



The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

October, 2009

Jane Person, President

Charlene McAllister, Editor

LOCAL LEAGUE TAKES MEASURE A STAND AFTER STUDY

Editor's Note: In August, President Jane Person appointed a committee to study Measure A on the November ballot. The committee examined the text of the measure, considered action based on established League positions and submitted the following recommendation:

The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County opposes Measure A, a county-wide ballot initiative introduced on behalf of an out-of-state real estate developer. This proposal conflicts with established Government and Natural Resources positions of the League of Women Voters of California, and would remove significant legal protections our state's citizens would otherwise have

under existing laws.

The League believes land use decisions should relate to and protect the overall quality of the environment. In land use planning and regulation, government must provide for involvement of citizens throughout the process and develop mechanisms to prevent conflict of interest on the part of persons who make land use decisions.

If passed, Measure A would cut off any further public participation as well as most government oversight. The only interest represented is that of the developer. According to the Report to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors Regarding the Effect of the Proposed

"Mendocino County Tomorrow" Ballot initiative, "The normal procedural requirements relative to noticing, hearings or findings for the adoption of general plan amendments, mixed use specific plans and zoning ordinances do not apply if the same measures are enacted by initiative."

The League supports comprehensive measures to provide maximum protection to human health and the environment from the adverse effects of hazardous materials. The public has the right to know the potentially harmful effects of materials they encounter in the home, workplace and community. Citizens

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LEAGUE MEMBERS SET FOR CANDIDATE FORUM IN TOWN HALL THURSDAY NIGHT

Sharon DiMauro, publisher of the *Mendocino Beacon* and *Fort Bragg Advocate - News* will moderate a candidate forum from 6-8 p.m. Thursday, October 1, 2009 in Fort Bragg Town Hall, corner of Main and Laurel Streets.

League Voter Service chair JoAn Blackstone announced at press time that all candidates for the following offices agreed to attend:

Mendocino County Board of Education (Trustee Area

5) and Board of Trustees of College of the Redwoods.

The forum is open to the public and there will be time for questions from the audience. MCTV will broadcast the forum.



JoAn Blackstone

2009-2010

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Becky Bowen	Nominating Committee

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Becky Bowen, Susan Eveleth, Louis Hough,
Susan Mitchell, Jane Person

President's Message

The first time I realized that if you think something can't happen here, it probably will, was sometime in the mid sixties. Students at the Sorbonne were cutting classes, marching, and waving placards protesting indifferent professors and irrelevant curricula.



Can't happen in the US, I thought. Students here are too busy studying or at least partying, thinking of my own college generation. Less than a year later US college students were cutting classes, marching, and waving placards protesting indifferent professors, irrelevant curricula and, of course, the Viet Nam War.

If Measure A passes, other corporations might be encouraged to use the initiative process to bypass local planning, public input, and State environmental regulations. Already there is an initiative on the ballot in the Santa Barbara area to allow off shore oil drilling. It's a long shot at this point, but the corporation owning the GP property could follow DDR's example.

So our League is sending out press releases to local papers and to papers in Willits and Ukiah urging a No vote on Measure A. Talk to your friends if they are unsure as to how to vote because a dangerous precedent could be set. Let them know that the League is against it. Tell them that the Plan on the ballot does not promise that anything at all will be built on the site, only that what, if anything, is built, will be at the developer's discretion. The developer will not have to mitigate traffic concerns or deal with possible toxins in the soil, among other things. DDR could turn around and sell the property undeveloped for a princely sum because the next owner would also be unencumbered by any planning or environmental regulations or public input.

The Board of LWV Mendocino County didn't arrive lightly at the decision to oppose Measure A. A Board-appointed committee studied LWVC positions on natural resources and government policy to make sure that our stand falls in line with LWVC. We drafted the document you see on page one after much research. This action, I think, shows the League of Women Voters doing what our mission states: lobbying for issues we hold to be important to good government and a healthy environment.

Jane Person

LEAGUE TAKES STAND ON MENDOCINO COUNTY MEASURE A *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

should be included in the planning and decision making processes of hazardous materials management. There should be stringent siting, design and operating standards for facilities, and frequent monitoring and effective enforcement procedures.

