



# The Voter

## THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

January, 2019

Cindy Plank and Nancy Kleiber, Presidents

Jary Stavely and Lee Tepper, Editors

*January meeting ...*

### **Regenerative Agriculture: Local Action on Climate Change**

*by Cindy Plank*

"Climate change is the most pressing issue of our time," is the heading for the press release we have issued announcing the January meeting of the Mendocino County League, to be held at 6 PM on Tuesday, January 8 at the Caspar Community Center. The announcement continues:

We are calling on YOU to be a part of the climate change solution! From our local forestry professionals to our local farmers and winegrowers, and even our local home gardeners, many in Mendocino are already leading the way. You are invited to participate in a conversation about principles and practices to draw down carbon and store it in the soil.

The meeting will begin with a presentation and dialogue about carbon storage strategies and techniques, led by Elizabeth Guimarin, of the organization, Soil Carbon Watch (also called Soil Health Watch). She says the following about her upcoming presentation:

"In the face of climate change, healthy soils can remove carbon from the atmosphere and store it in the soil. It can change agriculture and land management from a major cause of climate change to a solution within reach!

The urgency of climate change requires us to rapidly scale Soil Health for climate stability, moderating temperatures and extreme weather, food security and water abundance.

Whether we live in an urban or rural area in

California, we can all participate in regenerating land by capturing carbon through plants with Soil Health."

Her talk will address the questions,

- How does Soil Health provide climate change solutions?
- How can Soil Health restore water cycles?
- How can Soil Health benefit our food systems?
- What can we do in our gardens, farms, and communities and throughout our state?

The meeting will continue with a networking session including local farmers, gardeners, and growers, during which they will share their stories, and we will be able to begin our own.

These conversations will be useful for community members to learn and share these cool techniques, put them into practice in home, community or school gardens, and meet neighbors who are already practicing carbon storage and soil health strategies.

Continuing to take climate change seriously and advocating for a national and worldwide climate recovery plan is essential, but not everyone can be involved at that level. There are many ways to tackle the effects of climate change and this is a specific method that each and every one of us can do on our own.

Please join us. And note the *evening* starting time: doors will open at 6 PM for coffee and refreshments.

*(More on Soil Health is on p.7)*

#### **LWW 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 ...*

## **The Holidays From a League Perspective**

*By Nancy Kleiber*

The 2018 holiday season is over. In reflection, it was a successful season for the League of Women Voters.

Starting in October with the bustle of pre-election activity, my favorite time: registering voters, providing candidate forums that give us all a chance to meet and question the candidates, researching the ballot propositions for our non-partisan presentation on the pros and cons, resisting voter suppression schemes and, finally, getting out the vote. League efforts didn't end on election day, especially this year, but continued with an intense scrutiny by the League of the vote counting process to ensure that every vote was counted. So by Thanksgiving Day, we could celebrate the highest voter registration and turnout in many years, as well as give thanks for the end of those repeated and annoying political ads, phone calls and money-raising emails.

Traditionally after-Thanksgiving is a time of political calm as we turn our attention to family and holidays. But in 2018, the political ceasefire was broken daily by hyper-partisan activities. In one-party controlled states, e.g. Wisconsin and Michigan, lame duck administrations and legislatures frantically tried to preserve power. In the midst of the December political storms, the League remained an eye of calm. Instead of "partisanship," the League is noted for its "issueship," focusing on the fundamental problems we face, such as climate change. Our Mendocino County League has prepared a fascinating program for our January 8 evening (6 PM) meeting — see the articles on pages 1 and 7.

Now the New Year of 2019 begins with hope and resolve. As newly elected representatives, full of energy and brimming with ideas, take on their duties and the old pols try to adjust and assimilate them, there is talk of possible bipartisan cooperation. However, without a mechanism or structure in place to reach agreement, the odds are against it. The League is an effective advocate because we have a process by which to reach consensus and take a united position on basic issues. Consensus is not reached from the top down but from the bottom up and it begins this year at our February meeting (on February 12 at 10 AM) when we will deliberate on both our current positions and proposals that will be considered for adoption. We will also be determining our program focus for the coming year.

