

JEANNE BROWN AND THE STORY OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

I joined the League in 2003 and became a board member in June of 2006 once I retired from teaching high school math and science. My first position was as administrator. At that time we had a part-time employee and an office to oversee. In October of 2006 I was hired as the San Diego Organizer for California Common Cause.

By 2008 I took on the position of LWVSD Program Chair which at that time included what is today Events and Program. I combined the two "jobs" by planning events with my League committee but inviting Common Cause members as well. I was also on the Speakers' Bureau, so I often spoke for one organization or the other.. There were no conflicts between the two organizations until 2011 when I became president of the LWVSD and could no longer wear both hats so I had to resign from Common Cause.

After 2011, I was either a co-president or president while still being chair of the Program Committee. In 2016 I became a member of the LWV of California Board and so then stepped down as LWVSD president in 2017. I was on the LWVC Board for 4 years as Membership Director.

After having planned a number of events having to do with the legal system and joining the virtual meetings of the Criminal Justice Committee for LWVC, I reached out to the LWVSD membership to see if there was interest in having a Criminal Justice Committee in San Diego as there was in the Los Angeles, San Francisco and Sacramento Leagues. Around 20 people showed up and in the fall of 2018 the Criminal Justice Committee began.

We were slightly unfocused to start with. Some wanted to work on prisons, some the death penalty, some recidivism, some sentencing, etc. So many issues. It took us a while to start focusing on local police and sheriff's departments rather than issues that were state or federal topics. We've learned a lot over the years.

Last year one of our members said that we have learned so much about the jails that we should share this information with the public because educating the public is one of the key goals of the League. We decided to make that this year's focus. We have written a report and will present our findings at the luncheon this month (October 22nd) at Elijah's is the culmination of that project. We hope you will attend and learn about our concern over the jail system of San Diego County.