



# The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

March 2015

Carol Czadek, President

Charlene McAllister, Editor



Then candidate and now Assembly Member Jim Wood (left),  
League members Rachel Binah and Winston Bowen, 2014

**You are Cordially Invited  
To Meet and Greet  
Our Elected Officials  
Friday, March 20, 2015  
5-7 p.m.  
Caspar Community Center**

*By Barbara Matheson*

Mendocino County 4th District Supervisor Dan Gjerde was the first elected official to RSVP to the League's 10th annual Meet and Greet Your Elected Officials reception set for Friday, March 20, from 5-7 p.m. at the Caspar Community Center.

More than 60 local, city and county elected officials have received an invitation to meet voters in an informal, casual setting with no agenda, no speeches and no formal program.

Officials invited represent the Fort Bragg City Council, Mendocino Coast Healthcare District, school, water and fire districts, and others. State officials also have been invited.

Wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served. If you are able to help with food (no sweets please), please deliver them by 4:45 p.m.

Meet and Greet Your Elected Officials is free and open to the public. Hope to see you there, and please bring a friend.

## *Staff Photos*

### *From Past Meet & Greet*

#### *LWV Events*



*Candidate and now Superior Court Judge Ann Moorman (middle), 2010.  
Fifth District County Supervisor Dan Hamburg and Caspar resident  
Lorraine Duff at the 2013 LWV Meet and Greet (bottom photo). Staff photos*

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Please visit us on our new facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/LWVMendo1>

### **President's Message**—Excerpted from a January 21, 2015, article by Jessica Jones, Grassroots Lobbyist for the LWVUS



Spending levels for the 2014 election are the newest evidence of lasting effects of the *Citizens United* Supreme Court decision. An estimated \$4 billion was spent on the 2014 election, the most expensive midterm election in U.S. history. Money poured in to Super PACs and other outside groups, and was also funneled to secret dark money organizations. More than \$600 million dollars was raised and spent by Super PACs. These “independent” groups could raise and spend unlimited amounts because of weak Federal Election Commission regulations. Too often, elections are about electing officials who will do the bidding of big-money and secret donors rather than address interests of the people they represent. The League is observing the 5th anniversary of *Citizens United* with a renewed resolve to limit influence of money in politics.

Here are four things on the LWV agenda:

**Improve Disclosure:** Citizens have a right to know who is trying to influence their vote and disclosure of donations and spending is necessary to shine a light on secret money. The League is a longtime supporter of the Disclose Act. We will continue to urge passage of this important piece of legislation

**Establish a Public Financing System:** The League believes public financing is the best long term solution that gets big money out of politics. We continue to seek ways to limit the size and type of contributions from all sources as a means of combating undue influence in the election process.

**Strengthen Regulations on Coordination:** The Federal Election Commission (FEC) is the federal agency that regulates federal campaign finance laws. So far, the commission has done practically nothing to address the Supreme Court's disappointing decision in *Citizens United*. Under existing law, the FEC can work to define “coordination” as a way of cutting back on the “independent” expenditures that really are coordinated with candidate campaigns, but thus far, the commission has refused to do so.

**Vote:** If Americans want to get money out of politics, it's time to take our elections back. Voting is the most powerful form of expression a single citizen has. When citizens vote, politicians have to listen. We must improve voter turnout and work within our communities to combat undue influence of money in our political system.

I would like to add that it is time to write your representatives, sign petitions, and take to the streets! *Carol Czadek*

## **BERKELEY-ALBANY-EMERYVILLE LEADERSHIP OPENS DOOR FOR LOCAL LEAGUE ADVOCACY TO SUPPORT LIVING WAGE**

***Editor's Note—Meeting Basic Human Needs Position of the LWVUS is described on page 74 of the Impact on Issues, 2012-2014 publication: The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that one of the goals of social policy in the United States should be to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families and that the most effective social programs are those designed to prevent or reduce poverty.***

A small committee led by Pat Kuhi, chair of the Berkeley Albany Emeryville League's Economic Inequality Team, contacted other California Leagues last winter requesting support at the upcoming state convention to establish a study on living wage or minimum wage. Pat originally introduced the proposal to the national League convention in 2014, based on the Basic Human Needs Position (stated above). The proposed study got 50 per cent of delegate votes, but failed to receive the required 2/3 vote.

Pat and her team didn't give up. They planned to seek support to establish a state study at the upcoming California League convention in San Diego in May.

Now no study is necessary. The Board of Directors of the National League recently reversed its opinion about this issue and announced the national Basic Human Needs Position permits state and local Leagues to advocate and lobby in support of raising state or local minimum wages or adopting living wage provisions, according to an announcement posted February 2, 2015, on the BAELWV website.

The caveat: to advocate for living wage reform, state and local Leagues will be required to do research necessary to determine what is an appropriate wage for their own communities. The appropriate wage depends on specific community situations and Leagues will be required to research economic situations, including such things as the presence or absence of adequate mass transit or health insurance availability. This research would include consultation with all stakeholders including small business, labor, neighboring jurisdictions, etc. Public forums and small group discussions are encouraged. Then, if the League decides to act, advocacy for a wage that fits the community needs has a good chance of getting passed. Living wage is defined as the minimum income necessary for a worker to meet needs considered to be basic.