Hope to see you there and thank you for your involvement in the League. Onward!



*LWV California CEO Melissa Breach at our November meeting.  
Photo by Lee Tepper*

## **State CEO Discusses League's Future**

*by Jary Stavely*

Melissa Breach, the Chief Executive Officer of the California League, addressed 26 local League members and friends on the future of the organization on November 13 at the Caspar Community Center. Her presentation was based on the national League's Transformation Platform and its recent declaration supporting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. It ranged over numerous topics, including climate change, youth engagement, the principle of consensus, the 2020 census, and declining membership. Ms. Breach said we need to be able to respond to the question, "How can the League be relevant currently?"

She began with a discussion of the League's membership  
*(League's Future is continued, next page)*

*(League's Future, from p. 2)*

challenges. Recalling the past, when membership was largely made up of stay-at-home housewives, she remarked that the League was "built on the unpaid labor of women." That period is clearly in the past, since now a large majority of younger and middle-aged women work outside the home. A study of the League's demographics also shows that the historical pattern of members sticking with the organization over the long term no longer holds. California is now a brown state, and women of color are even less likely than the average to have the leisure, mid-day time during which the League has done most of its work. For the League to continue being relevant, to continue to work for the public good, it needs to be more representative of current demographics.

Change is needed, which is why the Transformation Roadmap is being created, and the push for diversity, equity, and inclusion is taking place.

One of the questions she is often asked is, "What should the League be spending its money on?"

During the past seven years, since Ms. Breach has been the CEO, LWVC has been one of the strongest advocates in the national League for spending money developing and sharing data with the public and with other organizations. In support of this, our state League (under the leadership of a millennial) has been pushing LWVUS to modernize its information technology. On the state level, lobbying produces results: up to early November, the League's efforts had already helped pass at least 18 of the 60-plus bills it had participated in.

In 2015 a powwow was held to decide how to modernize the League while making sure that Making Democracy Work was core to its future work. There was intuitive agreement that its makeup was too affluent and white, but there was little other demographic information available. Another big problem was how the national organization could be well-focused when it was made up of diffused, autonomous local units like ours. Participants realized, as well, that the administrative requirements for local leagues were growing, while their volunteer hours were shrinking, so they worked on creating options for helping local leagues deal with the increased administrative workload. The Transformation Roadmap came out of these meetings. Unfortunately, the national CEO resigned

not long afterwards. Virginia Kase has come on since last summer to help facilitate the plan.

What won't change for the League are its commitment to the work of advocacy and education, and its principle of non-partisanship, although we now downplay that term, since so many issues on which we take positions and action have come to be regarded as ideological/partisan. Ms. Breach suggested that in the past, league units have been more focused on the "work" to be done, than on being 'welcoming.' The roadmap suggests that we need to be more engaged in training replacements for positions currently held by older, affluent, white people.

In her view, an important area for us to be involved in during the next two years is in advocacy for a fair 2020 census. "If our representation echoed the electorate, most of our problems would be solved," she said. We should be targeting voter registration efforts to make the voter rolls reflect the diversity of the public at large, which is why she doesn't like to spend money on registration efforts at Whole Foods, for example. A good way to implement the push for diversity, equity, and involvement is to mix with different people, she said. Leagues and League members should interact with brown and poor groups at every opportunity. As a white woman, she gets corrected (and thereby learns) all the time in such situations.

Finally, our state CEO made a few comments about civility, consensus, and concurrence. She finds that emphasis on civility can sometimes be a trap that curtails rightful expression. One question is how to have passion in opposing hateful speech—we need to be able to hold space for those who are being oppressed. She warned that although consensus remains a strong principle for League decisions, we need to make sure it doesn't lead to a tyranny of the minority. In these times, when decisions cannot wait for formal 'studies,' the League is working more and more toward adopting positions through 'concurrence.' What can't change, she said, is that local leagues have to decide in a real way about issues. However, "The only time the process is more important than the outcome, is if you don't care about the outcome," She ended her presentation with this non-exclusionary principle: "I believe in the power of women."

