



The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

January/February 2010

Jane Person, President

Charlene McAllister, Editor

LEAGUE COMMITTEE PICKS CENSUS FOR ACTION

By Barbara Matheson

The U.S. Census is so important to good governance that the League of Women Voters has made it a top national, state and local priority in 2010.

The league will actively urge all U.S. residents to return census forms which will be mailed out to all households in March. It will be due back April 1, 2010.

The form asks 10 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete.

Questions include name, sex, age, date of birth, race, ethnicity, relationship and housing tenure.

Census data is important because it impacts more than \$300 billion a year in federal and state funding allocated to communities for neighborhood improvements, public health, education and transportation.

Census data also determines apportionments of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and impacts redistricting of

state legislatures. Data also is used to define legislative, school and other governmental districts.

The LWV of Mendocino County will encourage prompt return of forms by contacting churches, schools, community groups and the media. The census committee will start work in early January. If you are interested in helping on this project, please contact Barbara Matheson—email ken@mcn.org or 937-5164.

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JANUARY 12 MEETING TO LOOK AT LWV POLICY, NATIONAL PLAN

January's LWV general meeting is, in part, an introduction to the way the League works. We are a three tier organization but we speak with one voice, and this meeting will show members how we got that way and why.

Lynda Hungerford, our Management Training Advisor, joins the local board to present League history, structure, lobbying for issues, voter services, and action, and lots

more. How do the three League levels relate to each other? How does the League decide what topics to study? How does it spend our dues? What is a vertical" position? This is an important meeting

for new members and for others who are just not sure how the League op-



Lynda Hungerford

erates.

The second half of the program will be devoted to National Program Planning and Review. It is the grass roots who decide what State and National League's programs will be, so January's meeting will be important

for those who want a say in these programs. Come

and help decide what current positions should be retained, what new issues should be studied in the next two years, and what issues should be the League's advocacy priorities for the coming year.

The meeting is 10 a.m.—noon, St. Michael's Church, Fort Bragg. Come for coffee at 9:30 a.m.

Submitted by Barbara Matheson

2009-2010

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VOTER Staff-- Barbara Auerbach,
Becky Bowen, Susan Eveleth, Louis Hough,
Susan Mitchell, Jane Person

President's Message—When I taught English to a group of lightly motivated high school seniors, I asked them, as their first writing assignment in January, to write a Janus essay. This essay, named for the Roman god Janus who looked backward to the old year and forward to the new one, was designed to help them focus on their academic efforts (mostly the lack thereof) during the first semester and their plans to redouble those efforts so as to get out of my English class in May and into a graduation gown.



The idea of looking backward and forward is relevant to us in League as well. Looking back, on a national scale, the League worked hard to help bring about some sort of health care reform, and while it lacks the single payer component, the reality is that passage of a single payer plan was just not possible given this political climate. Looking forward, Congress, now having passed a package of reforms, is tasked with figuring out just what all this means to most of us.

On the local level, we can look back to a series of successful Candidates Forums and forward to several more this spring, including the race for County Board of Supervisors. The Board also plans to increase awareness of Smart Voter among County voters via an article to the local papers and radio coverage.

Our most important task this spring is educating the public regarding return of census forms. You may have seen a recent article in the *Press Democrat* hypothesizing which states might gain representatives in Congress and which might lose some based on population migration. All bets are off if census materials aren't returned. It's imperative that we all return these counts or answer the questions if the census worker comes to our door; otherwise we may lose some representation in Congress. Our February meeting is partially devoted to this topic. Plus, we celebrate our 90th birthday then, complete with cake, skits and fun!

As a League member you may get questions asking why the League doesn't get involved in such-and-such a project. For example, some people were angry that the League had no position on freezing salaries for the Legislature if a budget could not be agreed upon. At our January meeting part of the time will be devoted to explaining just how the Leagues (national, state, and local) work together, how positions are agreed upon, changed, or thrown out. Then we will participate in the national planning process at our grass roots level.

It's an election year and the Mendocino County League of Women Voters needs your participation to keep our programs going. Please come to the general meetings and see how you can become part of this exciting process! *Jane Person*

THE UNITED STATES CENSUS—AN HISTORICAL SIDEBAR

By Louis Hough

Our founding fathers wisely decreed that a census be taken every ten years. A matter important enough that they put it near the top of the U.S. Constitution: Article 1. Section 2. A major reason for counting every American was to apportion the number of members of the House of Representatives to reflect the number of constituents (all persons, not just voters) living in the representative's district.