### **LOCAL LEAGUE RECOMMENDS PRISON REFORM, CLIMATE CHANGE, ELECTION SYSTEMS AS AREAS OF STUDY, ACTION FOR CONSIDERATION AT STATE CONVENTION IN SAN DIEGO**

*By Charlene McAllister*

Twenty-two local League members met to review LWVC positions January 13 and as expected, there was agreement that all current positions should be retained. However, concern was expressed about the Education position. Members wondered how it fits with the current Core Curriculum standards. Other comments included the issue of children coming to school hungry. Election systems also elicited comments. Some members wondered if it was time to revisit this position in light of ideas such as all mail-in ballots and changes in the primary system. There was a lengthy discussion about how the state League's hazardous materials position is used to look at "fracking." Requests from other Leagues also were reviewed.

When it came time to make recommendations for the coming two years, the majority felt there needs to be a study on the prison reform. LWVMC members also would like to see the state League focus on issues of climate change and an update to the election systems. Reports from all Leagues in the state will be tallied and recommendations brought to the state convention in San Diego in May for delegates to vote upon. Our three delegates will go "informed but not instructed" to vote for our choices should they be on the ballot. Our delegates are Jane Person, Roberta Brockschmidt and Sharon Gilligan.

## League of Women Voters of Mendocino County 2015 Meeting Calendar

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Tuesday, March 3, 2015         | Board of Directors Meeting<br>9:30 a.m.<br>Fort Bragg Library Community Meeting Room  |
| <b>Friday, March 20, 2015</b>  | <b>Meet &amp; Greet Your Elected Officials Event<br/>5-7 p.m.<br/>Caspar Community Center</b>   |
| Tuesday, April 7, 2015         | Board of Directors Meeting<br>9:30 a.m.<br>Fort Bragg Library Community Meeting Room  |
| <b>Tuesday, April 14, 2015</b> | <b>Mendocino Community College<br/>Barbara Rice, Trustee,<br/>Redwoods Community College District<br/>10 a.m.<br/>Caspar Community Center</b> |
| <b>Tuesday, May 12, 2015</b>   | <b>Annual Business Meeting/Potluck Luncheon<br/>Time TBA</b>  |
| Tuesday, June 9, 2015          | Board of Directors Meeting<br>Time and Place TBA  |

*All general membership meetings are open to the public at no charge. All board of directors meetings are open to League members.*

### SAN DIEGO LWV TO PROPOSE DEATH WITH DIGNITY STUDY AT MAY CONVENTION

*By Nancy Kleiber*

The San Diego LWV will seek support at the May convention for a study about Death with Dignity, anticipated by many to be on the state ballot as a proposition.. Here are links with more information. The LWV of Arizona has created a White Paper on the pros and cons of the Oregon model: <http://lwwaz.org/files/EndOfLifeChoices-LWVAZwhitepaper.pdf>

Other Leagues have looked at the subject but we have not found a state with a LWV position. The League of Boulder County, Colorado produced a report: [http://lwwbc.org/files/2012\\_03\\_right\\_to\\_die\\_unit\\_report.pdf](http://lwwbc.org/files/2012_03_right_to_die_unit_report.pdf)





*Meeting Notes, Comments from February LWV Meeting*

**MEMBERS HEAR CLIMATE CHANGE UPDATE,  
CASPAR LESSON, ELECTRIC VEHICLE NEWS**

*By Sharon Gilligan*

At our February meeting, Jary Stavely opened the program with an update on the efforts of the League's national body to support the EPA's carbon emissions regulation and to oppose construction of the Keystone XL pipeline. LWVUS activities can also be followed on Facebook or on their website.

Jary turned the floor over to Caspar Commons representative Michael Potts who reviewed the history of the Caspar Community Resiliency Project. He explained the philosophy of "resilience" as opposed to "sustainability" as the guiding watchword of how to live responsibly in an unavoidably changing climate. His example included the fact that although P.G. & E. had that morning restored its power to most coastal residents, the Caspar Community Center would have been open and warm for the League's meeting, since it has its own solar panels, electrical storage, and generator.

Michael shared a bit of the history of the organization stating that a group began meeting informally in 1995 when it became clear that large tracts of open space were likely to be sold and developed. As the board took shape a decision was made to function on a consensus basis and not simple majority rule and to include all interested members of the community on major issues. Their concerns include resisting further gentrification of small coastal communities, promoting opportunities for education and employment to keep young people from abandoning our towns, and as our climate changes, water issues. Perhaps the most important message Michael left us with was that community planning should strive for a one hundred year plan, not just a five or ten year goal.

