



The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

May, 2016

Carol Czadek, President

Jary Stavely and Lee Tepper, Editors

Annual meeting May 10

Issues Discussion Will Set Next Year's Course

By Jary Stavely

President Carol Czadek will call the League's Annual Business Meeting to order at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, May 10th, at the Caspar Community Center. The order of business includes approval of the minutes of the 2015 meeting, adoption of a budget for 2016-2017, and nomination and election of officers and directors for the coming year (For background on these agenda items, refer to your April *Voter*, or see it online at mendo.ca.lwvnet.org). The agenda also includes a review of local and national League positions. Charlene McAllister and Nancy Kleiber will lead us through the history and implications of existing positions, and how we can use them in planning our local program of meetings.

During and after a sumptuous luncheon, which will include soup provided by the Westport Hotel, side dishes and desserts provided by members, and beverages arranged by Patricia Marien, members will participate in "table talks" which will guide the new board in preparing programs for the 2016-2017 League year. The current board has identified potential areas for discussion during the conversations held around the various luncheon tables. The local issues (and subissues) which have been identified are:

- Social Services in Mendocino County
- Broadband (how potential loss of landlines might impact 911 calls)

- Mendocino County Charter (if W passes)
- Hospital District (potential status change to non-profit)
- Mendocino College (requirement of 250 FTE students)
- Mill site development update
- Employment opportunities in the county
- Housing opportunities and vacation rentals
- Sustainability (status of local farms)
- Marijuana
- Local transportation

Topics to be considered at the LWV national convention and of potential interest for discussion include:

- Climate change
- LWV by-laws amendment to broaden voting membership (Minnesota recommendation)
- Money in politics
- Immigration
- Healthcare
- Behavioral health position (Colorado recommendation)

Members are strongly encouraged to join us at the Annual Meeting for a lively and informative time. Bring your Meeting Kit and a side dish for a stimulating middle of the day. Friends and neighbors who are interested in joining should come as well. It will be a wonderful opportunity to become familiar with what we are about.

LWV 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.

President's Message

Evaluating the Propositions

by Carol Czadek

Our June 7th ballot has one statewide proposition on it. If passed by the voters, Prop. 50 would amend the state constitution to allow either chamber of the Legislature, by a two-thirds vote, to suspend a member of that body without pay or benefits. The LWVC recommends a YES vote. I am often so sure that I will agree with the state League, that I don't always do my own research. The website www.votersedge.org/ca is a good starting point to gather information about what is on your ballot. Also, the following check list from the LWVC website is a handy guide for evaluating an initiative or referendum:

1. Examine what the measure seeks to accomplish. Do you agree with those goals? Is the measure consistent with your ideas about government? Do you think the proposed changes will make things better?
2. Who are the real sponsors and opponents of the measure? Check where the money is coming from on the Voter's Edge California website [above].
3. Is the measure written well? Will it create conflicts in law that may require court resolution or interpretation? Is it "good government," or will it cause more problems that it will resolve?
4. Does the measure create its own revenue source? Does it earmark, restrict, or obligate government revenues? If so, weigh the benefit of securing funding for this measure against the cost of reducing overall flexibility in the budget.
5. Does the measure mandate a government program or service without addressing how it will be funded?
6. Does the measure deal with one issue that can be easily decided by a YES or NO vote? Or, is it a complex issue that should be thoroughly examined in the legislative arena?
7. If the measure amends the Constitution, consider whether it really belongs there. Would a statute accomplish the same purpose? All constitutional amendments require voter approval; what we put into the Constitution would have to come back to

the ballot to be changed.

8. Be wary of distortion tactics and commercials that rely on image but tell nothing of substance about the measure. Beware of half truths.

By the way, I will be voting YES on Prop. 50. I recommend using this guide when voting on our local measures on June 7th.



Propositions on the Primary Ballot

50 (California constitutional amendment referendum) Suspension of State legislators
(Supported by LWVC)

U (Fort Bragg City initiative) Banning social services from central business district
(Opposed by LWVMC)

V (Mendocino County initiative) Declaring intentionally killed standing trees a public nuisance

W (Mendocino County initiative) Creating a committee to draft a County charter

Offices on the Primary Ballot

We will be voting for three offices in this primary, in three different ways. The vote for **Superior Court Judge** will be final, since there are only two candidates. The vote for **U.S. Senate** is an open, or "top-two" primary, where party affiliation does not count. The vote for **Presidential candidate** (technically, to elect and instruct delegates to the party conventions) is a "modified closed primary" where each voter can vote their own party's ballot and some parties (this year, Democratic, and American Independent) allow "No Party Preference" voters to request their party ballot.

