



The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

October, 2016

Cindy Plank and Nancy Kleiber, Presidents

Jary Stavelly and Lee Tepper, Editors

October 11th meeting

Hot Issues on the State Ballot will be Our October Meeting Topics

The Voter Education Committee—Jane Person, Nancy Kleiber, Cindy Plank, and Carol Czadek—has reserved several of the most-discussed California ballot measures for the League general meeting at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, October 11th, at the Caspar Community Center. Citizens United, the death penalty, marijuana, gun control, bilingual education, rights of non-violent felons, and accountability in the legislature will be considered as the committee reviews the pros, cons, and financial support associated with Propositions 54, 57, 58, 59, 62, 63, 64, and 66 (not necessarily in that order). As usual, coffee and conversation will commence at 9:30.

This will be a chance to ask questions and discuss the measures, as well as hear the traditional “pros and cons.” It is intended as a service to the public, not only our members, so bring a friend or

neighbor, a voter or future voter.

The *Voter* would like to remind you that the League has provided a list of questions to consider as you prepare yourself to vote:

- What does the proposition do for California?
- Who endorses it?
- What’s the source of funding for support or opposition?
- What will it cost?
- What will passage or defeat mean for Californians?

Another good way to examine the propositions is to visit the State League Educational Fund website, CAvotes.org, which has easy-to-follow navigation of the November 8 General Election. The League’s non-partisan publication of pros and cons can also be downloaded as a pdf document there.

League will Sponsor Forums on Local Contests

Our League’s series of forums on local issues and candidates will continue through October. For details, check p.3 of [last month’s Voter](#). All will be evening meetings, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 6—Fort Bragg City Council

Wednesday, Oct. 12—Parks & Recreation Board

Friday, Oct 14—Mendocino Coast District Hospital Board

Tuesday, Oct. 25—Measure AG Mental Health Initiative

Note that the October 25th forum will take the place of our November general members’ meeting. Sheriff Tom Allman will review arguments in favor of his mental health facility initiative. Opponents are expected to present their views as well.



Moderators’ tools promote civility

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

Be a Discerning Information Consumer

by Nancy Kleiber

This country was founded on citizen journalism, wherein public citizens play an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analyzing, and disseminating news and information. Thomas Paine's powerful pamphlet *Common Sense* was read by (or to) virtually every rebel and helped mobilize the move for independence from Great Britain. The concept of citizen journalism combines the term "citizen" (with its attendant qualities of civic-mindedness and social responsibility), with that of the practice of "journalism". Today, thanks to new media technology, such as social networking, cell phones and the internet, it allows input by amateurs to a mass audience. Due to the availability of technology, citizens often can report breaking news more quickly than the traditional media. We are all familiar with the impact that citizen journalism had in reporting major events such as the Arab Spring, the Occupy Wall Street movement, and the 2014 Ferguson protests.

In the past decade we've added "post", "blog" and "tweet" to our vocabulary, both as nouns and verbs. These internet phenomena allow the user to instantly transmit text and pictures with links to other blogs and web pages. By definition, the internet is interactive, so readers can react by sharing or leaving comments. In the 2008 presidential election, political consultants and the candidates began using blogs as tools for outreach, opinion forming and soliciting contributions.

The multiplicity of individual blogs has led to the development of "multi-author blogs" (MABs) with posts written by large numbers of authors, collected and distributed by newspapers, other media outlets and by advocacy groups. Not only can MAB sites sway public opinion, they can also be lucrative. WikiHow has a website devoted to ideas for people interested in setting up a website:

Ready to grab some of that Internet cash for yourself? Globally, online ad spending is on track to exceed \$145 billion, which means there are a lot of people getting rich! If you'd like to capture some of that for your own, we have some tips for you.

Blogs commonly feature banner advertisements or promotional content, either to financially benefit the blogger, support website hosting costs, or to promote the blogger's favorite causes or products.