## LWVMC Taking Action for Increased Voting and Inclusion

The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County has been awarded a grant of \$900 by the national league Education Fund (LWVEF) to support a local Youth Registration Project. According to the terms of the contract agreement, "the project aims to engage high school, community college, and/or vocational school students in the electoral process, and in particular to work to mitigate the widespread disparities in youth voting among African Americans, Latinos, and young people with no college experience. LWVEF is providing funding and materials to utilize during the registration activities (including the *Empowering the Voters of Tomorrow* training manual) in targeted underrepresented communities to support voter registration in the Spring of 2019."

Cindy Plank, Nancy Kleiber, and Jane Person will be meeting in January to organize details of the plan, and welcome the participation of any and all who would like to join the project, which will involve ten schools in the county. The team will:

- participate in training provided by the Education Fund,
- give voter registration presentations in the classroom,
- pay special attention to youth who have special needs or who come from underrepresented communities,
- keep records of registrants,
- publicize the project in local media, and
- develop a plan for following up with the youth to complete actual voting.

More information will be available at the January 8 meeting or by contacting Cindy, Nancy, or Jane directly.

## Local Election Results Finalized

At the end of November the final results for the fall election were released, a week before the statewide deadline. This time the tabulation of mail-in and questionable ballots did not change the preliminary results announced on election night. Lindy Peters, Jessica Morsell-Haye, and Tess Albin-Smith won four year terms on the Fort Bragg City Council.

Jessica Grinberg, Amy Beth McColley, and John Redding took four-year seats on the coast hospital district board, while Karen Arnold took the two-year seat that was on the ballot. Measure H, for a sales tax increase in Fort Bragg (which the League supported), failed to gain a majority, losing by 68 out of 2280 votes cast.

## Current Thinking about the Situation

*by George Reinhardt*

Here are links to two articles about climate change. The first is short and appeared recently in Forbes magazine. The second is a long, three part article that outlines the necessary transition to an electricity based — rather than our fossil fuel based -- energy system. The longer article is a comprehensive look at the challenges and the necessity. It is not all depressing: there are some reasons to believe we might be successful. I feel there is no reason to assume we will. Business as usual is a very bad idea.

The first article: This is a business man's perspective on this most important topic summarizing his alarm after reading the recent report from the IPCC (the UN Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change). *Combating Global Warming Means Adopting Technology, Now*  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/enriquedans/2018/10/09/combating-global-warming-means-adopting-technology-now/#15593b21d461>)

The second article: This three-part article is terrific and worth the investment of your valuable time. There are some things I disagree with, of course, but the scope is unlike anything I have read. *Homo Electric, Part 1: The Trillion Dollar Time Trial*  
<https://medium.com/future-crunch/homo-electric-and-the-trillion-dollar-time-trial-9ae2e4fb23ee>)

After absorbing the challenges of this comprehensive article the final crucial point is that we must all get involved politically. We must vote and get civically engaged if we want to solve this – the greatest challenge our species has ever faced. There is a lot our community can do about climate change. On a personal level as well as the political. The political is the most important and the hardest to implement. If you wish to comment or discuss, please write to me at <[nhudg@mcn.org](mailto:nhudg@mcn.org)>.



## News and Links from National

### League Instrumental in Passing Redistricting

**Ballot Initiatives:** Congratulations to the Leagues of Women Voters of Colorado, Michigan, Missouri, and Long Beach, CA for successfully passing redistricting initiatives on the 2018 ballot. The Leagues' work in these locations was instrumental in ensuring voters had the information they needed to make informed choices.

More at [https://www.lwv.org/blog/leagues-support-redistricting-initiatives-november-6th-ballots?utm\\_source=LeagueUpdate&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=110818](https://www.lwv.org/blog/leagues-support-redistricting-initiatives-november-6th-ballots?utm_source=LeagueUpdate&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=110818).

