



The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

November, 2016

Cindy Plank and Nancy Kleiber, Presidents

Jary Stavelly and Lee Tepper, Editors

League Members will Observe to Verify Election Integrity

The League Board has accepted an invitation from County Clerk-Recorder Susan Ranochak to join the Election Observer Panel for the November 8th election. Cindy Plank, Jane Person, Nancy Kleiber, and Carol Czadek have agreed to act as a team to perform two-person observations before, during, and after the date of the balloting.

On November 1st Cindy and Jane expect to witness mail-in ballots being opened, checked for signatures, scanned, and sorted into precinct order. Those ballots will not be actually counted until after

8 p.m. on election night. Two more observers will visit the courthouse in Ukiah on election night and see the ballots arrive in locked boxes from the precincts. Subsequent visits will also be made during the 30 day post-election period during which all the ballots are to be counted and verified.

According to Co-President Cindy Plank, "We are not worried about any fraud or "rigging". Our purpose in observing is to be able to inform our membership and the public of the processes in place. In our county, everyone who goes to the polls can vote, even if it is a provisional ballot, and all ballots that are certified are counted. Because of the time needed to process provisional and mail-in ballots, final tallies take a while to be reported, so patience on the part of the public is needed."

Look for a report on the team's experience in the January *Voter*.

Save the date: January 11th

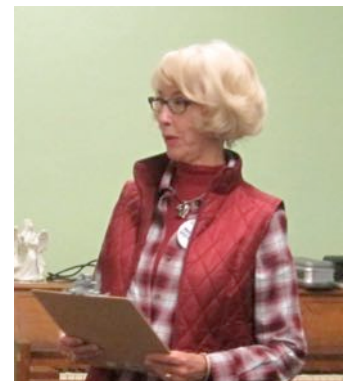
Our League will take a break over the winter holidays. The next members' meeting will be on January 11th at 10:00 a.m. (coffee and conversation start at 9:00!) at the Caspar Community Center.

Voter Services

Candidate Forums, Pros and Cons Meetings, EasyVoter Distribution ...

This election season has been a challenging one for our voter service team, led by Jane Person. Our League has sponsored three local candidates' forums (*pictures right and on p. 7*); held two pros and cons meetings for State ballot measures; distributed voter guides in English and Spanish; held an informational meeting on a local proposition; shared links and background information on local measures through the *Voter*; and we will be observing the election process in November. We should be proud of what our tiny organization has accomplished, and invite others to join our dynamic team.

Right: Jane Person introduces Hospital forum



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

How Do I Know My Vote Counts?

by Cindy Plank

Are you worried about your vote this election? Evidently around 30% of Americans have “little or no confidence” that votes will be counted accurately this election. But there have also been many recent articles stating why we shouldn't worry about any “rigging”. Here are a few of those reasons:

The election is decentralized. Elections are not federally run. States run them. They are held in public places and in open rooms, in plain view of everyone. Local citizens serve as clerks, as inspectors, as officers, and as other election officials who run the polling places and



conduct the voting. And they keep detailed records, which are open to public inspection after the election.

State officials are on guard. “Secretaries of State are charged with administering elections in each state.” Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted, a Republican, stated recently that our election system is one of the bedrocks of our American democracy and its legitimacy should not be questioned because it works very well. “In places like Ohio, we make it easy to vote and hard to cheat.”

Election fraud is rare. From the Brennan Center for Justice web site (a nonpartisan law and policy institute at NYU School of Law): “There is no basis to the claims of widespread fraud or rigged election outcomes. Fraud by voters at the polls is vanishingly rare. Every major study, investigation, and court decision has found little evidence of fraud — and substantial evidence of disenfranchisement. Instead, these claims are used to push restrictive laws that block legitimate voters.” Check out this link for more info on “Debunking the Voter Fraud Myth.” <http://www.brennancenter.org/press-release/truth-about-election-rigging-and-voter-fraud>

So what are we, as members of LWV to do? The following, from LWVUS President Chris Carson, has some very good things to think about:

The credibility of American elections has been brought to the forefront of this campaign. For nearly a century, the League's members have worked tirelessly to ensure that elections in this country are free, fair, and credible. Thanks to our work, we know voters who cast their ballots do so with the confidence that their votes will count. The League is obligated to set the record straight so that voters across the country have the real facts.