Congress, in 1790, authorized legislation that sent census-takers, called "enumerators," out knocking on doors to take a head count. In the nineteenth century the task was undertaken by U.S. marshals. Imagine a gentleman with a silver star glistening on his chest—think of Gary Cooper or Tommy Lee Jones—smiling through the screen door with a sheaf of documents that he had drawn up himself. "Mornin. May I ask a question or two." Though Gary and Tommy had been given very detailed instructions on what to find out, their home-made reports proved to be a haphazard mass of data difficult to sum up accurately. So Con-

gress authorized the printing of uniform questionnaires in 1830.

In 1902, the Census Office became a permanent U.S. agency, and fifty years later its activities were codified in Title 13. By 1960, a great many questionnaires were being mailed: to count the number of people living at a domicile, and to ask questions about the people living in the household (such as age, education, race) and housing characteristics (how many toilets, bath tubs, TVs). The Census Bureau (its current name) recognizes how life-styles today are different from before; how things have changed from one generation to another—have changed from just ten years ago. Still a large number of questionnaires are completed when a census-taker visits the home.

Like the "enumerators" of old, women and men will be canvassing American neighborhoods on foot. Absent, of course, are the silver stars and Stetsons®, but each interview starts as always, "Good morning. May I ask you a few questions?"



"About time to measure yourself again?"

Editorial cartoon by Clifford K. Berryman. Photo courtesy of the National Archives.

Editor's Note: More information is available at www.census.gov/aboutus/

Board Highlights:

The Board received a letter from Janis Hirohama, LWVC president, thanking the Board for contributing \$300 to support Smart Voter.

College of the Redwoods President Jeff Marsee responded to a LWVM letter indicating concern for student safety in the Fort Bragg campus science labs that have not been repaired since passage of Measure Q by voters in 2004. Marsee wrote that \$10.5 million has been allocated for projects that would be prioritized by the district facilities committee. The board agreed that Jane Person should seek more information about who sits on this committee and how the local CR lab project can be given high priority.

The Board is interested in suggesting a CR course in helping officials of Special Districts conduct effective meetings and meet the requirements of the Brown Act. Jane volunteered to speak with Geisce Ly regarding the possibility.

SUSTAINABILITY 101: WHERE DO WE GO WITH TRANSPORTATION?

By Barbara Auerbach



Recently, speakers at our League meetings, and contributors to the VOTER have attempted to instill the benefits of sustainability into our psyche. For the most part, I think many of us did heed some of the suggestions.

We began to buy more locally, eat organically grown meals, turn off lights when not in use, and some of us went as far as to hang out wash on the a line to dry. But there still remains the question of sustainability for transportation. What does it mean, and how does it fit in to our lives?

We live in a rural area. This means if you don't live in town then it's a long walk to anywhere, especially the store. Walking is healthy. It cuts down on carbon emissions, offers socialization with other walkers, and it is economical. But walking with heavy bundles of groceries or items from the hardware store could cause faulty knees, bad backs, and sore shoulder muscles.

In years past rural folk did have a means of transportation. They hitched a ride on their neighbor's truck. They rode into town with their horse and buggy, or they saddled up their horse and off they went to town.

I thought about this one morning as I walked with my two dogs to get our daily paper. I live about a third of a mile up the hill from Highway 1. Most days I walk to get our paper which is delivered to our mailbox off the highway. The walk down to the mailbox is a naturalist's delight. There are mushrooms or wild orchids to seek out, there are song birds to hear, or my favorite sight, the wild turkeys crashing through the trees like 747s.

The walk back up the hill is challenging. There is a steep incline that literally takes one's breath away. It's a struggle with only the newspaper. I shutter to think of what it would be like to lug two bags of groceries up the hill.

Nevertheless, it is only a round trip of 2/3 of a mile. In my more active years, I used to run 10k's, swim a mile, bike forever, play tennis for hours, ski all day etc, etc. People I know ran in marathons, swam, rode a bike, ran in triathlons, and hiked for days at a time with heavy packs on their backs. Let's keep in mind that a 10k race

is the equivalent of running 6 miles and 376 yards. A 5k race is the equivalent of running 3 miles and 188 yards. A marathon race means that you walked or ran 26 miles and 385 yards. In a triathlon you swim 2.4 miles, run 26 miles, and bike 112 miles. However, when I or the marathoners, who I know, went to the store two miles away, we all jumped into our cars and off we went. Never once did we consider using another mode of transportation. I could walk to the town of Mendocino which is only 1.5 miles from my home. This would be an easy walk for me with a backpack full of groceries.

However, I would have to walk or bike-ride over two small bridges that offer no leeway for pedestrians or bike riders. There are no flashing lights suggesting right of way for four-legged or two-legged moving objects. Bicyclists without iridescent vests, high rise flags and lights, proceed at their own risk.