Judge Candidates' Forum will be on Friday the 13th



Keith Faulder

On June 7th Mendocino County voters will select a new Superior Court judge to replace the retiring David Nelson. Patrick Pekin and Keith Faulder are vying for the position, and both will be on hand at the C.V. Starr Center in Fort Bragg on May 13th for a forum sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Mendocino County. Sharon DiMauro will moderate, assisted by Carol Czadek, and Nancy Kleiber will be the timekeeper. Jane Person and Lee Tepper will be on hand to collect written questions from the audience. The candidates have expressed some



Patrick Pekin

differences of opinion about issues facing the Superior Court and the county as a whole, so this forum will provide an opportunity for coastal voters to prepare to cast informed votes in the June Primary.

Local League Opposes Proposition U

At its regular meeting on the Tuesday following the Measure U forum (see story on p. 7), your Board considered whether to take a stand on the proposition. They decided unanimously to oppose the measure and appointed a committee to help President Carol Czadek draft a letter to the editor of the Advocate-News explaining our position. The letter reads:

The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County opposes Measure U, which will appear on the June 7 ballot for residents within the City of Fort Bragg.

In determining whether to support or oppose any measure, the League recommends the use of a list of questions, including:

[See the criteria in Carol's message on p. 2]

After careful study using those criteria and existing League policy positions, our local League has determined that this discriminatory measure would not have its intended effect of benefitting local businesses, is not well written, would conflict with laws that protect the equal access rights of disabled individuals, and would cause more problems than it would resolve, in that it would almost certainly trigger one or more lawsuits against the City of Fort Bragg.

Regardless of the legal outcome, the costs of defense and the negative image that would be created for Fort Bragg and its local businesses could well mean losses of hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxpayer funded litigation expenses

as well as a significant loss of revenue from the tourist trade the city seeks to promote.

The League supports community efforts to provide access, facilities and services for those in need of social services. Those individuals include disabled veterans, seniors, children, developmentally disabled adults, those suffering from the effects of poverty, mental illness, substance abuse, and those suffering from domestic violence and(or) homelessness. The League of Women Voters of the United States has a policy position which states, in part, "Facilities and services for participants (of supportive services) should be the same as for the general public. Whenever possible, these services should be conveniently located in the neighborhood."

The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County (LWVMC) strongly urges a "No" vote on Measure U.

Discuss the issues with your friends and neighbors, and don't forget to tell them about www.votersedge.org/ca, the new version of Smartvoter.org

Measure W Discussed at Senior Center

By Jary Stavely

Proponents of Measure W, the initiative to change Mendocino County from a General Law County to a Charter County, held a meeting at the Redwood Coast Senior Center in Fort Bragg on April 16th to discuss the process the initiative involves, and to introduce some of the charter commission candidates who will appear on the June 7th ballot. A group of 25 people, including five candidates, attended the Saturday afternoon meeting, which was moderated by Doug McKenty.

In the primary election, voters will be asked the question, "Shall a charter commission be elected to propose a Mendocino County charter?" Similar to the process in a recall election, in which possible replacements appear on the ballot at the same time as the recall is proposed, they will then choose 15 commissioners from a list of 17 candidates. If the measure is approved, this commission will be charged with drafting the text of a county charter, which subsequently would have to be approved by the voters. The presenters were careful to emphasize that this election represents only the first phase of a three part process: 1) voters approve the idea of becoming a charter county and establish a commission; 2) the commission would then hold hearings around the county to draw up a proposed charter; 3) the voters would need to ratify the proposed charter by a majority vote in a future election. At this time, there is no definite content for the charter which the initiative would begin to create.

According to the commission candidates at the meeting, a charter is like a mini-constitution for a county, a document which provides guidelines for governing and making laws within the county. The adoption of a charter could provide a measure of "home rule" within the county, allowing for ordinances specific to the county's needs, which, if not in conflict with the state constitution, would not be preempted by general state law.

