force in U.S. public life—stronger than any norms, independent of any facts,” Vox’s David Roberts wrote in his extensive breakdown of the factors that influenced the election.

Beck says, “People also learn selectively—they’re better at learning facts that confirm their worldview than facts that challenge it. And media coverage makes that worse. While more news coverage of a topic seems to generally increase people’s knowledge of it, one paper, “Partisan Perceptual Bias and the Information Environment,” showed that when the coverage has implications for a person’s political party, then selective learning kicks into high gear.”

As many have observed, “fact-checking erroneous statements made by politicians or cranks may also be ineffective. Nyhan’s work has shown that correcting people’s misperceptions often doesn’t work, and worse, sometimes it creates a backfire effect, making people endorse their misperceptions even more strongly.”

The Google era has opened new ways for people to either have false beliefs reinforced or spread erroneous information. Beck says, “And because humans didn’t evolve to operate in such a large sea of people and information, Boyer says people can be fooled into thinking some ideas are more widespread than they really are.”

Not surprisingly, in the United States, people are less generally trusting of each other than they used to be. “Since 1972, the General Social Survey has asked respondents: “Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?” As of 2014, the most recent data, the number of people saying most others can be trusted was at a historic low.”

Beck says, “On the other hand, there’s “particularized trust”—specifically, the trust you have for people in your groups. “Particularized trust destroys generalized trust,” Manjoo wrote in his book. “The more that people trust those who are like themselves—the more they trust people in their own town, say—the more they distrust strangers.”

Beck makes a key point when she says that sometimes when we argue about the facts, we're not arguing about the facts at all. "These are more often disputes over values, Kahan says, about what kind of society people want and which group or politician aligns with that. "Even if a fact is corrected, why is that going to make a difference?" he asks. "That's not why they were supporting the person in the first place."

So if you are trying to win someone over to your point of view with facts, remember this, "Much of how people view the world has nothing to do with facts. That doesn't mean truth is doomed, or even that people can't change their minds. But what all this does seem to suggest is that, no matter how strong the evidence is, there's little chance of it changing someone's mind if they really don't want to believe what it says. They have to change their own mind."

Members in the News

Congratulations to Our Members on the North Bay Business Journal's 2018 Best Places to Work List

North Bay Business Journal offered employers a chance to have their employees rate them, and this year 100 enterprises made the cut for the annual Best Places to Work awards.

Redwood Credit Union Named Best Financial Institution

Redwood Credit Union (RCU) has received the Sonoma Valley People's Choice Award for Best Financial Institution.

Sonoma State University ranked No. 19 among top public colleges in the West

Sonoma State University ranked No. 19 on U.S. News and World Report's list of top public schools in the West.

Sonoma State University Survey Shows Majority of Locals Have Positive Perceptions of Wine Industry

Residents of the North Bay's five wine-producing counties hold mostly positive views of how wine businesses are impacting their quality of life, according to the findings of a new study by Sonoma State University researchers.

Kaiser Permanente Finalizes Agreement to Enable Carbon Neutrality in 2020

Kaiser Permanente, the nation's largest nonprofit integrated health care system, has finalized an agreement for a major renewable energy purchase that will enable it to achieve its goal of being carbon neutral in 2020.

Dominican University of California Ranked as One of the Top Regional Universities in the West

Dominican was ranked 25th out of 127 regional universities in the west in the 2019 edition of the guidebook. This is a five point increase from last year.

Redwood Credit Union Recognized for Outstanding Performance in Investment Services

Six wealth management advisors at Redwood Credit Union (RCU) received Pacesetter awards, and RCU's investment marketing efforts were also recognized at the CUSO Financial Services (CFS) "Fulfilling the Vision" 2018 Annual Conference, recently held in San Diego, California.

SolarCraft Completes Solar Power System at New Life Christian Center

Novato and Sonoma based SolarCraft, a leading North Bay solar installer for over 35 years, recently completed the installation of a 111 kW DC solar system at New Life Christian Center in Novato, CA.

The Buck Institute for Research on Aging Sites AGEs as Drivers of Age-Related Disease

An inevitable by-product of metabolism, advanced glycation end products (AGEs) are toxic molecules formed when proteins, DNA and fats become bound after exposure to sugar.

Canine Companions for Independence Names Paige Mazzoni New CEO

Canine Companions for Independence, a Santa Rosa-based nonprofit that matches people with disabilities with trained assistance dogs, named Paige Mazzoni its new CEO.

Midstate Construction Complete Walnut Place

Midstate Construction Corporation recently completed rehabilitation of Walnut Place (West Marin Senior Housing), a senior residential community in Pt. Reyes, CA for owner EAH Housing, a nonprofit affordable housing development and management organization.

Keysight Technologies Certified by Great Place to Work

Keysight Technologies, Inc. (NYSE: KEYS), a leading technology company that helps enterprises, service providers, and governments accelerate innovation to connect and secure the world, announced the company is now certified as a great workplace by the independent analysts at Great Place to Work®. Keysight earned this credential based on extensive ratings provided by its employees in anonymous surveys completed in June.

Read more online at www.northbayleadership.org/news



Who We Are

Over twenty five years ago, business leaders founded the North Bay Leadership Council on a simple premise: We can accomplish more by working together. Today, the Council includes 54 leading employers in the North Bay. Our members represent a wide variety of businesses, non-profits and educational institutions, with a workforce in excess of 25,000. As business and civic leaders, our goal is to promote sound public policy, innovation and sustainability to make our region a better place to live and work. For more information: Call

707.283.0028 / E-mail info@northbayleadership.org
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