So how do the reader and voter know if they're being sold a bill of goods, since the blogosphere is unregulated with no serious fact checking, and comments are unfiltered? In this election season with the proliferation of polls, posts, blogs and tweets, it is essential to be a discerning information consumer. We need to go beyond gauging a site by how many hits it has, to asking ourselves some basic questions: who wrote the blog or ballot measure, designed the poll sample, paid for it, profits from it, and places advertisements on it?

To help sort through the babble of the season, LWV has put together a list of reference sites. See the box on this page.



Useful Websites for Understanding the Propositions

To read nonpartisan analysis, arguments for and against, and the full text of the proposed law:

www.CAvotes.org (League of Women Voters of California)

www.ballotpedia.org
(independent)

www.voterguide.sos.ca.gov
(California Secretary of State)

To look up who is giving money to the Yes and No campaigns:

www.speakoutca.org
(independent)

www.ag.ca.gov (California Attorney General)

www.votersedge.org/ca (LWVC)

To check facts:

www.factcheck.org Launched at the University of Pennsylvania, 2003

www.flackcheck.org Points out errors in political speeches and debates

www.politifact.com Operated by the Tampa Bay Times

www.urbanlegends.about.com New York Times affiliate company

www.quackwatch.org Reviews questionable medical claims

www.snopes.com Debunks urban legends and other myths

www.publicagenda.org Provides non-partisan background on key public issues

Other Meetings and Forums on the Coast

by Jary Stavelly

As you may have realized from reading the September VOTER, the League is not presenting information on every item on your November ballot. Fortunately, there are other presentations available to inform us on local issues.

Mendocino TV has put together several online discussions which can be "attended" live or watched from its archives. They can be accessed at mendocinotv.com.

Although the League will host a forum concerning Measure AG on October 25th, KZYX radio has already broadcast an hour-long discussion by proponents on its program "Mind Body Health" on September 13th, and another hour by opponents on the same program on September 27th. Those programs can be accessed at kzyx.org by clicking on the [Jukebox](#) link, choosing "Mind Body Health & Politics" from the "shows" dropdown, and clicking on "play" after each show date.

The KZYX news department also broadcast an overview of all the state and county propositions, moderated by Annie Esposito and Karen Ottoboni, on October 5th, between 6:30 and 8 p.m. This presentation is also at the [Jukebox](#) link.

In addition, a number of "town hall" meetings concerning the county cannabis Measure AF have been scheduled by its proponents at various locations:

Fort Bragg--Tuesday, October 4: 6-8 pm at the Fort Bragg Town Hall, 363 N. Main Street.

Comptche--Monday, October 10: 6-8pm, at the Comptche Community Hall, 30672 Comptche-Ukiah Rd.

Anderson Valley--Thursday, October 13: 6-8 pm, at the Anderson Valley Grange, 9800 Highway 128, Philo.

Mendocino--Thursday, October 20: 4-6pm, at The Annex, 44970 Ukiah Street.

LWVC news

Recent Successes in the California Legislature

The League of Women Voters of California has issued a summary of recent legislative victories. President Helen Hutchison says, "Our hard work has paid off, and great things are in store for California with so many new laws going into effect. These wins aren't possible without your support! Thank you to everyone who responded to our action alerts and made your voices heard in Sacramento. For more information about all the bills we've been working on, check out our [Bill Status Report](#)."

Money in Politics: **SB 1107** removes the ban on public financing of campaigns and helps level the playing field for candidates. **SB 1349** modernizes the state's online database of campaign finance and lobbying information.

Climate Change: **SB 32** and **AB 197** reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect disadvantaged communities and those most affected by this pollution.

Voting Rights and Redistricting: **AB 2466** makes it less likely for Californians to be unfairly denied their voting rights after a criminal conviction. **SB 450** makes voting more accessible with vote-by-mail ballots, early voting, and vote centers, starting in 14 counties in 2018. **AB 958** establishes a

Citizens Redistricting Commission for Los Angeles County, and **SB 1108** allows all other California cities and counties to have these commissions too. **AB 350, AB 2220, and AB 2389** promote better representation and protect voting rights when local governments change to district-based elections. **AB 2010** helps local candidates reach voters with more affordable, online options for displaying their statements in official election materials.

