



The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

March, 2019

Cindy Plank and Nancy Kleiber, Presidents

Jary Stavelly and Lee Tepper, Editors

March event ...

Meet and Greet *Your* Elected Officials

California Assemblyman Jim Wood, Mendocino County Supervisors Dan Gjerde and Ted Williams, Fort Bragg Chief of Police Fabian Lizarraga, Coast Hospital Board member John Redding, and Mendocino Unified Schools Superintendent Jason Morse are among those planning to attend the League's 14th annual Meet & Greet Your Public Officials reception, set for Friday, March 15 from 5 to 7 PM at the Caspar Community Center. The invitation list includes officials and leaders from Mendocino County offices in Ukiah, Mendocino College, the City of Fort Bragg, the Mendocino Coast District Hospital, the Mendocino Coast Recreation and Park District, coastal school, water and fire districts, and more. This event will provide opportunities to interact with several of our newly

elected public representatives.

Wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served. Our League is proud of the reputation we have developed for the tasty treats offered at this event. Members who can help in providing them (finger food is best) should please bring them in by 4:45 to allow sufficient time for setup. If you have questions, contact Patricia Marien at 964-4942 before March 7, or email them to paprika@mcn.org. Meet & Greet Your Public Officials is free and open to the public. We hope to see you there, and please bring a friend.

More invitations to free events inside!

Practice civil discourse ... p. 5

Start a worm farm ... p. 7

Celebrate visionary women ... p. 7



Our League's new priorities: see p. 3

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 ...

Question, Inform and Support

by Nancy Kleiber

As a member of the coastal community and the League of Women Voters, I was delighted by the level of engagement in last November's election. All across the country citizens from many walks of life and diverse cultural backgrounds were stepping forward to run for office. The voters turned out in record numbers to question them, to inform them, and to support their candidates of choice. Locally, our League was pleased to present and moderate many candidate forums and pro-con informational meetings on the numerous ballot issues.

After an election it's very easy to shift our daily focus away from all those thorny issues. After all, hadn't we done our job by electing representatives to figure out the solutions? But this year, at least on the national level, the press and social media have followed the progress of our newly elected officials as they navigate the system of taking on their duties as our voice. This has, perhaps inadvertently, kept some of those issues in public focus. For example, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (AOC, in public media shorthand) made headlines, as she tried to find affordable housing in Washington DC, and did a few dance moves outside her freshly-signed congressional office.

I think those little glimpses of frustration and joy remind us of our common humanity, perhaps even more so than grandiose speeches from the floor of Congress. We understand the learning curve on a new job or tackling a big, complex problem. We know the delicate balancing act of having time for job, community, and family. So now is not the time for voters to disengage, but to continue to question, inform and support our elected representatives.

Here at home we have a great opportunity to have a conversation with our newly elected, re-elected, or appointed representatives on March 15, during the League's annual Meet and Greet event. You can ask those burning questions you always wanted answers to, or you can simply share observations on life in Mendocino County and your vision for the future. Please join us, and help make our democracy work by enabling a strong connection between citizen voters and their representatives



League Youth Project Proceeds

by Cindy Plank

Planning and preparation for our Youth Voter Registration Project (see the February '19 *Voter*) is nearly done. We've made all of the buttons, trained classroom presenters, and assembled most of the voter-info packets to be presented to the estimated 1,000 high school seniors in the county. Among the volunteers helping with packet assembly is a Ukiah small business owner who read about the project from the press release posted in the Willits newspaper!

The County Office of Education is finishing up some terrific rack cards, in conjunction with both our committee and the County Elections department. They are also printing some informational fliers to be shared with students.

Teams of classroom presenters are eager to begin scheduling their visits. We're targeting the month of March for classroom visits—one reason being that California's next primary general election will be on March 3, 2020, only one year away. The second reason is to keep from bumping up against all of the end-of-year activities and deadlines for high school seniors. Hopefully, we will have many visits scheduled by the first of March.

February meeting ...