- LWV's response is a new social media campaign: “*I know my vote will count.*” Over the remaining days until this election, we urge you to join us in sharing the message, “I'm voting, and I know my vote will count.”
- When there is a problem with the integrity of our elections, the League of Women Voters is the first to speak out.
- Peddling false claims about such an important issue is a direct threat to America's cherished democratic process, and it belittles the real challenges too many American voters have faced in recent years.
- Don't let naysayers undermine your faith in democracy. Have your say by voting.
- Millions of voters will head to the polls to stand up for what matters most in their communities and their lives. The League hopes all eligible voters will exercise their right to vote and weigh in on the elections in their community.
- These elections are about our jobs, our health, our communities, our security and our future. Take control and commit to vote in these elections.
- Voting brings us together as Americans – it is the one time when we are all equal.
- Voting is your opportunity to support your community and have a say in America's future. Every vote counts and our votes make a difference.

The League will have election observers working around the country to make sure all voters have a fair say on Election Day. Any voter facing challenges can visit www.VOTE411.org to find accurate election information, and can also call the national Election Protection hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE. Your local League is taking part in this process by observing the counting at the Mendocino County Registrar's Office. We will report on our observations and experiences in the next issue of the *Voter*. In the meantime, ***I'm voting and I know my vote will count.***

Mendocino County Issues

Editors' note: Since your local League lacks the resources to do a thoroughly researched and objective "pros and cons" on County measures, we are presenting a grab bag of background on some of them. Please be alert for bias. Don't forget to check the archives of KZYX and Mendocino TV for more viewpoints.

Measure AF

Some Background on County Cannabis Regulation Measures

by Jary Stavelly

According to an article by Guy Kovner in the Santa Rosa *Press-Democrat*, the debate on Measure AF represents a significant battle between the Mendocino County marijuana industry and the County political establishment. The industry, credited by some with producing 60% of the nation's cannabis, wrote, financed, and promoted the 60-page-long measure after negotiations with the county over local medical marijuana regulations (enabled by recent state legislation as explained to our League at its November, 2015 meeting) broke down in late spring.

The measure would allow one acre of marijuana on large parcels and 10,000 sq. ft. on smaller ones. It would remove local law enforcement agencies from the regulation process, putting penalties for violations of licensing rules or environmental standards in the hands of county inspectors. Proponents point out that law enforcement agencies would still have oversight in trespass growing cases. They also say that their vision for regulation will eventually be broadly adopted throughout the country.

Opposition to the measure has come from the Board of Supervisors, the Ukiah City Council, the Ukiah Valley Democratic Club, the Mendocino County Farm Bureau, and other education, public safety, and environmental groups. They say that the measure has no enforcement teeth, and, in contrast to the Supervisors' measures, AI and AJ, provides no language that would allow for the successful collection of taxes. The competing measure, AJ, is a non-binding advisory initiative.

As of the date of the article, the supporters of AF had raised \$61K for their efforts, while the opponents had \$15K in contributions. The article may be read in its entirety, beginning at the top of the front page of the Sunday, October 23rd issue.

Local Audubon Society Recommends No on Measure AF

by Charlene McAllister for MCAS

The Board of Directors of the Mendocino Coast Audubon Society (MCAS), during their regular meeting on Monday, October 10, voted to endorse a "NO" vote on County Measure AF (formerly called The Mendocino Heritage Act) on the November 8, 2016, General Election ballot. The vote was unanimous (with one abstention, based on potential conflict with county job duties.)

We oppose this industry-sponsored initiative because, as an initiative measure, it would bypass the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review process. The CEQA process allows for public comment, and resource agency review, to identify potentially significant adverse environmental effects. The measure would weaken the few existing protections against the potential environmental harm of cannabis cultivation, processing, transportation, and sale. For example, the measure would repeal existing county requirements for wildlife-exclusion fencing, and it would place no restrictions on use of rodenticides (rat poisons, commonly used in cannabis cultivation), which are known to spread through the ecosystem and kill owls and raptors. Measure AF includes almost no restrictions on where or how cannabis may be cultivated, and would prevent any modification or amendments before June 2018.

