



# The Voter

## THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

January/February, 2017

Cindy Plank and Nancy Kleiber, Presidents

Jary Stavely and Lee Tepper, Editors

### What Do We Do Now?

The Mendocino County League will hold its next meeting at 10 a.m. on January 10th at the Caspar Community Center. Our topic will be Program Planning at the State and Local Levels. In League lingo, our “program” means what we plan to do. The November election has raised questions about what will happen with a number of different issues of longstanding interest to the League. Charlene McAllister, Dorine Real, Nancy Kleiber, Cindy Plank, and Jary Stavely are planning a review of selected national, state, and local positions, in light of the election results, with two goals: like other local Leagues, we will make recommendations to the State League about its focus for the coming two-year cycle (from September 2017 through June, 2019); and we will decide how to focus our own priorities, meetings, and energies for this year and the next.

To make more room for discussion, the committee has pared down the scope of our review (and look ahead) to four major areas: immigration, the environment, health care, and mental health (in light of the defeat of Measure AG). Our intention is not just to prioritize the topics, but to plan what actions we can take.

In addition, the national League has asked the state leagues to make a commitment to support the new national theme, “Making Democracy Work.” Please come to the meeting prepared to help answer



*Climate change is one of several issues on which the League’s positions conflict with announced Administration policies.*

the question, "How will the League promote Democracy in the coming months and years?" We hope to stimulate extensive discussion, so be prepared to share your own concerns and hopes with the group.

As usual, coffee, tea, refreshments, and conversation will be available for the half hour before the meeting, at 9:30. And as always, you are invited to bring along interested non-members.

### 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*

## Think Nationally—Act Locally

by Nancy Kleiber

With the so much of our focus for the last year being on national events, issues and elections, it's time to come back home. Not that we could, nor should, ignore what's happening on the national stage, but we need to reconnect with our local community, because every action in Washington will impact us in Mendocino County. For me there are three main areas of concern:

Being of a certain age, I care about access to health care, Social Security, and Medicare. In order to know how pronounced changes in those programs would affect me and my neighbors, I need to find out a lot more about how those programs operate currently at the local level. For example, how many county residents are insured under the ACA and Covered California? Are there some changes to the ACA or Covered California that would actually benefit residents of a rural county like Mendocino and our primary health care providers including the District Hospital and clinics?

Our environment. Need I say more? Many of us are veterans of the fights to prevent offshore drilling, marine sonar testing, and ill-conceived wave energy projects, and so we have done a lot of homework already. But what of the opening of federal lands to development by sale or lease? What federal lands are there in the County that might be affected? If federal air and water quality standards are rolled back, what are our State protections? How dependent are the State and County on federal funding for enforcement?

Immigration and its dark side, deportation, is my third major concern. How many of our young people have registered for DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals)? What is the process for deportation? Are there resources within the County that can assist law-abiding immigrants from arbitrary deportation?

You've heard my top concerns, now tell us what you care about—go to our website ([www.mendo.ca.lwvnet.org/](http://www.mendo.ca.lwvnet.org/)), Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/LWVMendo1/>), or better yet come to the January League meeting on January 10th, where we will be setting the program priorities for the upcoming year. Our League will be doing what we do best, providing in-depth non-partisan information on the issues facing us so that we can act responsibly and effectively to preserve our democracy. Don't be inflamed, be informed!



Keep up with League activities at all levels by visiting the National members' website,  
**forum.lwv.org**  
and the State site,  
**lwvc.org**

### A Letter from Cindy Regarding Meeting Times

Dear League Members,

We are interested in your honest opinion. We want to provide our meetings at a time of day, or day of the week that would allow the highest attendance. Please send a quick email, or leave a phone message, and share with us your preference: Would you be likely to attend meetings if we held them in the evenings? at lunch time? on Saturday?

My phone number is 357-4282, and my email is [theplanks@yahoo.com](mailto:theplanks@yahoo.com). You can also reply at [voter@mcn.org](mailto:voter@mcn.org).