The League of Women Voters of Utah celebrated a hard-fought victory in the battle for redistricting reform as news came of the passage of Proposition 4. This measure promises the creation of an independent redistricting commission that is tasked with drawing lines for state legislative and congressional districts—meaning that those in power will no longer be the ones in charge of shaping their districts and choosing their voters. Read more at [https://www.lwv.org/blog/leagues-help-secure-redistricting-win-utah?utm\\_source=LeagueUpdate&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=122018](https://www.lwv.org/blog/leagues-help-secure-redistricting-win-utah?utm_source=LeagueUpdate&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=122018).

**End the Influence of Big Money:** New legislation from Congress, HR1, will modernize our election system, reform redistricting, and restore the Voting Rights Act. But we need your help to ensure that a key provision reducing the undue influence of Big Money in our politics is also included. Contact your representative and ask that a small donor public financing system is included as a priority in HR1. Contact link: [http://participate.lwv.org/c/10065/p/dia/action4/common/public/?action\\_KEY=13540&utm\\_source=LeagueUpdate&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=122018](http://participate.lwv.org/c/10065/p/dia/action4/common/public/?action_KEY=13540&utm_source=LeagueUpdate&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=122018).

### League Submits Comments on VRA to USCCR:

Each year the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights solicits feedback from the public for its Fall Report. We submitted comments to answer the question of whether the federal government has maintained its role in relation to civil rights and ways to make enforcement more conducive for the U.S. Read our comment at <https://www.lwv.org/expanding-voter-access/league-submits-comments-vra-us-civil-rights->

[commission?utm\\_source=LeagueUpdate&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=122018](https://www.lwv.org/expanding-voter-access/league-submits-comments-vra-us-civil-rights-commission?utm_source=LeagueUpdate&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=122018).

### Support H.R. 5308 - Women's History and Nineteenth Amendment Centennial Quarter

**Dollar Coin Program Act:** Legislation has been introduced that proposes a series of quarters, featuring a 19th Amendment icon on one side and a noteworthy woman from each state and territory. The legislation has been introduced in the U.S. House by Rep. Barbara Lee. A template is now available on the League Management Site for those wishing to contact their Representative in support of this bill. See [https://www.lwv.org/league-management/other-issues-tools/support-hr-5308-womens-history-and-nineteenth-amendment?utm\\_source=LeagueUpdate&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=122018](https://www.lwv.org/league-management/other-issues-tools/support-hr-5308-womens-history-and-nineteenth-amendment?utm_source=LeagueUpdate&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=122018).

## News from State

*LWVC President Helen Hutchison made climate change the theme for a recent appeal for funds, referring to our September presenter Diz Swift. Here is her recent letter (with donation links deleted):*

The headlines keep coming, and the message is clear: the devastating impact of climate change is here, and its effects in the coming decades could be catastrophic. California is on the front line, battling drought and unprecedented wildfires.

Unlike Superman, you can't turn back time. But you can support the heroic work of our Climate Change Task Force, whose grassroots leaders are working to protect our environment.

The Climate Change Task Force advocates for critically important public policy reforms while helping local Leagues and organizers educate their legislators—and their communities. “We’re making climate change better understood in communities across California,” says task force director Diz Swift. “For people to vote climate, they need to understand the science and the legislation.”

Our team is tracking, analyzing, and targeting those bills that will have the greatest impact. This year we advocated for the passage of SB 100. Now law, SB 100 directs California to achieve 100% zero-carbon efficiency by 2045—an important and achievable goal.