Is there a mode of transportation that we can use that is energy efficient, economical, safe and realistic in terms of moving goods from one place to another? Yes! We can ride forever on the MTA but our fate may be unknown. The Mendocino Transit Authority does offer an alternative. There is a posted schedule that is available on line or by telephone, as well as flyers posted in some public buildings. The rate for local rides is \$1.00, and a ride from the coast to Ukiah will cost \$4.75 each way. PLEASE HAVE EXACT CHANGE!

The schedule for the local MTA bus known as the #60 Coaster, which travels North and South from Narvarro River, to Fort Bragg, is reasonably paced for a shopping trip. For example, if you lived in Caspar and wanted to shop in Fort Bragg you could catch the Coaster at the Caspar Gallery at 7:20 a.m., 9:38 a.m., 12:50 p.m., 1:02 p.m., 4:02 p.m., and 5:30 p.m.

The #5 local bus will circle around Fort Bragg and stop at the #60 (Coaster) pick up and delivery points. The return trip south will deliver you to Caspar Gallery at: 7:45a.m., 12:00p.m., 3:00p.m., 4:00p.m. and 4:55p.m. The time may vary slightly depending upon the pick up location in Fort Bragg.

Someone living on Gurley and Little Lake Road could hail the bus on that corner at 8:00 a.m. or 3:27p.m. without having to go all the way down to the highway or into the town of Mendocino to catch the bus. Just

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Transportation continued from Page 4

keep in mind that your return trip for the 3:27p.m. ride would be arriving at 8:a.m. the following morning. This is however, an excellent opportunity for students and teachers coming from Fort Bragg to attend the Middle School on Little Lake Road. On the other hand, if you are depending on the MTA #65 CC Rider for your transportation for jury duty in Ukiah, you'd best have a very understanding judge. The CC Rider, which hooks up with the Coaster in Fort Bragg, will get you to Ukiah at 9:00a.m. It leaves Ukiah for the coast at 4:33 p.m. Make sure that you have enough time to hike to and from the bus stop to the courthouse. It should be noted that the MTA buses are equipped to allow access for wheelchairs as well as bicycles. Additionally, there is a senior citizen bus that transports to

and from the Senior Center in Fort Bragg. There is also a dial-a-ride bus that operates in limited areas.

Whatever your mode of transportation make sure it's safe. There is a wonderful piece by Michael Gartner, editor of newspapers large and small and president of NBC News. Mr. Gartner relayed the following conversation that he had with his father concerning road safety, and the secret of a long life. His father gave up driving at the age of 25 after hitting an animal on the road. This forced his mother to drive, but his father would always go along for the ride.

... "If she were going to the grocery store, he would go along to carry the bags out—and to make sure she loaded up on ice cream. As I said, [Dad] was always the navigator, and once, when he was 95 and

[Mom] was 88 and still driving, he said to me, "Do you want to know the secret of a long life?"

"I guess so," I said, knowing it probably would be something bizarre. "No left turns," he said.

"What?" I asked. "No left turns," he repeated.

"Several years ago, your mother and I read an article that said most accidents...old people are in happen when they turn left in front of oncoming traffic. As you get older, your eyesight worsens, and you can lose your depth perception, it said. So your mother and I decided never again to make a left turn." "What?" I said again. "No left turns," he said. "Think about it.

Three rights are the same as a left, and that's a lot safer. So we always make three rights." "You're kidding!" I said, and I turned to my mother for support.

"No," she said, "your father is right. We make three rights. It works." But then she added: "Except when your father loses count." I was driving at the time, and I almost drove off the road as I started laughing. "Loses count?" I asked. "Yes," my father admitted, "that sometimes happens. But it's not a problem. You just make seven rights, and you're okay again." I couldn't resist. "Do you ever go for 11?" I asked. "No," he said "If we miss it at seven, we just come home and call it a bad day. Besides, nothing in life is so important it can't be put off another day or another week."

This article will continue in the next issue after we take a ride on the MTA. Please join us if you like. A survey on your thoughts will be forthcoming.

Editor's Note: The LWVMC adopted a position on transportation in 1991 supporting a public transportation system that continues to be subsidized and utilizes publicity and convenience to encourage ridership. And League members made public transportation a priority in the sustainability "contract" signed in January, 2009 with Fort Bragg planner Virginia O'Roarke. This is a first in a series of stories that examines public transportation in Mendocino County. To contribute thoughts, suggestions, ideas or stories, please contact VOTER Editor Charlene McAllister.