Thanks for your participation,  
*Cindy*

## The League's Position on the Electoral College

In view of the results of the November presidential election, the *Voter* is sharing the following article from the LWVUS website, reviewing the League's position on the Electoral College. California is one of ten states plus the District of Columbia which have subscribed to the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact, an agreement which would sidestep the Electoral College without amending the U.S. Constitution, and give a majority of the Electoral College vote to the winner of the popular vote. The Compact, which needs to be adopted by enough states to have a majority of the electoral votes in order to go into effect, currently has 30.7% of the votes in the Electoral College. Two more states have legislation pending to join the Compact.

A League study of the presidential election process culminated in a 1970 position supporting direct election of the President by popular vote as essential to representative government. The League testified and lobbied for legislation to amend the Constitution to replace the Electoral College with direct election of the President, including provisions for a national runoff election in the event no candidates (President or Vice-President) received 40 percent of the vote. The measure, which passed the House and nearly passed the Senate in 1971, has been revived in each Congress without success. In 1997, the LWVUS again called for abolition of the Electoral College and for direct election of the President and Vice-President in testimony before the House Subcommittee on the Constitution.

The League has supported national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections to ensure equity for voters from all states and to facilitate the election process.

The League believes strongly that the Electoral College should be abolished and not merely "reformed." One "reform" which the League specifically rejects is the voting by electors based on proportional representation in lieu of the present "winner-takes-all" method. Such a system would apportion the electoral votes of a state based on the popular vote in that state. Instead of making the Electoral College more representative, such proportional voting would increase the chance that no candidate would receive a majority in the Electoral College, thereby sending the election of the President to the House of Representatives where

each state, regardless of population, would receive only one vote. Election of the President by the House further removes the decision from the people and is contrary to the "one person, one vote" principle. The League also does not support reform of the Electoral College on a state-by-state basis because the League believes there should be uniformity across the nation in the systems used to elect the President.

The 2002 Convention voted to expand and update the position. The new position, adopted in June 2004, took into account the entire presidential selection process and supported a process that produces the best possible candidates, informed voters and optimum voter participation.

The 2008 Convention voted to conduct a study of the National Popular Vote proposal, which would establish the popular election of the President through a compact among the states governing how they would cast their votes in the Electoral College. The 2010 Convention amended the national position to support the National Popular Vote compact.

### LWVUS Statement of Position on Selection of the President

(as revised by the 2010 National Convention)

*The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The League of Women Voters believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished. We support the use of the National Popular Vote Compact as one acceptable way to achieve the goal of the direct popular vote for election of the president until the abolition of the College is accomplished. The League also supports uniform voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. The League supports changes in the presidential election system – from the candidate selection process to the general election. We support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates and their positions, public policy issues and the selection process itself. The League supports action to ensure that the media, political parties, candidates, and all levels of government achieve these goals and provide that information.*

## Local Election Count: It's Official After 22 Days

by Jary Stavelly and Dorine Real

The final results of the November election in Mendocino County were released on December 1st. Countywide, Measure AG, the mental health facility measure advanced by Sheriff Allman, failed to pass by less than half a percentage point, receiving 66.3% of the vote.

As reported in the Advocate-News, Bernie Norvell and Will Lee took the two seats available on the Fort Bragg City Council with 33.66% (1,527 votes) and 35.77% (1,623 votes) of the vote, respectively. Measure AA, to increase the Transient Occupancy Tax in Fort Bragg from 10% to 12%, passed easily (1,546 to 1,050 votes), as did the advisory measure directing spending of the increase. Fort Bragg had the highest voter turnout in the county.

Lucas Campos and Steve Lund won long-term seats on the MCHD Board (with 30.22% and 27.76%) and Kevin Miller will be filling the remainder of retired Dr. Kate Rohr's term (with nearly 40%). John Huff and Kirk L. Marshall won the open seats on the Mendocino Coast Parks and Recreation District Board with 39.56% and 36.98%.