Commission candidates Agnes Woolsey, Keith Wyner, Robin Sunbeam, Michael St. John, and Doug McKenty addressed the audience, giving reasons why they would like to help draft a new county charter. Agnes, a local League member and retired high school social studies teacher, said that having a charter would give citizens a document for the future, instead of merely responding to the status quo, and that it would help county enactments such as Measure H to be legally affirmed in court. She and others are interested in establishing the legal basis for a publicly owned bank in the county.

Keith Wyner, a retired special ed teacher in the Fort Bragg schools, stated that a county charter would help preserve the beautiful home environment which Mendocino County residents cherish from encroachment by outside corporate interests. Voter-supported measures would have better legal standing than current initiatives and resolutions.

... Continued on next page ...

What is a Charter County?

The California Constitution recognizes two types of counties: general law counties and charter counties. General law counties adhere to state law as to the number and duties of county elected officials.

Charter counties, on the other hand, have a limited degree of "home rule" authority that may provide for the election, compensation, terms, removal, and salary of the governing board; for the election or appointment (except the sheriff, district attorney, and assessor who must be elected), compensation, terms, and removal of all county officers; for the powers and duties of all officers; and for consolidation and segregation of county offices. A charter does not give county officials extra authority over local regulations, revenue-raising abilities, budgetary decisions, or intergovernmental relations.

A county may adopt, amend, or repeal a charter with majority vote approval. A new charter or the amendment or repeal of an existing charter may be proposed by the Board of Supervisors, a charter commission, or an initiative petition. The provisions of a charter are the law of the state and have the force and effect of legislative enactments.

Statements of commission candidates, as well as other information, can be found at mendocinocountycharter.org.

Robin Sunbeam of Ukiah shared a Power Point presentation showing how the charter movement is based on language in the preamble of the California Constitution, and that the process of establishing charter counties is spelled out in that document. She is motivated by her concern over the Citizens United Supreme Court decision, and her desire to establish control over the way the current political system seems to be leading toward environmental and economic collapse.

Michael St. John, of Mendocino, currently co-teaches a class at the Mendocino College coastal campus entitled "Citizenship in an Age of Corporate Power." A former economist, he is interested and excited by the possibilities that the charter movement may provide for reclaiming democracy in our community. He called it "an opportunity for stunning change."

Doug McKenty, a former host of the radio program Open Lines on KZYY, said that he has been moved by his callers' frustration with a seemingly dysfunctional system. He participated in the campaign for Measure S, liked it, and is interested in how to get the community to move together for this wider goal.

Later in the meeting, Paul Cienfuegos, formerly of Democracy Unlimited in Humboldt County, and currently working to promote community rights nationally, described how a county charter, depending on how it was formulated, might fit into a movement in which communities in other places around the country are trying to push back against corporate control of community assets. They have been asserting local control in language which challenges the precedents which have gradually built up the current corporate power wielded in courts and legislatures of the United States. He described the process as "stepping outside the structures of law which have made protecting a community illegal."

Although there is no formal opposition to Measure W, Mr. McKenty mentioned that negative views about it have been expressed in the Ukiah Daily News and by the Employers' Council.

Which Are the Chartered Counties?

There are currently 44 general law counties and 14 charter counties. They are as follows:

General Law Counties:

Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, Del Norte, Glenn, Humboldt, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Kings, Lake, Lassen, Madera, Marin, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Modoc, Mono, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, Plumas, Riverside, San Benito, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter, Trinity, Tulare, Tuolumne, Ventura, Yolo, Yuba

Charter Counties:

Alameda, Butte, El Dorado, Fresno, Los Angeles, Orange, Placer, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Tehama

September meeting

Save the Dates

The League's annual schedule of member activities will end with the annual meeting May 10th. The *Voter*, too, will take a summer break.

Our fall 2016 Kickoff Meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, September 27th. Propositions Galore! And more on October 11th. More details in your September *Voter*.

Thank You ...

to the 24 members who attended the 2016 Virtual Garden Tour. Your contributions make our programs possible. And because the Tour is virtual, it's not too late to attend. Just find that envelope with the beautiful bookmark (courtesy of Becky Bowen) or send a check to:

League of Women Voters of Mendocino County
P.O. Box 1128
Fort Bragg, CA 95437



April meeting

Local Perspectives on Drought and Drought Regulations

By Becky Bowen

How does the California drought impact coastal communities in north Mendocino County?