PreK-12 Education and Juvenile Justice: **AB 1014** and **SB 527** reduce truancy and serve students at risk of dropping out of school, as required by Proposition 47.

Immigration: **AB 2792** protects the rights of immigrants in local custody.

Natural Resources and the Environment: **SB 122** supports the public's voice in land-use decisions by streamlining the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process. **SB 7** promotes conservation by requiring individual water meters in new multifamily housing. **SB 1262** protects our long-term water supply by preventing the overuse of groundwater in new developments. **AB 2480** puts funding of watershed restoration projects on an equal basis with other water infrastructure.

September Pros and Cons Presentation in a (Giant) Nutshell

by Jary Stavely

Nine propositions were the subject of discussion by League members on September 27th at the Caspar Community Center. The Voter Education Committee presented the main arguments of supporters and opponents of each measure and the identities and amounts of major donors as well as some "little known facts" that shed light on the proposals. An informal question-and-answer format allowed for some interesting discussion.

Here is an overview of the information presented:

51: \$9B Bond Authorization for School Facility Construction/Renovation

Pros: schools (including K-12, community colleges, charters, and tech centers) need to recover from long period of maintenance neglect, which cannot be paid for out of annual budgeting

Cons: already vetoed by Governor Brown; allocation of projects would benefit richer districts; locally funded projects are more efficient; CA debt should not be extended

Funding For: construction company associations and building trades unions (\$8.3 M)

Funding Against: no significant expenditures

52: Voter Approval Requirement for Diversions of Hospital Medi-Cal Fees

Pros: legislature should not be allowed to take fee moneys (which are raised to enable federal medicaid funding) away from impoverished hospitals; measure would help state in count of prop 98 expenditures

Cons: legislative authority to meet emergency needs should not be curtailed; created as a power grab by CA hospitals

Funding For: hospital associations (\$60M)

Funding Against: nurses union et al. (\$11.5M)

53: Voter Approval Requirement for Bond Projects above \$2B

Pros: voters should have direct say in large projects such as the twin tunnels or the bullet train; they now have a say in large general obligation bonds, but not similar revenue bonds; CA long term debts should be controlled

Cons: many projects only have regional benefits

that voters would not support statewide; this measure would prevent or delay repairs after emergencies and natural disasters

Funding For: agribusiness worried about tunnel/train projects (\$4.5M)

Funding Against: regional/county agencies; environmental groups (\$1.1M)

55: Extension of Prop 30 Tax on Incomes Greater than \$250K

Pros: measure maintains existing tax rates so the wealthy pay their fair share to support education and health care; extends the existing income tax rates until 2030, but allows the extra .25% sales tax to expire

Cons: when passed in 2012 after a budget crisis, voters were promised the increases would be temporary, not permanent; continuation of the increase is not needed

Funding For: teachers' unions, healthcare groups (\$42M)

Funding Against: no significant expenditures

56: Increase of Cigarette Excise Tax by \$2.00/pack (to \$2.87)

Pros: an effective method to reduce smoking and other tobacco use; will help offset \$3.58B spent on tobacco-related healthcare costs; regulates e-cigarettes for the first time

Cons: measure would pay insurance companies extra \$1B for same treatment they provide today; only pays small amount for actual treatment and child use prevention

Funding For: various health, dental, and business groups (\$17.1M)

Funding Against: tobacco and e-cigarette industry (\$35.6M)

60: Requirement to Use Condoms in Filming Pornography

Pros: measure closes loopholes in existing law and improves enforcement so that the adult film industry is held to the same workplace protection law that applies to every other California industry

Cons: most of the industry is located in LA area
(Continued on next page)

(Pros and Cons, from p. 3)

already covered by local regulations which impose the same thing; creates a dangerous new private right to legal action (the measure establishes a special attorney general--the measure's author--to defend it in court)

Funding For: film executive Michael Weinstein (\$2.4M)