The time it takes for the final vote count, and the discrepancy between the election night report and the final totals, have prompted a number of questions and concerns around Mendocino County. K.C. Meadows, the managing editor of the *Ukiah Daily Journal*, performed official observations and wrote an opinion piece which can be found in the November 30 *Journal* (<http://www.ukiahdailyjournal.com/general-news/20161130/the-observer-vote-tally-still-not-finished>).

## Local League Members Give Presentation at Rotary Meeting

by Cindy Plank

Fort Bragg Rotary invited LWVMC representatives to speak at their luncheon meeting on November 9, 2016, at The Wharf. Jane Person provided to the Rotary membership some very interesting stories about the decades of determination involved in acquiring the right for women to vote, as well as the history of the formation of the League of Women Voters. Nancy Kleiber spoke about League process used for establishing League positions. She also shared that the match between California state ballot measure results and League recommendations was

She saw several ways in which the count could be dramatically speeded up – for an additional cost.

LWVMC members Jane Person, Cindy Plank, Carol Czadek, and Dorine Real served as official observers, two before, and two others after, Election Day. Their purpose was primarily to assure the integrity of the count, but they also noticed several factors that help explain why the process takes so long. The holdup is mainly caused by the many mail-in ballots, in particular those that are turned in at the polls on Election Day. Each mail-in ballot must have its outside signature checked, then be removed from the envelope and carefully smoothed so it will feed through the counting machine, and checked to see whether it needs to be “remade.” Remaking is a process that only applies to mail-in ballots. Registrar Susan Ranochak explained that polling-place voters have access to the help of poll workers and the ability to obtain a fresh ballot if their first ballot becomes “spoiled”; since mail-ballot voters don't have these, a special effort is made to rescue their spoiled ballots by remaking. This is a tedious process of copying any clearly-intended but not machine-readable votes onto a fresh ballot, always working in pairs and with ample precautions against losing ballots or introducing extra ones

At the same time, Ms. Ranochak herself attempts to validate the provisional ballots. If a voter has registered anywhere in Mendocino County, even under a slightly different name, Ms. Ranochak tracks down the proof in various County records, eventually managing to validate about 90% of the ballots.

Our observers, like Ms. Meadows, concluded that the process does not have to become less conscientious to be speeded up.

very high in this election. Cindy Plank provided some information regarding League's primary focus of Voter Rights, and explained the many areas of Voter Services that our local League provided during this past election cycle.

Steve Lund complimented the LWV on the valuable information available on its website. He and Doug Hammerstrom also praised our local League for the programs we offer as well as the professional-quality forums we provide. The Rotary members were warm, friendly and attentive. We very much enjoyed our time spent with them.



# National League Accomplishments of 2016

by Jary Stavely

This is a summary of a report on the LWVUS website. More activities including partnerships, a concert tour, visibility, media mentions, social media, and the presidential debates are listed at [forum.lwv.org/document/2016-league-review](http://forum.lwv.org/document/2016-league-review):

## Election Services

- Vote411.org helped more than 4 million voters in 2016
- provided data on nearly 45,000 candidates in nearly 24,000 races.
- Over 500 debates and candidate forums hosted nationwide by local leagues.

## Voter Registration

- State and local leagues held over 400 voter registration events.
- Over 300 regional and local news articles about National Voter Registration Day
- Nearly 19,000 new Americans registered to vote
- More than 500 league volunteers attended 220+ naturalization ceremonies.
- League volunteers registered nearly 15,000 high school and community college students.

## Advocacy in Congress and courts to defend

- **rights of voters** (also increasing public understanding of the issues involved in suppressing the vote through gerrymandering and voter i.d. restrictions)
- Kobach v. EAC (i.d. laws in Arizona, Kansas)
- Phillip Randolph Inst. v. John Husted. (voter

purge in Ohio)

- Bethune-Hill v. Virginia State Board of Elections (gerrymandering in Virginia)
- legal complaint in Florida which led to additional week of registration
- LWV v. Newby (proof of citizenship in Alabama, Georgia, Kansas)
- Zubik v. Burwell (gerrymandering in North Carolina)

*Of special local interest ...*

## Offshore Oil Moratorium

In mid-December President Obama announced a permanent moratorium on offshore oil drilling in certain areas – but not the Pacific coast. Here is a link to League President Chris Carson's article about the League's interest in this event:

<https://morningconsult.com/opinions/permanently-protect-arctic-atlantic-children-future-generations/>.