Measure A would exempt the entire subject property from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and instead require only those mitigation measures provided in the developer's plan.

League believes initiative proposals should be limited to a single subject and written in language that is precise and understandable.

With a single vote, Measure A asks Mendocino County voters to enact significant planning and zoning changes and approve a complex "Mixed-Use Specific Plan" that includes all of the following:

1. A conceptual land use plan
2. Development standards

3. Design and landscape guidelines
4. Circulation and infrastructure plan
5. Project mitigation measures with respect to potential impacts to the community and the environment
6. The developer's intended use of the same well that serviced the area when the former Masonite facility was operating there

Promoted as a way to create jobs, enhance shopping choices and build housing, Measure A in fact calls for designation of the entire 76-acre site as a "Mixed-Use Specific Plan." This is a legal term for a kind of initiative that would, if passed, supersede most existing site development requirements. Call the measure a "Specific Plan" is probably misleading. The actual proposal is more than 300 pages, and is far from specific. This "Specific Plan" would allow for a variety of possible uses, including light industrial, retail, commercial, residential, office, entertain-

ment, educational, public facilities, utility installations, parking lots and structures, and open space. It also includes broadly-worded disclaimers, such as "All uses, site plans, and descriptions shown within this Specific Plan are conceptual and are subject to change."

Many of the answers County staff have provided in response to questions from the Board of Supervisors were inconclusive due to limited available information. It is our understanding that significant questions about toxins, sanitation, ground water, transportation and other issues remain unanswered or only partially answered. Measure A is both too complex and too open-ended to be considered precise or easily understood by voters. Its passage would make sweeping changes to our county's General Plan and Zoning Plan, eliminate requirements for future citizen participation in the development process, and limit government oversight, yet offer no assurance that any particular kind of development will occur. In view of these concerns, a "No" vote is recommended.

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.

2009 Calendar of Events

Thursday, October 1, 2009: Public Candidate Form: 6-8 p.m.

Location: Town Hall, Fort Bragg (corner of Laurel and Main Streets)

Tuesday, October 13, 2009: General Meeting: 9:30 a.m. – noon

Location: St. Michael's Church, Fort Bragg

10 – 10:30 a.m.: Discussion of League's opposition to County Measure "A"

10:30 – noon: Healing Hospital Wellness Program for Coast Hospital

Guest Speakers: MCDH CEO Raymond Hino and Kelly Mather of Harmony Healing House

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

Tuesday, November 10, 2009: General Meeting: 9:30 a.m. – noon

Location: St. Michael's Church, Fort Bragg

Topic: Seniors and the Law

Presentation by Attorneys-At-Law JoAn Blackstone (RET) and Brandt Stickel

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

Tuesday, Dec 1, 2009 (Note date change): General Meeting and Holiday Luncheon

Location: Hill House Inn – Mendocino

Time: 10:30 – 1 p.m.

Topic: Education

Guest Speaker: Fort Bragg Superintendent of Schools Donald Armstrong

Please Save These Dates for 2010

Tuesday, January 12, 2010: General Meeting:

League Orientation and Local and National Program Planning

Tuesday, February 9, 2010: General Meeting:

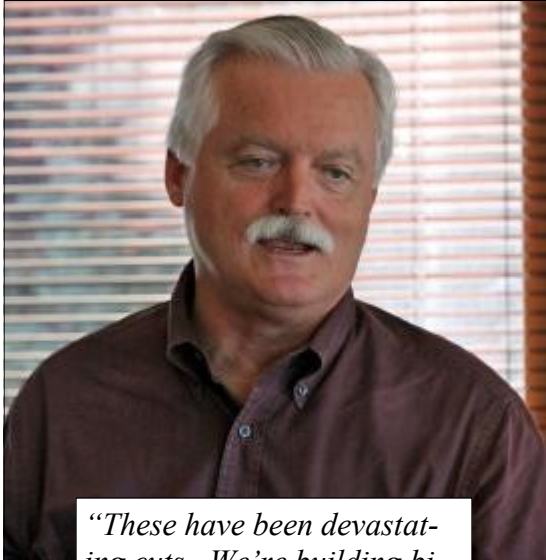
League's 90th Birthday Celebration plus forum on 2010 Census