*(State news continues, next page)*

## Don Kirkpatrick: In Remembrance of Small Things

*League member Don Kirkpatrick passed away on November 19, 2018, at the age of 87 in his home outside of Mendocino. Many people have fond memories of being with him at League events and elsewhere in the community. Priscilla Comen sent us the following:*



Don Kirkpatrick--Kirk to his wife Shirley and close friends and to his sister Elizabeth--was a fine human being. He knew how to get things done with a smile, not with an angry word, when Superintendent of Schools in Mendocino. He wrote humorous limericks and loved when his audience laughed at them. He also wrote memoirs about his and Shirley's life. He was a gracious host at birthday parties at his home (decorated with mementos of his travels abroad), a loving grand father and great-grand father. He loved going to Spain to visit his family there, and brought back delicious olives for close friends. He was a member of the Mendocino branch of the League of Women Voters because he believed in their values. He made delicious sausage soup.

We will miss him. He was a good friend.

*(State news, continued)*

While this is a BIG victory in the fight against climate change, we have much more to do!

*She similarly invoked the League's work for fairly drawn legislative districts in another appeal:*

Gerrymandering is a foe we've been battling for years. A decade ago, we were instrumental in establishing California's Citizens' Redistricting Commission. In 2011, the new maps were approved, helping break the monopoly held by many incumbents and making districts across California more competitive. The 14-member commission upended the system, breaking the incumbent monopoly and giving voters a bigger voice.

Now it's time to prepare for a new commission in 2020! We're already advocating for a complete and

accurate census and for sufficient funding for the commission's vital work. And soon we'll begin outreach efforts to identify a pool of applicants that reflects California's rich diversity.

This fall, UC Davis student and League intern Syeda Hamdani and I met with the redistricting committee director and legislative staff at the Capitol to plan for a successful new commission and district maps. "Getting people involved in civic engagement is really important," says Syeda—and the new commission will be a key way for Californians to directly guide our democracy.

We're dedicated to ensuring a fair and transparent redistricting process here in California and in states like Utah and Michigan that are replicating our citizen-led process.

## Contact Your League

**Mail:** LWVMC, P.O. Box 1128, Fort Bragg, CA 95437

**Website:** <http://mendo.ca.lwvnet.org>

**Telephone:** (707) 937-4952 (messages)

**Facebook:** <http://www.facebook.com/LWVMendo1/>

**Voter:** [voter@mcn.org](mailto:voter@mcn.org)

## Dig Deeper on Soil Health



The League's Climate Committee has found several sites with useful introductory and background information regarding carbon sequestration in the soil. A short video which scales down the concepts can be found at <https://www.greenamerica.org/climatevictorygarden>.

The following article from The Climate News Network shows the impact which Natural Climate Solutions (NCS), like storing carbon in the soil, can have: <https://mailchi.mp/climatenewsnetwork/better-land-use-could-slash-us-emissions?e=624f6b04f8>.



January speaker Elizabeth Guimarin's personal statement about the importance of carbon in the soil can be found online at <http://www.soilcarbonwatch.org/about.html>

## LWVMC Schedule of Programs

The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County plans to hold the following general meetings during the remainder of our 2018-19 program year. Please note that, while some meetings are scheduled for our traditional 10 AM time, some are scheduled for evening (6 PM) in order to accommodate more members of the public and working members. All take place on Tuesdays at the Caspar Community Center, with the exception of the traditional Friday evening Meet & Greet in March.

Members are also welcome to attend Board meetings, held at the Fort Bragg Library at 9:30, generally on the final Tuesday of the month. Check our website ([mendo.ca.lwv.org/](http://mendo.ca.lwv.org/)) for any changes.

January 8, **6 PM only:**

"Carbon Sequestration/Local Farming"  
presented by Elizabeth Guimarin & local farmers  
contact: Carol Czadek

February 12, 10 AM only:

"State/Local Positions & Program Planning"  
presented by LWVMC members  
contact: Nancy Kleiber

March 15, **5 PM:**

"Meet & Greet Your Local Officials"  
contact: Jary Stavely

April 9: "The Future Mill Site Wetlands"

presented by the League's Mill Site Committee  
contact: George Reinhardt

May 14, 10 AM only:

Annual Meeting/Luncheon/Election of Officers  
contact: Cindy Plank