After a lively question and answer period, meeting participants heard Bruce and Eileen Broderick tell about their recent campaign to facilitate the use of Neighborhood Electric Vehicles (more affordable and slower than the full-size electric vehicles on the market from major manufacturers) in and around Fort Bragg. The proposal would require a lowering of speed limits at either end of town to accommodate the 25 mph capabilities of these vehicles and the installation of convenient charging stations. Both presentations were great reminders of the respect and concern our neighbors have for our environment.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, A NON-PARTISAN POLITICAL ORGANIZATION,  
ENCOURAGES INFORMED AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT,  
STRIVES TO INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF MAJOR PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES,  
AND INFLUENCES PUBLIC POLICY THROUGH EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY.**

*LWVC News*

## ***League, Partners to Pursue State Motor Voters' Rights***

SACRAMENTO—The LWVC intends to pursue litigation to force the state to make voter registration easier for California drivers, according to an announcement released February 5.

“It’s time for the Department of Motor Vehicles to stop dragging its feet and make voter registration easy and accessible for the millions of Californians who apply for or renew their driver’s licenses or ID cards every year,” LWVC President Helen Hutchinson said.

Under the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), California and most other states are required to treat a driver’s license application or renewal as a voter registration application if the applicant chooses to register to vote. If the applicant is already a registered voter, the state must update the existing voter registration with any new information supplied on a driver’s license application, renewal or change of address form.

According to the statement, California has one of the lowest levels of DMV “Motor Voter” registration in the country. The “pre-litigation” notice letter was sent to the California Secretary of State. The letter was written by attorneys from Demos, Project Vote, ACLA Foundation of San Diego and Imperial Counties and the law firm Morrison & Foerster. It was written on behalf of the League of Women Voters of California, California Common Cause, the National Council of La Raza, several individual California citizens and ACCE Institute. The ACCE Institute is affiliated with the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment, a non-profit community organization headquartered in Los Angeles.

*Celebrating the 95th and the 50th Anniversaries*

## **MARK YOUR CALENDAR, CELEBRATE MILESTONES**

February 14, 2015, was not just any Valentine’s Day. It was the 95th anniversary of the Carrie Chapman Catt’s founding of the League of Women Voters in 1920. In August of that year, the 19th Amendment was enacted and women won the right to vote, ending a struggle and fight that had gone on for 57 years.

This is a big year for the national League and it gets even better: VOTER editor Charlene McAllister recently sent this note to our local Board of Directors: “In 1965, LWVMC was ‘born’ as an MAL (Member-at Large League). It was 24 years later, in 1989, that we became a local League. If we chose 1965 as our birthday, that makes us turn 50 this year. Something to celebrate.”

We hope you celebrate with us May 12 at our business meeting and potluck luncheon.

And to celebrate the anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, please join us on the lawn of the Kelly House Museum from 2-4 p.m. August 22, in Mendocino Village where we will join the Mendocino Women’s Political Coalition in a program that includes music by the Mendocino Coast Women’s Choir, poetry, and (of course) speeches about our political and personal histories.

Val Muchowski, an active member of the Mendocino Women’s Political Caucus as well as the County League of Women Voters, organized this celebration in 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010. We hope to see you there and look forward to our 100th birthday bash in 2020.



*Val Muchowski in suffragist wardrobe at the 2010 Celebration of Women’s Right to Vote. This year’s event, sponsored by the Mendocino Women’s Coalition and the LWVMC will be Saturday, August 22, 2015 on Mendocino Village’s Kelley House Museum lawn. The event is open to the public at no charge. Staff photo*

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 for 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. Dues for 2014-2015 cover the period between September, 2014 and September, 2015.

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 \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: **LWV Mendocino County**  
 And mail to: **LWVMC**  
**P.O. Box 1128**  
**Fort Bragg, CA 95437**

**The League of Women Voters  
 of Mendocino County  
 P.O. Box 1128  
 Fort Bragg, CA 95437  
 (707) 937-4952**

[www.mendo.ca.lwvnet.org](http://www.mendo.ca.lwvnet.org)

[www.ca.lwv.org](http://www.ca.lwv.org)

[www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

[www.smartvoter.org/ca/state/](http://www.smartvoter.org/ca/state/)

**Mendocino County  
 Election Office  
 (707) 463-4371**

**National Commission  
 on Voting Rights Report  
[http://votingrightstoday.org/ncvr/resources/  
 discriminationreport](http://votingrightstoday.org/ncvr/resources/discriminationreport)**

**Status of bills in Congress  
[www.thomas.loc.gov](http://www.thomas.loc.gov)**

**Sources of Information about Money in Politics**

[www.moneyoutvotersin.org](http://www.moneyoutvotersin.org)

<http://cal-access.sos.ca.gov/Campaign/Candidates/>

<http://www.fppc.ca.gov/index.php?id=14>

<http://cal-access.sos.ca.gov/Campaign/Measures/list.aspx?session=2011>

[http://ca.lwv.org/sites/ca.lwv.org/files/Campaign%20Finance%20FACTS\\_1.pdf](http://ca.lwv.org/sites/ca.lwv.org/files/Campaign%20Finance%20FACTS_1.pdf)

<http://www.fec.gov/finance/disclosure/srssea.shtml>