State and Local Program Planning for 2019-20

by Jary Stavelly

A group of 18 League members and friends attended the program planning meeting on February 12 at the Caspar Community Center. As the California League will hold its convention this June in Pasadena, this would have been the usual time for a biennial review of all the State positions to keep or update. (None has ever been removed, in longtime member Charlene McAllister's experience.) This year, however, the state is concentrating on assisting the U.S. League in its effort to pass HR1 in the U.S. Congress (*see the article on p. 5*), so our Board decided it was unnecessary to plow through all the state positions again.

Instead, the focus of the meeting was to be two-fold: selecting issues for local emphasis during 2019-2020, and reviewing four proposed amendments to State positions that are up for adoption at the state convention.

Co-President Nancy Kleiber opened the discussion of our local League focus with a look at last year's meeting, which involved reviewing and endorsing the U.S. League's broad "Making Democracy Work" rubric, as well as adding a special local focus on civil discourse and climate change. That meeting generated this year's program, which has included successful meetings around civil discourse, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and carbon sequestration, as well as extensive voter service for the fall 2018 election. She also reminded the group of the State League's particular emphasis on diversifying membership, which also ties into our current Youth Voter Registration program. Co-President Cindy Plank presented wall charts showing possible areas of local emphasis which had been brainstormed by the Board. The list included last year's Civil Discourse and Climate Change, followed by Coast Hospital, Behavioral Health, the 2020 Census, and At-Large vs. District Elections.

A group discussion ensued concerning these areas and possible others. Dorine Real suggested that we need to find ways to incorporate young people's own concerns, rather than hoping and trying to lure them into what we older League people want. Cindy added that the Mendocino Huddle group (not

avowedly non-partisan) did include a larger proportion of younger people, and that they were interested in working on hospital issues, the so-called Green New Deal, and other environmental issues. The group also discussed the limitations of the Making Democracy Work framework. What does that mean in an era of divided government at the national level? What about the splintered nature of primary elections nationally? Linda Banta and others wondered about how the electoral college and the current structure of Congress fit into making democracy functional. It was suggested that we should learn more about voting systems for the present day.

Cindy added items from the discussion to the wall charts, and Nancy passed out three dot stickers to each attendee for identifying their preferences. When everyone had finished placing their dots, three areas for emphasis had emerged: Civics education (as per the discussion), the Environment, and Behavioral Health.

Charlene opened the second part of the meeting, the discussion of proposed State position changes, with a review of how positions are traditionally adopted, and a consideration of what concurrence is and how it is reached. According to League procedures, 'concurrence' is an agreement "to accept, reaffirm, or reject a previously adopted statement or position." This is done not by consensus, but by a yes/no vote. When the Ukiah League unit disbanded, our unit concurred on their previous studies, and adopted them when we became the LWV of Mendocino County. Likewise, the California League adopted its positions on Gun Control and on Social Issues by concurring with positions which had originally been studied and prepared elsewhere. Our task in this portion of the meeting was to "inform, but not instruct" our delegates to the State convention about how to vote on four proposals for concurrence.

Dorine summarized the San Luis Obispo League's local position on Civil Discourse (discussed at our April 2018 meeting and published in the February '19 *Voter*). The group voted in favor of concurrence.

Meg presented information on the San Diego League's proposal about Homelessness (not included in the February article). The group was not in favor of concurrence, mostly due to specific provisions which could unfairly affect businesses heavily impacted by homeless encampments. It was thought that we may learn more about how to word a position on homelessness after our Behavioral Health considerations in the coming program year.

Nancy discussed the Sacramento League's proposal to modify the state position on Elections. This reworking would accommodate more alternatives for determining election winners without necessitating run-offs. Again, the group voted against concurrence, due to concern about weakening the secret ballot, and about the unsatisfactory outcomes which alternative voting methods have led to so far.

Nancy then shared information about the Criminal Justice position prepared by a task force created at the 2017 state convention. This proposal reflects the recent elimination of the statewide cash bail system, and it includes detailed recommendations about policing practices and training, successful re-entry programs, and the regulation/elimination of private prisons. The group felt that, although the proposal seems well thought-out, it was too sweeping and detailed to consider properly. The decision on concurrence was tabled until a committee made up of Charlene, Sharon Gilligan, Jessica Morton, and JoAn Blackstone has a chance to explore it more thoroughly and to report back at the annual meeting in May.