Funding Against: both major political parties, medical societies, AIDS groups (\$0.1M)

61: Prescription Drug Price Regulation (requirement for state to pay no more for prescription drugs than the U.S. Dept. of Veterans' Affairs)

Pros: high prescription prices are a matter of life and death for many people, and this would end price gouging; would allow state to negotiate better deals for taxpayers in the same way that the VA does

Cons: would only cover 12% of Californians; likely to result in higher prescription drug costs, since pharmaceutical companies may refuse to negotiate or sell their product; would eliminate discounts state currently receives

Funding For: Michael Weinstein, CA Nurses Association, Peace & Freedom Party, some local Democratic clubs (\$9.5M)

Funding Against: Big Pharma; Republican Party; NAACP (\$86.6M)

65 & 67: Carryout Plastic Bag Regulations

Background: In 2014 the California Legislature passed SB 270, which would have required stores that offer plastic bags for carryout to sell them for 10¢ apiece, with stores being allowed to keep the money for certain specified purposes (legislation similar to what Mendocino County already has). This law did not go into effect when a referendum requiring its approval qualified for the state ballot. That referendum is now Proposition 67. Prop. 65 would require that the money collected from the sale of plastic bags (in the attempt to curb their use) be placed in a special new fund, administered by the Wildlife Conservation Fund, thus removing stores' discretion in how to use bag funds that are collected. The wording of the two propositions says that whichever one has the most votes would supersede the other one, in the event they both pass.

65 Pros: stores should not be allowed to profit from sales of plastic bags to consumers who no

longer can have free ones; environmental responsibility is the goal of a plastic bag ban, so funds should go for the environment, not retailers

65 Cons: grocery stores don't profit from the bag sales anyway; the proposal was created to deceive the public and obscure the issue at hand, phasing out plastic bags; it would nullify local plastic bag regulations, already covering 40% of California consumers

Funding For 65: The Plastic Bag Alliance--a plastic bag manufacturers' trade group, International Paper, Dow Chemical, taxpayer associations (\$5.1M)

Funding Against 65: no significant expenditures

67 Pros: this is a common-sense solution to reduce plastic litter in oceans, lakes, and streams and to protect wildlife; opposition is funded by out-of-state corporations who want to protect their profits; approving this would not affect the 40% of Californians already covered

67 Cons: banning bags would be bad for the economy and would eliminate jobs; grocers do not deserve to have the money raised by the ban

Funding For 67: Californians Versus Big Plastics; Governor Brown; various other state legislators and officials; Democratic Party; Grocery Outlet; 65 environment organizations (\$1.8M)

Funding For 67: The Plastic Bag Alliance; International Paper; Dow Chemical; taxpayer associations (\$5.1M, exactly the same as pro 65)

A fuller treatment can be found in [the LWVC "Pros and Cons" publication at CAVotes.org](#). Eight more propositions (including legalization of marijuana and death penalty procedures) will be discussed in the next League meeting at 10 a.m. on October 11 at the Caspar Community Center. Coffee and conversation begin at 9:30. As at all League meetings, the public is welcome at no charge.

Vote With the League

Don't forget that in addition to providing unbiased information on the State propositions, the League also makes [ballot recommendations](#) designed to further our State and national program and to make our political system more democratic.

LWVUS News

Voters Win Major Civil Rights Challenge

The League of Women Voters has just won a major federal voting rights case. A federal appeals court blocked the illegal action of Brian Newby, U.S. Election Assistance Commission executive director, who earlier this year unilaterally allowed Alabama, Georgia and Kansas to require voters to produce difficult-to-obtain proof of citizenship documentation when completing the federal mail voter registration form. This action has illegally kept voters from the polls, caused confusion, and threatened the lawful voter registration efforts of the League and other groups.

“With just weeks to go before a critical presidential election, we are grateful to the court of appeals for stopping this thinly veiled discrimination in its tracks. We should be making voting easier, not harder. All eligible Americans deserve the opportunity to register and vote without obstacles,” said Chris Carson, president of the League of Women Voters of the United States. “With this ruling, League volunteers will be able to get back to what we do best: helping voters get registered and ready for Election Day.”