SPOTLIGHT ON LEAGUE MEMBERS IN OUR COASTAL COMMUNITY



From left: Little River Inn's Cynthia Knox, Author Liz Irwin and League Board Member Susan Eveleth at the 24th DoGood Lunch. **Hilarie Coate photo**

DOGOODERS DO WELL AT DEC. 8 EVENT

League members Susan Eveleth, Pat Dunbar and Friend-of-the-League Mary Willoughby helped organize the 24th annual DoGooders Luncheon at the Little River Inn Dec. 8, 2009. Local author Liz Irwin, charter DoGood member, emceed the event which raised more than \$3,800 for the Fort Bragg Food Bank. Some 80 people attended.

The Little River Inn donated the facility, servers and decorations for the event and lunch was prepared by Chef Peg Davis.

Calendar of Events

2010

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Tuesday, January 12, 2010: General Meeting: 9:30 a.m. – noon

Location: St. Michael's Church, Fort Bragg

Topic: League Orientation and National Program Planning

Presentation by League panel and our Management Training Advisor Lynda Hungerford, Sonoma County League.

Board of Directors Meeting, 12:30 – 3 p.m. (board members bring sack lunch)

Tuesday, February 9, 2010: General Meeting: 9:30 a.m. – noon

Location: St. Michael's Church, Fort Bragg

Topic: League's 90th Birthday Celebration plus Forum on 2010 U.S. Census

Special guests: Former Presidents of the League of Women Voters of Mendocino County

Board of Directors Meeting, 12:30 – 3 p.m. (board members bring sack lunch)

Friday, March 12: Fifth Annual Meet and Greet Your Elected Officials Event: 5 – 7 p.m.

Location: St. Michael's Church, Fort Bragg

Special guests: All local elected officials

Tuesday, April 13, 2010: General Meeting: 9:30 a.m. - noon

Location: St. Michael's Church, Fort Bragg

Topic: Discussion of State Ballot Measures Presentation by Voter Service Committee

Board of Directors Meeting, 12:30 - 3 p.m. (board members bring sack lunch)

Tuesday, May 11, 2010: ANNUAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON

(Date, time, and location to be announced)

An Opportunity to Serve on our League Board of Directors

Our nominating committee will begin to contact members in January to ask about serving on our board of directors. This is a good way to learn about our League and meet all our members. We look forward to talking with you and hope that you can drop by during our regular board meetings held immediately after the general meetings January 12, February 9 and April 13 (bring a sack lunch). All League board meetings are open to our members. Board members serve for one year. For more information, contact nominating committee chair Becky Bowen (casparbeck@comcast.net or 962-1602) or any member of the nominating committee (Charlene McAllister, Betty Barber, and Jean Morley)

FEBRUARY MEETING OBSERVES LEAGUE'S 90TH BIRTHDAY, HONORS PRESIDENTS OF THE LWV OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

By Barbara Matheson

From the spirit of the suffrage movement and the shock of the First World War came a great idea – a nonpartisan civic organization that could provide education and experience the public needed to assure the success of democracy. On February 14, 1920, six months before the 19th amendment to the Constitution was ratified, the League was formally organized in Chicago as the National League of Women Voters.

ers.

At our February 9, 2010 meeting we will celebrate League's 90 years. League members will present "The League of Women Voters Through the Decades!" with great fanfare and many surprises. We will be inviting and honoring all the former presidents of our League. Several, who have moved out of town, have already indicated that they will be attending. This will be a very festive occasion with a chance for old friends to meet again. Please mark

your calendar and plan to join the fun.

The meeting will be held at St. Michael's Church on the corner of Franklin and Fir streets in Fort Bragg starting at 9:30 a.m.

At this time, the League of Women Voters of Mendocino County will be joining the National League and Leagues all around the county to kick off the campaign to insure that everyone returns their 2010 Census form (see story on Page 1 of this VOTER).



Do you remember these former presidents of the LWV of Mendocino County? Charlene McAllister, Priscilla Comen, Mildred Benioff, Lynn Wellner, Judy Brooks, Susan Eveleth, Helen Herbert, Barbara Matheson, Becky Bowen, Carol Ann Falk. Do you have a story to share about any of these leaders? Is this complete? Let us know. Contact Jane Person, our current president at janeperson@hotmail.com

JUST IN TIME FOR THE LEAGUE'S 90TH BIRTHDAY, A HISTORY PROFESSOR PRESENTS A SLATE OF FIVE CLASSIC BOOKS ABOUT THE U.S. WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

Sally McMillen, a history professor at North Carolina's Davidson College, recommended the following books about women's suffrage in the weekend edition of the *Wall Street Journal* October 31, 2009.

McMillen is the author of "Seneca Falls and the

Origin of the Women's Rights Movement" (Oxford, 2008).