Local Protest Against Emergency Declaration

A group of 50 local citizens gathered at the corner of Main and Laurel Streets in Fort Bragg at noon on Presidents' Day to protest Donald Trump's declaration of a national emergency. The protesters carried signs and chanted slogans suggesting that the action was illegal and racist. League members Irene Malone, Linda Jupiter, Meg Courtney, Jenny Heckerth, Nancy Kleiber, and Jary Stavely were among those who joined the demonstration.

National League CEO Virginia Kase issued the following statement following President Trump's declaration of a national emergency:

"By declaring a state of emergency, the president abuses his national emergency powers and undermines Congressional authority - all for a wasteful, ineffectual border wall that will not make our nation safer.

"The American people expect the president to fulfill his executive responsibility for sound management of public funds, not sidestep Congress in order to force funding for a border wall that the American people have not sanctioned.

"The League objects to this abusive declaration of a national emergency."



Both our local protesters and LWWUS objected to the wall itself as well as the President's tactic for funding it.

Resistance to the emergency declaration is happening both in Congress and in the courts. Here is some background:

<https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/senators-seek-halt-trumps-border-emergency/story?id=61384217>

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2019/02/18/will-the-presidents-emergency-declaration-stand-here-are-three-and-a-half-reasons-it-may-not/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.14af4546fd4e

Proposal to Tighten Food Stamp Regulations

Our ally, the Mendocino Coast Jewish Community Justice Group, is preparing to educate local citizens about a recent change in food stamp rules being promoted by the Trump administration. This proposed change in regulations would immediately kick 755,000 people (the government's own estimate) off of SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program).

According to the organization Hands Off Snap, "current law already requires that states limit SNAP to just three months out of every three years for most working-age adults without minor children, unless they can log 20 hours of work per week. This policy alone cuts off hundreds of thousands of unemployed or underemployed individuals from food assistance when they need it most. President Trump's proposed rule would make this policy even harsher by taking food assistance away from even more people who are struggling to find steady work, while taking away states' ability to waive these harsh time limits when unemployment is high. Since 1996, every state except Delaware has needed to use waivers to halt time limits on SNAP, showing just how essential it is to allow states the flexibility they need to help their residents put food on the table when they fall on hard times."

Information from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities about the current waiver policy can be found at <https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/waivers-add-key-state-flexibility-to-snaps-three-month-time-limit>. A form for submitting comments is at handsoffsnap.org.

LWVUS Supports the For the People Act

The U.S. League is continuing to support HR1, the For the People Act, in Congress. Their recent message follows:

The measure is moving toward a final vote.

HR1 is the biggest democracy reform agenda many of us have seen since the Voting Rights Act. This bill will revamp our voting system, implement fair redistricting, and crack down on dark money in

elections so that voters have a stronger voice at the ballot box.

But there's still more we can do to make sure this bill remains a bold, transformative set of reforms to strengthen our democracy and return political power to the people. Please contact your Representative today to keep this bill moving forward. Voters across the country voted for democracy reform up and down the ballot in 2018, sending the 116th Congress a clear message that the country is ready for bold, comprehensive democracy reforms. The extraordinary and comprehensive reforms in HR1 are good for all Americans and deserve bipartisan support.

We cannot get this across the finish line without your help. It's time to put power back in the hands of the American people. As an organization with a mission of empowering voters and defending democracy, the League of Women Voters is proud to support the For the People Act, which will improve American elections by making our election system more free, fair, and accessible to all eligible Americans.

It's time for Congress to move HR1 forward to final passage. Contact your Representative today, and tell him how important this package of reforms is to the future of our democracy.

The link is:

http://participate.lwv.org/c/10065/p/dia/action4/comm/public/?action_KEY=13571

An Invitation to Conversation

Meg Courtney reports that the civil discourse group which assembled at the Caspar Community breakfast in January [see the February *Voter*], had a second session on February 24. The twelve attendees feel that their attempt to enable effective political discussion is producing good results. Their next get-together will take place at 11 AM on the back deck of the Community Center on Sunday, March 24. All are welcome to come ahead of time for the monthly breakfast, and then join the discourse.