2015-2016 Officers and Directors Contact List

Co-President 964-6862	Nancy Kleiber nkleiberca@mac.com	Co-President 357-4272	Cindy Plank theplanks@yahoo.com
Vice President 964-2781	Dorine Real dorine@mcn.org	Secretary 964-3600	Sharon Gilligan sharongilligan@comcast.net
Treasurer 964-2781	Lee Tepper eel@mcn.org	Voter Service 964-6351	Jane Person janeperson@hotmail.com
Membership 964-4942	Jary Stavely jstavely@mcn.org	Director 937-2481	JoAn Blackstone jblackstone@mcn.org
Director 964-3600	Roberta Brockschmidt rbrockschmidt@comcast.net	Director 964-9271	Carol Czadek norcoel@mcn.org
Director 937-3409	Pat Dunbar pdunbar@mcn.org	Director 937-0629	Babs Levine babs.levine@gmail.com
Off-Board Chairpersons			
Budget	Jim Plank	Nominating	Patricia Marien
Editors	Jary Stavely, Lee Tepper	Voter voter@mcn.org Staff	Jane Person, Dorine Real, Sharon Gilligan, Becky Bowen

LWVMC MEMBER MEETINGS

Below are the dates and topics of our members' meetings for the rest of the 2016-17 year. The public is invited to attend all member meetings at no charge. Meetings are scheduled on Tuesdays. Refreshments and conversation start at 9:30 a.m., program at 10:00. All will be held at the Caspar Community Center.

October 11th: Pros and Cons, part II

October 25th: Forum on County Measure AG (Mental Health Facility)

January 10th: Local program planning

February 14th: Coast Hospital issues

March 17th: Meet and Greet event

April 11th: Broadband access

May 9th: LWV of Mendocino County Annual Meeting

You are also welcome at LWVMC Board meetings, held on Tuesday mornings at the Fort Bragg Library Community Room. For Board meeting dates, see our website (www.mendo.ca.lwvnet.org).

Dear Members,

As you can tell from reading this newsletter, this election year is a busy one for the League, and your dues are more important than ever. If you are reading this now in the *Voter*, please take a minute to mail your dues, or mark your calendar to bring them along to our next meeting on October 11th. The more dues we collect at this time, the less we will spend on postage asking later on.

As you know, our dues support the national, state and local League. Our dues are now \$60.00 for an individual membership, and \$90.00 for a 2-member household. The vast majority of your dues is passed on to the U.S. and the California Leagues, leaving less than \$2 of your dues for local use. In addition to our regular and household memberships, we are pleased to include two additional levels of membership for you to consider when you make your renewal. Each membership level is named after a woman of the past who chose to make a difference:

- Susan B. Anthony founded the National Woman Suffrage Association along with Elizabeth Cady Stanton.
- Amelia Bloomer was the first woman to own, operate and edit a newspaper, *The Lily*, which promoted women's rights issues.
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton founded the National Woman Suffrage Association and served as its first president.
- Carrie Chapman Catt founded the League of Women Voters: "Winning the vote is only an opening wedge -- learning to use it is a bigger task."

Thank you for remaining a member of a committed group of women and men who are working to make a difference in the future of our country.

Jary Stavelly
Membership Chair

Membership Renewal, 2016-2017

Please make checks payable to LWVMC. Print this page and mail with your check to:

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

Sorry, only Education Fund donations are tax-deductible.

Name	_____
Susan B. Anthony Individual Membership	\$60 _____
Amelia Bloomer Household Membership	\$90 _____
Elizabeth Cady Stanton Membership	\$100 _____
Carrie Chapman Catt Membership	\$250 _____
Donation to LWVMC	_____
Donation to LWVMC Education Fund (tax deductible)	_____
Total	_____



Want to write a letter to the editor? The *Voter* has a new online mailbox. You can now send questions, comments, and suggestions to voter@mcn.org. We'd love to hear from you.