The County of Mendocino currently is drafting a set of regulations to provide a regulatory framework for cannabis cultivation, processing, transport and use, including all State-approved licensing. Unlike Measure AF, the proposed county ordinance will be subject to public and agency environmental review, and can be amended by a vote of the supervisors after public review and comment. The MCAS Board believes this process is likely to include better environmental protections than the industry-sponsored initiative.

We recommend a NO vote on Measure AF.

(More County issue discussion, next page ...)

Measures AG and AH

Member Meeting Hears Allman on Local Mental Health Crisis Care

By Jary Stavely

Mendocino County Sheriff Tom Allman spoke in favor of Measures AG/AH at the League's monthly meeting on October 25th at the Caspar Community Center.

After giving a helpful way to remember which propositions we were talking about — "AG/AH stands for All Good/All Here," — he proceeded to relate the history and current status of mental health delivery in the county, and then to describe what the measures are supposed to accomplish.

In 1999 Mendocino's psychiatric health facility, or PHF (pronounced 'puff'), which had had continuing problems including two suicides that year, was closed. Sheriff Allman compared that action to closing a fire station and expecting to have fewer fires to deal with.

Since that time, in Mendocino County, as in several other small rural counties, all "5150" mental health cases must be transported out of the county (in our case to Solano or Yolo County or to Vallejo) for a mandatory 72-hour stay and assessment, and then driven back, at great expense.

Unfortunately, Allman said, law enforcement officers have become the default first responders for mental health problems, even non-violent ones.

After a particularly poignant incident on Thanksgiving Day, Mr. Allman called together a committee of 12 stakeholders from around the county to make a plan for local mental health care. This committee developed a four-part plan. First, those in mental health crisis would initially go to a 72-hour locked facility within the county (PHF), for initial evaluation and a timeout from the proximate cause of a disturbance; second, they could proceed, on a voluntary basis, to a 30-day residential crisis center, which would provide a safe place away from home factors which may have precipitated the crisis; third, there would be easy access to a place like the Manzanita Centers, which provide a drop-in place for respite and self-help; and fourth, services for veterans would be improved, especially on the coast.

The committee rejected a parcel tax to finance the

plan because landlords would pass 100% of the cost to their renters, the least able to pay. Instead they agreed on a 5-year, half cent sales tax, which would take advantage of the 10% of county sales made to out-of-county visitors. This tax is projected to raise \$37M all told, which would be spent on developing the new treatment centers. Ten per cent of the funds, or \$3.7M, would be used to establish a training center for law enforcement officers and health care providers to learn more effective and "less-than-lethal" methods for dealing with mental problems. This could be a model for the state and beyond, and President Reyes of Mendocino Community College is excited about participating in it.

The committee was able to raise almost double the number of signatures needed for the measure to qualify for the ballot.

No speakers against the measure responded to invitations to attend, but during the question and answer period the sheriff responded to earlier criticisms. To the point that no money could be spent on staffing, he said that is good -- the money is not tied to people who come and go. The annual county budget for mental health, \$27M, now pays for the high cost of using far-off facilities, so it should be enough to staff new local facilities. To the suggestion that the old Howard Hospital in Willits could be used, he stated that, yes, it has several advantages, but it would need expensive earthquake retrofitting and modernization. The 11-member commission to be established by the measure would undertake a Needs Assessment to decide how the PHF(s) would be established. In his opinion, there should be one on the coast. If there is surplus money raised by the temporary tax, he suggested that it could legally be used for future maintenance.

Measure AG (with its enabling language companion, AH) must get 66.7% of the vote to pass. Mr. Allman said he is hopeful that it will, but stated that just having it on the ballot is sparking the kind of conversation about mental health care that is needed for the situation to improve.

Remainder of California Propositions Explored in October

by Jary Stavely

The League's Voter Services Committee completed their review of the 17 California Ballot Propositions at the League general meeting on October 11th. Carol Czadek, Cindy Plank, Nancy Kleiber, and Jane Person presented pros, cons, and further information on the eight measures not discussed in September.