Dear Supporters and Friends,

We would like to invite any of you who are not members to consider joining. The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County is part of both the state and national organizations. The full amount of regular dues—\$60.00 for an individual membership or \$90.00 for a 2-member household—is passed on to the U.S. and California Leagues to support their efforts towards making democracy work and preserving our world. If you prefer to support our local efforts, you can designate your contribution (in any amount) as a donation. Joining at the extra levels listed below also generates funds for our local efforts. Either way you are welcome to participate in our work, and to receive our newsletter, the *Voter*.

- Susan B. Anthony, co-founder of the National Woman Suffrage Association.
- Amelia Bloomer, was the first woman to own, operate and edit a newspaper, *The Lily*, which promoted women’s rights issues.
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton, co-founder and first president of the National Woman Suffrage Association
- Carrie Chapman Catt ,founder of the League of Women Voters: "Winning the vote is only an opening wedge -- learning to use it is a bigger task."
- Another individual who chose to make a difference was Frederick Douglass, who spoke at the Seneca Falls women’s rights convention urging women not to compromise on their demand for the vote. Donations to our League’s Frederick Douglass Diversity Fund will be used to support discounted or waived memberships for people who will bring more diversity to our group.

Thank you for your interest in a committed group of women and men who are working to make a difference in the future of our community and our world.

Jary Stavelly
Membership Chair

Name(s)	_____		
Memberships:	Student	@ \$5*	_____
	Susan B. Anthony Individual	@ \$60	_____
	Amelia Bloomer Household	@ \$90	_____
	Elizabeth Cady Stanton	@ \$100	_____
	Carrie Chapman Catt	@ \$250	_____
Donations:	Friend of the League	@ \$40	_____
	Frederick Douglass Diversity Fund		_____
	LWVMC Education Fund (tax deductible)		_____
Total			_____

* *The student membership fee can be waived. Write, "Please waive," on the amount line. Please make checks payable to LWVMC. Mail checks to P.O. Box 1128, Fort Bragg CA 95437. Sorry, only Education Fund donations are tax-deductible.*

Mendocino Women's Political Coalition Presents

CHAMPIONS OF

36th Annual Women's History Gala Celebration

PEACE & NONVIOLENCE

VISIONARY WOMEN

March 3, 2019
Sunday 12:30 pm

Saturday Afternoon Clubhouse
107 S. Oak Street, Ukiah, CA

Our Women Ukiah Poets Laureate
Linda Noel (2003-2008) - Theresa Whitehill (2009 - 2011)
Roberta Werdinger (2018-2020)

Song & Dance
BREATH, Inland Valley Women's Chorus,
Raging Gramnies, Rhapsodiva
Nori Dolan - Story Dance

Silent Auction and Appetzlers / Desserts
Tickets: \$10 at the Door

With AAUW-Ukiah, Ukiah Saturday Afternoon Club, Cloud Forest Institute



Anne Escobedo
honoree



Maggie Nathan
honoree



Maggie Strong
honoree



N YO FOOD FOREST

VERMICULTURE WORKSHOP



Saturday, March 9, 2019 • 1-3pm

This workshop is a thorough introduction to vermiculture - worm composting! We will cover worm life cycles, various styles of bins, bedding, food, moisture, and more. Learn about different systems that work for the backyard gardener as well as small-scale farmers, and everyone in between!

INSTRUCTOR: KEITH MICHALAK
Keith co-manages Buttecamp Compost Lab at the School of Adaptive Agriculture where he experiments with diverse strategies for composting. Keith has worked on many different farms around the world, and will share his many years of composting experience with you!

Where: The Learning Garden at Noyo Food Forest
300A Dena Street, Fort Bragg

Cost: Free to attend
Donations welcome and appreciated!

RSVP required: Please email Sara@NoyoFoodForest.org
or call 707-357-7680