It depends on the source and quality of your water, how it's used, how it's treated and how it's stored, four panelists told members of the League of Women Voters yesterday at a presentation at the Caspar Community Center.

Barbara Garcia, of Surfwood (north of Mendocino Village); Marie Jones, Community Development Director of Fort Bragg; Marlene Demery, of Caspar South Service Company; and Water Master Donna Feiner (who services twenty community water systems) talked about how statewide drought mandates impacted some coastal communities with their own set of complications.

These include king tides, drastic reduction in water usage, management of water for the critical beer and tourist industries and disappointment with the recent delay of construction of a 15-million-gallon reservoir that could provide city water for up to 9 months during a future water crisis in the City of Fort Bragg. The reservoir had been planned, funded and a bid accepted when construction was put on hold after the State cited environmental concerns, Ms. Jones said.

The source of water for Fort Bragg (2700 connections) is the Noyo River and two unnamed streams; the source for Surfwood (102 connections) is Jack Peters Creek; and the source for Caspar South Service Company (102 connections) is primarily seven shallow wells not greater than 38 feet deep. Surface water (including water from shallow wells) requires processing or treatment before it reaches humans. Chlorine disinfection and pH correction of typically acidic water are required.

During drought, surface water is severely impacted, Ms. Feiner said. There is more sun and less fog, and one redwood tree can draw up to 40 gallons of water a day, much of which usually comes from fog, so river flows are reduced.

Even though the area enjoys an average annual

rainfall of 40"-60", it was clear that the northern Mendocino Coast was dry last year. Restrictions applied across the state and local residents complied, reducing water use by 19 to 25 per cent.

Community water service historically has been cheap, but the cost of procurement, equipment maintenance and processing is destined to rise. For instance, the Caspar South Service Company's annual assessment of \$1,245 per lot covers use of 4,500 gallons of water per lot per month. There is a tiered cost structure over this base amount up to 7 cents per gallon. Ms. Demery pointed out that water conservation was nothing new for residents of South Caspar, where water use dropped by 45% between 1998 and 2015.

Even with new and changing drought mandates, cooperation by local residents reduced consumption here, especially in smaller residential communities. Residents in many communities practiced landscaping water rules and other water-saving practices without "water cops," panel members said.

Fort Bragg's shortage was serious because fresh-water pumping was interrupted by "king tides" that made Noyo River water brackish. Georgia Pacific's Pudding Creek reservoir was not a storage option because its capacity has been so reduced by siltation, Ms. Jones said. Reservoir facilities were limited and a Stage 3 Water Conservation ordinance required city residents to reduce usage, and they did—by 25 %. Construction of the new reservoir is not only important in preparing for future water emergencies, Ms. Jones said. The new reservoir also is part of a vision to develop the former Georgia Pacific mill site property. Providing services for that development is a critical part of the city's future, Ms. Jones said.

This panel discussion, organized by Pat Dunbar, gave us all a broader perspective on an issue that will only grow more pressing in the future and is sure to require a great deal of public decision-making.

Text of Measure V

Trees greater in height than 5 meters, intentionally killed and left standing for more than 90 days (except those created for the benefit of wildlife habitat) are a public nuisance and the party responsible shall be liable for any resulting damage when the tree is:

(1) within 1,000 meters of one or more critical infrastructures:

(a) roads including public roads, private roads and driveways, fire lanes

(b) telecommunication infrastructure including poles, wire, fiber, terminals, towers

(c) electrical infrastructure including poles, wire, substations, transformers

(d) significant water sources, including rivers, creeks, ponds, lakes

(2) within 1,000 meters of a structure

(3) within CAL FIRE State Responsibility Area.

The County shall not enter residential property to verify compliance.

League Hosts Measure V Forum

by Charlene McAllister

LWVMC hosted a forum on Measure V on April 1 at Caspar Community Center. Presenting in favor of the measure were Ted Williams, Fire Chief of Albion-Little River Fire Department, and Kirk Van Patten, a retired Cal Fire Air Attack Captain. Speaking against the measure were John Anderson, Director of Forest Policy for Humboldt and Mendocino Redwood Companies; Jim Little, Chief of Laytonville Fire Department, and Bill Morrison, Coastal District Manager for Soper-Wheeler Company.