Here is an overview of what was discussed at this question-and-answer gathering:

54: California Legislature Transparency Act

Pros: This measure's requirement that every bill in the legislature be published in its entirety on the internet 72 hours before its final vote will give the public and its elected officials time to better understand what each vote is about; it will end the practice of "gut and amend" which has led to legislation being passed which most lawmakers haven't even known about; its requirement that all public meetings be recorded on videotape so the public may view them will help prevent back room deals, and promote transparency and good government

Cons: Expensive, time-consuming and unneeded, and will take up an extraordinary amount of digital storage space; will make it much more difficult to get needed legislation passed; gives special interests more time to sabotage bipartisan compromises; opens up the possibility for private lawsuits

For: Charles Munger Jr. (Berkshire-Hathaway), League of Women Voters of California, Common Cause, Chamber of Commerce (\$10.5M)

Against: CA Democratic Party, labor unions, NOW (no significant expenditures)

57: Change in Rules Involving Criminal Sentences, Parole, Juvenile Criminal Proceedings and Sentencing

Pros: This combination of measures, which would allow parole consideration at an earlier stage, would give credit for education and retraining completed in prison, and would return juvenile sentencing discretion to judges, will focus resources on keeping dangerous inmates behind bars, encourage rehabilitation which lowers recidivism, and save money; long term solution to the court-ordered reduction in the California prison population

Cons: Anti-crime laws have been weakened too far; most of the court-ordered reduction has already been carried out; the measure mistakenly classifies some violent crimes as 'non-violent' thereby giving earlier release to dangerous individuals

For: Gov. Brown, CA Dem. Party, Catholic bishops, probation officers, LWVC (\$8M)

Against: district attorneys organization, law enforcement groups (\$250K)

58: Bilingual and Multilingual Education

Pros: Repealing Prop 227, which requires classroom instruction only in English for non-English-speaking students, will allow districts to provide bilingual instruction without cumbersome waivers, better meeting the needs of parents and families; it will allow for faster proficiency in learning English; will restore local control to schools and communities

Cons: Complete immersion in English is better for developing fluency; bilingual education hasn't worked in the past

For: LWVC, CA Council of Service Employees, several state senators, school administrators, Los Angeles Office of Ed. (\$67K)

Against: Ron Unz (author of Prop 227), "Keep English for the Children" (no significant expenditures)

59: Advisory Vote for Amendment to Overturn Citizens United Decision (Legislative Advisory Question)

Pros: Corporations and billionaires should not be allowed to buy elections, even though the Supreme Court has allowed them to; overturning Citizens United will bring meaningful campaign finance reform and restore the election process to ordinary citizens

Cons: This measure is a waste of time and tax money because it is non-binding and won't change anything; you shouldn't vote on something you don't know the language of; it's better to focus on full disclosure of political contributions

For: CA Nurses, CA Dem. Party, Common Cause, Move to Amend, Bernie Sanders, Santa Rosa Press-Democrat (\$170K)

Against: LWVC, Los Angeles Times (no significant expenditures)

Editors' Note—Margaret Koster, of Mendocino County Move to Amend, attended this Pro & Con discussion, and presented a written response to the League's recommendation to vote against this measure. The League's statement is at lwvc.org/vote/elections/ballot-recommendations/prop-59-constitutional-amendment-advisory-measure. Ms. Koster's response is at <http://mtayeson59.org/move-to-amends-response-to-league-of-women-voters-position-on-proposition-59/>.

62: Ending the Death Penalty (compare to 66)

Pros: In the last 38 years California has executed 13 out of 930 who have received death sentences, at an expense of \$384M/execution—abolishing the death penalty will save the state \$150M/year; this measure would remove the long process of death penalty sentencing trials and appeals, giving closure to victims' families sooner; abolishing the death penalty removes the risk of executing innocent people

Cons: This measure rewards murderers—the death penalty process should be reformed, not ended; changing/shortening the appeals process (as in Prop 66) is the best way to fix the problems of time and expense of the death penalty; it is the just consequence for the kind of murder it is reserved for; this measure jeopardizes public safety and denies closure to victims' families

For: LWVC, CA Democrats., various actors, academics, artists, civic orgs. and churches (\$6M)