Friday, March 12: Fifth Annual Meet and Greet Your Elected Officials Event

Tuesday, April 13, 2010: General Meeting: Discussion of State Ballot Measures

Tuesday, May 11, 2020: ANNUAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON

League Members, Speakers Look at State Budget Crisis Through Local Eyes
Assemblyman Wes Chesbro, Panel Bring Home Discussion of Funding Woes
At League's September 15 Kickoff Meeting at Harbor Lite Lodge, Fort Bragg



"These have been devastating cuts...We're building bipartisan coalitions between rural Republicans and Democrats based on trust, experience and relationships."
Assemblyman Wes Chesbro



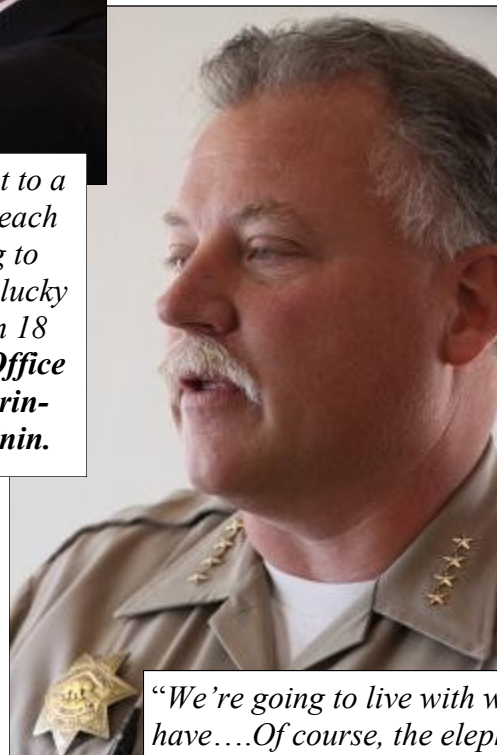
"This crisis will impact older adults, community agencies and especially in-home support services."
Mary Lou Leonard, County Health and Human Services Agency.



"These cuts amount to a 10 per cent cut for each child. It's not going to go away. We'll be lucky if it levels off within 18 months."
County Office of Education Superintendent Paul Tichinin.



"I've never seen double-digit negative numbers like this..I don't know what the future will bring to Fort Bragg."
Fort Bragg City Manager Linda Ruffing



"We're going to live with what we have....Of course, the elephant in the room is mental health. Twenty per cent of our inmates are mental health patients."
Sheriff Tom Allman

Profiles in League—Susan Mitchell

Editor's Note—This is a continuing series about our League members.

Susan Mitchell was born in Arkansas City, Kansas and grew up in Colorado Springs, CO. She attended Colorado Western State College in Gunnison.

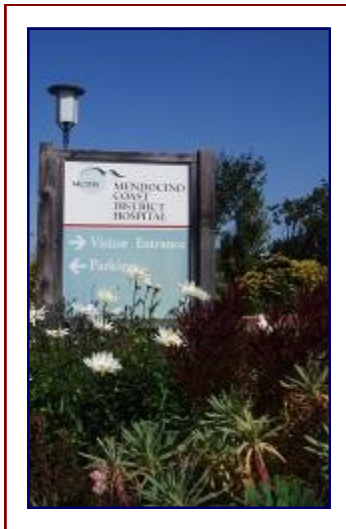
Susan lived in New York and England before moving to Califor-

nia where she was co-owner and president of Christopher Creek Winery in Healdsburg.

She and husband John have been active in the coastal community since they moved here. As soon as she joined the league, Susan was asked to sit on the board where she served for five years as a member and second

vice-president. She is an avid tennis player and knitter and works at the Mendocino Yarn Shop.

“I suppose what I am most proud of are my children!” she says. The newest member of the family is granddaughter Emerson (“Emmie”) born at 8:30 a.m. Friday morning in Wyoming.