"In Her Own Right," by Elisabeth Griffith (Oxford, 1984)—an autobiography of Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

"Century of Struggle," by Eleanor Flexner (Harvard, 1959)—study

of U.S. women's suffrage movement.

"New Women of the New South," (Oxford, 1993) by Marjorie Spruill Wheeler—the impact of southern suffrage on the national movement.

"Winning the Vote," by Robert P.J. Cooney Jr.

(American Graphic, 2005)—photographic history.

"Harriot Stanton Blatch and the Winning of Woman Suffrage," by Ellen Carol DuBois (Yale, 1997)—a biography of Elizabeth Cady Stanton's daughter.

Submitted by VOTER staff



Linda Wilson and David Gross accepted League recognition for good governance awarded to the Mendocino Fire District.



Board Members Dorine Real and Lee Tepper



Charlene McAllister chaired Special Districts study, Brown Act Training in April, 2009



Voter Service Chair JoAn Blackstone organized LWV Candidates Forums



Members Andarin Arvola and Louis Hough



Fort Bragg City Councilman Jere Melo and Vice Mayor Dave Turner at Meet & Greet in March, 2009.



Doris Hammer with Fort Bragg Planner Virginia O'Roarke



League Members raised vegetables and baked bread to practice sustainability and feed members at May meeting. Barbara Auerbach (left) and Susan Mitchell.



Barbara Matheson (center) leads programs in 2008, 2009 and 2010

GET READY, GET SET FOR 2010 ELECTIONS

Tuesday, June 8, 2010, is Election Day and the following Mendocino County offices are up for election:

Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder, Auditor-Controller, District Attorney, Sheriff-Coroner, County Superintendent of Schools, Treasurer-Tax Collector, Third and Fifth District County Supervisor, Judge of Superior Courts 1, 5, 8.

If you are a league member, please consider helping with LWV candidate forums led by Voter Service Chair JoAn Blackstone at joanblackstone@comcast.net

If you are a candidate, please consider participating in **Smart Voter**, a nonpartisan voting and election infor-

mation service produced by the state League of Women Voters and funded by the League's non-profit 501(c)(3) Education Fund. Go to www.smartvoter.org and click on "for candidates" on the left side of the home page to receive information about free webspace to help inform voters about your candidacy.

The June 8 election is a California Primary and in November, county residents also will vote for the following officials: U.S. Senator, Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, Attorney General, Insurance Commissioner, Representative of U.S. Congress, State Senator and member of the State Assembly. Californians also will elect four members of the State Board of Equalization.

Election Dates and Deadlines:*

Measures must qualify for Ballot	Jan. 28
Overseas Voter Registration	Apr. 9-May 24
**Write-in Declaration of Candidacy (Mendocino County)	Apr. 12-May 25
Sample Ballots Mailed Out	Apr. 29
Counties begin mailing vote-by-mail ballots	May 10
Special new citizen voter registration period	May 25—June 1
Last day to register	May 24
Last Day to request a vote-by-mail ballot by mail	June 1
Last day to request a vote-by-mail ballot in person	June 8
Election Day 7 a.m. –8 p.m.	June 8

*Source: California State Secretary of State www.sos.ca.gov/elections/2010

**Source for Mendocino County write-in declaration of candidacy: www.co.mendocino.ca.us/acr/pdf/Election_Due_Dates_June_8_2010.pdf

MISSION STATEMENT

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, A NON-PARTISAN 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.

Membership in The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County is a bargain and a statement. You will be saying that you are committed to the ballot as a means for change and to providing non-biased information to voters. The issues your League follows are those that affect every resident's family and community. Get involved in the League of Women Voters.

Please consider joining at one of these levels:

Susan B. Anthony Individual Membership \$55 ____

Amelia Bloomer Two-member Household Membership \$80 ____

Elizabeth Cady Stanton Membership \$100 ____

Carrie Chapman Catt Membership \$250 or more ____

Donation _____

Please send me more information:

Name/

Names: _____ Address _____

City: _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ E-mail: _____

Please make checks payable to: League of Women Voters of Mendocino County

And mail to: Carol Ann Falk

45575 South Caspar Drive

Mendocino, CA 95460

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www.mendo.ca.lwvnet.org

www.smartvoter.org

www.ca.lwv.org

www.lwv.org

**County Clerk-Recorder
Election Information
www.co.mendocino.ca.us/acr
707 463-4371**

**Library of Congress—Legislation Status
www.thomas.loc.gov**

**Mendocino County Public Television Meeting/Performance Coverage
www.mendocoasttv.org/CityMeetingsumbnails.html**