Against: CA Republicans., law enforcement groups, district attorneys (\$4.5M)

63: Strengthening Laws Restricting Gun and Ammunition Sales

Pros: This measure will save lives by preventing dangerous criminals, domestic abusers, and the dangerously mentally ill from obtaining and using deadly weapons and large-scale ammunition magazines; it will protect the safe use of guns by law-abiding Californians

Cons: This measure puts additional burdens on law-abiding gun owners without keeping violent criminals from possessing and using them; it will

burden the courts and law enforcement agencies because of flaws in its language

For: LWVC, Lt. Gov. Newsom, CA Federation of Teachers, CA Democrats, emergency room physicians, various gun control groups (\$4M)

Against: NRA, National Wild Turkey Org., sport/recreation gun-owners groups (\$425K)

64: Marijuana Legalization

Pros: This measure would bring in revenues of over \$1 billion, and could save tens of millions annually in reduced law enforcement costs; it would end the criminalization of marijuana and create a safe system for adult usage while protecting children; it uses best practices from states like Colorado which have already legalized adult use; the unfair sales tax on medicinal use would be repealed

Cons: This measure would increase highway fatalities because it provides no DUI standard for marijuana; it will allow indoor small residential grows next to neighborhood schools; felons with meth or heroin convictions could be licensed to sell recreational cannabis; it will harm existing medical marijuana growers

For: CA Med. Assn, Lt. Gov. Newsom, Bernie Sanders, some law enforcement officers (\$17M)

Against: CA Hwy. Patrol, CA Hospital Assn, some law enforcement officers, L.A. Times (\$2M)

Neutral: LWVC, Cannabis Growers Assn.

66: Shortening of Death Penalty Procedures (compare to 62)

Pros: This measure will solve the problem of lengthy death penalty appeals by mandating shorter periods of time in which to file appeals, not by eliminating the penalty itself; speeding up the process will save taxpayers \$30M annually

Cons: It is confusing, poorly written, and will lead to costly legal challenges; it will necessitate new prison facilities which will cost taxpayers millions

For: prison guards union, CA Republicans, some victims' and law enforcement groups (\$4.8M)

Against: LWVC, CA Democrats, other victims' groups (\$6.6M)

In the event that Proposition 62 and 66 both pass, the one receiving the most votes will become law.

Candidate Forums



Fort Bragg City Council forum: The five candidates for two seats on the Fort Bragg city council appeared at a League forum at Town Hall on October 6th. L to R: Curtis Bruchler, Rex Gressett, Will Lee, Scott Menzies, Bernie Norvell. Bruchler and Gressett have dropped out of the race.



MCRPD forum: Three candidates for two seats on the Mendocino Coast Parks & Recreation Board spoke and answered questions at a League forum on October 12th at the C.V. Starr Center. L to R: Lee Edmundson, John Huff, Kirk Marshall.



MCDH forum: Seven candidates for three seats on the local hospital board attended a League forum on October 14th at the Fort Bragg Senior Center. L to R: Tom Birdsell, Lucas Campos, Kaye Handley, Patricia Jauregui-Darland, Steve Lund, Kevin Miller, Tanya Smart. Birdsell, Campos, Handley, and Lund are vying for 2 long-term seats; Jauregui-Darland, Miller, and Smart seek the one open short-term seat.

Special! Buy Three Memberships for the Price of One!

Dear Members,

We hope that you appreciate and are proud of what our League has accomplished so far this fall. In this busy election season we have been able to inform ourselves and the public about an extensive and complicated ballot. Without the support of the California League we would not have been able to present the Pros & Cons, or distribute Easy Voters in English and Spanish up and down the coast; and the US League has provided us with online Vote 411, and legal support for voting rights around the country.

As you know, your dues provide membership at all three levels, local, state, and national. If you have not yet done so, please send them in now. Our dues are \$60.00 for an individual membership or \$90.00 for a 2-member household. We are pleased to include two additional levels of membership for you to consider when you make your renewal. Each membership 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 the 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	_____

P.S. We welcome new League members Linda Banta of Fort Bragg, Kate Lee of Mendocino, and Jim Havlena of the Seaside Beach area. When you see them, please be sure to let them know how much we appreciate their support of our local League.