- Evenwel v. Abbot (using criterion other than population for redistricting)
- Support of Voting Rights Advancement Act (response to court curtailment of VRA)

## Voter Protection at the Polls

- Volunteers monitored polling places on election day
- More than 117,000 calls to hotline call center in 2016

## Action Alerts, Online Petitions, Issue Advocacy

- Support for HR 425 (against effects of Citizens United)
- Letters to President Obama to protect against offshore oil drilling (*see box, this page*)
- work to support EPA's Clean Power Plan
- Fisher v. UT (support for Univ. of Texas admissions policy)
- Efforts to fix the Federal Election Commission
- Stop Voter Suppression petition
- Petition to President to ensure that ACA complies with voting rights laws
- Juliana et. al. v. United States (landmark climate change lawsuit in Oregon)



Former coastal resident and League leader Helen Herbert has passed away. She had been living at Oakmont, near Santa Rosa. There will be a chapel service on January 14th at 1:30 p.m. at Santa Rosa Memorial Park, and a celebration of life on January 15th at 1 p.m. at the Oakmont Golf Club. Condolences can be offered or flowers sent through Legacy.com.

# Local Hospital Topic of February League Meeting

by Charlene McCallister

Our February meeting, to be held on the 14th at the Caspar Community Center, will focus on the current state of the Mendocino Coast District Hospital. Charlene McCallister, current chair of the hospital foundation, has invited Bob Edwards and Steve Lund to speak, and has offered the following questions to them in order to spark a lively and informative session:

- What is the difference between the Health Care District and the Hospital?
- What services are offered through the hospital and which through the District?
- What can the district do that the hospital cannot?
- What is the current financial status of the hospital?
- What is the current status on a parcel tax

measure?

- Do we still need to have a new hospital in 2030 and if so, what plans are currently being made to provide for the building?
- Can the existing facility patient rooms be used for other purposes?
- How has the ACA affected MCDH?
- While it is premature to say what changes may be coming, do you have a sense of how they will affect small rural hospitals?
- What percentage of staff and physicians are "temporary"?
- What are the local barriers to attracting staff and physicians to this area?

Mark your calendar and be sure to attend. Coffee and conversation start at 9:30; the presentation will begin at 10 a.m.

2016-17 Directors and Officers			
Co-President:	Cindy Plank	357-4272	theplanks@yahoo.com
Co-President:	Nancy Kleiber	964-6862	nkleiberca@mac.com
Vice President:	Dorine Real	964-2781	dorine@mcn.org
Secretary:	Sharon Gilligan	964-3600	sharongilligan@comcast.net
Treasurer:	Lee Tepper	964-2781	eel@mcn.org
Voter Service:	Jane Person	964-6351	janeperson@hotmail.com
Membership:	Jary Stavely	964-4942	jstavely@mcn.org
Directors:	JoAn Blackstone	937-2481	jblackstone@mcn.org
	Roberta Brockschmidt	964-3600	rrbrockschmidt@comcast.net
	Carol Czadek	964-9271	norcoel@mcn.org
	Pat Dunbar	937-3409	pdunbar@mcn.org
	Babs Levine	937-0629	babs.levine@gmail.com
Off-Board Chairpersons		Voter staff	
Budget:	Jim Plank	<a href="mailto:voter@mcn.org">mailto: voter@mcn.org</a>	
Nominating:	Patricia Marien	Editors: Jary Stavely, Lee Tepper	
Mailing address		Staff: Jane Person, Sharon Gilligan,	
P.O. Box 1128, Fort Bragg CA 95437		Dorine Real, Becky Bowen	



Readers of the *VOTER* are encouraged to read about (and 'like') our Mendocino County League on Facebook. The site is <http://www.facebook.com/LWVMendo1/>  
 You don't even have to sign up in order to see what is posted there.