LOCAL HEALTH STAFF INTRODUCES “HEALING HOSPITAL” TO LEAGUE MEMBERS AT OCTOBER 13 GENERAL MEETING

Submitted by Barbara Matheson

Ray Hino, CEO of Mendocino Coast District Hospital and Kelly Mather, of Harmony Healing House will introduce league members to the hospital's new Healing Hospital Wellness Program at the general membership meeting Tuesday, October 13

from 9:30 a.m. - noon at St. Michael's Church, corner of Fir and Franklin, Fort Bragg.

“The Hospital has initiated an innovative wellness program that aims to improve the health of our local community by creating a ‘Culture of Health’ among hospital staff, patients, and even

local school children,” hospital officials said.

The league meeting starts with coffee at 9:30 a.m. followed at 10 a.m. with a brief discussion of the league's opposition to County Measure A on the November ballot. The Healing Hospital program starts at 10:30 a.m.

**The League of Women Voters Welcomes New Members:
Grant Miller, Barbara Rice, Wendy Roberts and Kathy Wylie**
Interested in joining? Contact Membership Chair Carol Ann Falk or see
application on page 8

LWVUS News**National League Goes on Offensive Against Organization With Similar Name**

National League President Mary G. Wilson, released this statement from the league's Washington, D.C. office on Monday, September 14, 2009:

"The League of Women Voters believes quality, affordable health care should be available to all Americans. A newly-formed organization calling itself the 'League of American Voters' is conducting an advertising campaign against health care reform that seeks to undermine public support by sowing fear and mistrust. We sent a letter calling them to task for using a name clearly designed to be confused with the League of Women Voters in order to disseminate misleading information and block health care reform. We asked them to reveal the major sources of funding for the advertising campaign.

"Their response? A 'blast email' to their followers condemning the League of Women Voters. We have begun to get disruptive and downright rude phone calls and emails from 'supporters' of the so-called League of American Voters. We are arranging for greater security due to a variety of threats that have been made. And we've begun exploring what legal options are available to help us protect our name in the face of those who are misusing it."

LWVUS Update

In Indiana the State Court of Appeals struck down a law requiring government issued photo identification for voters, agreeing with the League of Women Voters who were the plaintiffs in the case, that it held those casting ballots in person to higher standards than absentee voters.

The decision overturned on state constitutional grounds a law upheld by the US supreme Court in 2008. The Indiana law required voters to produce state or federal photo ID cards at their polling stations. Critics said the law disenfranchised some older, poor, and minority voters. Supporters said the law was needed to prevent voter fraud.

LWVMC BOARD UPDATE

The LWVMC has 83 members as of September with four new members joining at the kick-off meeting.

JoAn Blackstone, Susan Eveleth and Jane Person have expressed interest in attending the October 17 Sacramento County League's Regional Workshop.

The Board will consider a letter to the College of the Redwoods

concerning safety issues in the school's science labs. The letter will be drafted before the next board meeting. It will also consider a letter to County CEO Tom Mitchell requesting Mr. Mitchell to reconsider his decision to cancel video broadcasts of the Mendocino Historical Review Board.

The Hill House has been selected as the location for the December luncheon.

League of Women Voters of California News

Do you want to know what LWVC is up to? What issues have been selected for emphasis from 2009 through 2010 and why? The following website allows you to sign up for LWVC news, Smart Voter news, Easy Voter news and indicate your interest in League priority issues.

Moreover, it describes what a position is, how it comes about and much more. It's not just for League members; anyone can access the website and learn how the League operates. The site is:

http://lwvc.convio.net/site/PageServer?pagename=sign_up

The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County actively participates and supports Smart Voter, sponsored by the League of Women Voters of California Education Fund.

Smart Voter is an easy, quick way to get election information (including polling places) and candidate information. Candidates can post statements on Smart Voter for no charge. There are links to news media and other election sites as well as county election resources. The Smart Voter website also contains election archives.

www.smartvoter.org

**The League of Women Voters
Of Mendocino County
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www.mendo.ca.lwvnet.org

www.ca.lwv.org

www.lwv.org

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

**County Clerk-Recorder
Election Information
707 463-4371**

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.

\$55 One Year individual membership, \$80 two-person household membership

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

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