Proponents argued that this is a public safety issue : firefighters are at risk in a forest fire with standing snags. Fire Chief Williams noted that attempts to communicate with the upper management of the timber company had not resolved the issue.

Opponents argue that killing large numbers of tan oaks is necessary for the restoration of the forests. A visual presentation of treated forests was shown. Fire Chief Little argued that risk to firefighters can be diminished by knowing the area.

Audience questions included how this law would be enforced. Enforcement would be voluntary and opponents noted that they are already being monitored by numerous state agencies.

Questions about alternative uses for tan oak revealed that only a small amount could be used for firewood; other uses such as flooring were not financially feasible. Several audience questions were about herbicide use and the questioners were referred to talk to Anderson after the forum since the measure does not speak to herbicide use.

The Measure V Forum can be viewed online at mendocinotv.com/2016/04/01/measure-v-debate/

Measure U Forum Draws a Civil Crowd

by Jary Stavely

An estimated 75 people attended a League-arranged non-partisan forum concerning Measure U at the Redwood Coast (Fort Bragg) Senior Center on April 22nd. Measure U is a voter initiative amending the city of Fort Bragg's zoning code to prohibit further provision of social services in the downtown area. It will only be voted on by residents of the city.

Jean Stubenrauch and James Britt, representing the Concerned Citizens of Fort Bragg, who organized the initiative, spoke in favor, while Mara Thomas, Nancy Severy, and Scott Menzies, representing the Social Services Alliance Against Measure U, spoke against. Many audience questions were submitted before the opening 15-minute statements from each

side, and more were handed in throughout the session. Moderator JoAn Blackstone relayed as many of them as she could to the speakers. Each side had two minutes for its initial response to a question, and then an extra minute for rebuttal comments.

Although there had been indications beforehand that feelings at this meeting might escalate, the format as prepared by Voter Services Chair Jane Person (who on one occasion reminded the audience of the decorum and respect which everyone deserved) as well as the fairness which JoAn and timekeeper Sharon Gilligan displayed, helped everyone maintain a civil tone throughout the event.

LWV and Sewall-Belmont House & Museum

Initiative Celebrates Centennial of Women's Vote

from National Women's History Project

Today, the League of Women Voters of the U.S. (LWVUS) and the Sewall-Belmont House & Museum (SBHM), organizations with roots in the 72 year campaign for women's voting rights, announced the creation of the 2020 Women's Vote Centennial Initiative (WVCI), a collaboration commemorating the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, which added women's right to vote to the U.S. Constitution.

"I am excited that the League of Women Voters, a voter empowerment organization founded by suffragist leaders, is part of launching WVCI," said LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara. "This initiative will help remind us all of the decades of hard work and perseverance it took to win voting rights for women."

The WVCI will be led by a Steering Committee and a larger Task Force, which collectively represent the various segments of the historical women's suffrage movement, contemporary women's organizations, and scholars. The list of members can be found at: <http://www.sewallbelmont.org/learn/womens-vote-centennial/>.

SBHM Executive Director Page Harrington noted, "This is an exemplary group of women and men who not only care about the historical significance of women winning the vote, but are also committed to showing the relevance of that struggle today."

The WVCI Steering Committee honored the convening of this initiative at a public program hosted by the Sewall-Belmont House & Museum and co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters on Wednesday, March 30th. The program, entitled "Women and Politics: Advocacy, Activism, and Influencing Policy," included remarks from private collector and political strategist Ann Lewis and others.

The first project of the WVCI is a slogo contest. The Initiative is inviting individuals and groups to contribute their design skills and creativity to the development of a logo and slogan (slogo) for use by anyone celebrating the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment. The contest, which opens March

30th, will accept submissions through June 30th, 2016, and a celebrity judge panel will help select the winner in time for an announcement on Women's Equality Day, August 26th, 2016. Details for the Slogo Contest and WVCI activities can be found at www.sewallbelmont.org/learn/womens-vote-centennial/.

For more information, contact: Jennifer Krafchik, Deputy Director and Director of Strategic Initiatives: Jennifer.krafchik@sewallbelmont.org or (202) 546-1210, ext. 17.

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