The Voter THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MENDOCINO COUNTY Midwinter 2022

Paula Cohen and Dorine Real, Co-Presidents

January meeting ... The State of Our Democracy Reflections on the midterms by Pat Dunbar The public is cordially invited to join the League in an open Zoom meeting on



Tuesday, January 17 at 6 PM. The program will feature a discussion of various results from the midterms: local, statewide & national. Were efforts to expand or suppress voter participation successful? What results came from independent vs. partisan redistricting commissions? What are the implications

for current elected officials, and for the 2024 elections? How can we make democracy work in the months and years ahead? I will chair, and other League members have promised to contribute their thoughts

Please join us for a lively discussion of these and related topics on January 17 at 6 PM. And note that this will be the third Tuesday of the month. As has been our wont, we will welcome participants to check in ahead of time for casual greetings and conversation. The Zoom platform will open at 5:30. Bring your friends and neighbors along for our virtual get-together.

Zoom

and perspectives.



In this issue

January meeting

President's message

Local Coastal Plan Updates

A Note of Appreciation

Sustainable Construction

New Housing Completed

Latino Coalition Scholarships

Wave-powered Desalination

LWVC Review and Preview

Click a topic to jump to the article

Native American Women

County Election Results

Flavored Tobacco

US League Updates

LWVMC Information

Voting Methods

Ballot Measures

Links

Community College Seeks Trustee

Jackson State Forest

Young Voters Video Challenge

Jary Stavely and Lee Tepper, Editors

Calendar

- January 16 (Monday) Martin Luther King Day
- January 17 (Tuesday) 6:00 PM
- General meeting: State of Our Democracy Pat Dunbar
- January 25 (Wednesday) 6:00 PM Zoom Webinar: Pomo Landback (Mendocino Trail Stewards) January 31 (Tuesday) Zoom noon
- LWVC webinar: Know Your rights: California Public Meetings Zoom February 16 (Thursday) 7 PM
- LWVC webinar: Interest Group All-Hands Training
- February 21 (Tuesday) TBD General meeting: Local and state program planning
- The public is welcome at LWVMC events. Please invite your friends and neighbors.

President's message Our Land

Creating an inclusive vision



by Paula Cohen

As I think about this month's President's message, I realize it was just a little over a month ago that we were encouraging people to get out and VOTE! Now that is over (for now), and we need to concentrate our efforts on other issues, other aspects of democracy. There are many things we could discuss, but I have been reminded that Mendocino County's local coastal plan (LCP) has not been reviewed or amended for about 30 years. How time does fly! Sea level rise and other effects of climate change were not even addressed back then!

However, when thinking about a long-term vision for our coast, it is important to develop a road map, a guide that allows both preservation and change along our beautiful shoreline, and not let others plan 'what we should want.' Such planning really takes time-to gather input from our community members, to listen to their comments, to think and work together-in order to craft a plan that meets our human needs while it is cognizant of the ocean and land that we inhabit, and that reflects our best efforts to be 'good stewards' of these resources for us and the future. Now is the time to educate ourselves and others about this process, and not let it slip into the hands of those who do not live here or have the same concern and love that we do for honoring the land, for remembering its past and protecting its future. For those who value our part of the coast and wonder, "What can I do now after the election?" this may just be the opportunity for you. We need to learn what is in the current plan and imagine how it could be better; and as champions of democratic participation, we need to take leadership to ensure there is inclusive, timely civic engagement in the process of creating the new plan.

Local Coastal Plan Updates

Local Coastal Plan Grants Awarded At its November16 meeting the California Coastal Commission (CCC) approved two Local Assistance Grant Awards for updates to Local Coastal Plans within Mendocino County. These funds are in line with the Commission's express desire for cities and counties along the California coast to plan ahead of time for the effects of climate change and sea level rise [see Sept. '22 Voter]. According to the CCC staff report recommendation, "funds will be used for projects that are designed to assist local governments in assessing impacts and planning for coastal resiliency, including adapting to the impacts of climate change and sea level rise, and which contain an LCP planning component. This includes funding for developing technical and engineering studies; planning and design of adaptation strategies, including phased approaches, that address the impacts of climate change and sea level rise; and public outreach and engagement associated with this planning work." Mendocino County received almost \$2.2M for its grant project, which includes the entire coast with the exception of the 2 incorporated cities, and will be a comprehensive update addressing all general planning issues. The City of Fort Bragg received almost \$900K for its Noyo Harbor Blue Economy Visioning, Resiliency and Implementation Plan. In August, the City of Point Arena also received a \$100K grant to analyze the impacts of sea level rise for an update to its General Plan.

Planning Timeline

Peter McNamee, of the Grassroots Institute's Climate Crisis Working Group (and the League), read through the application and highlighted some schedule details:

- By January 15, 2023 Fort Bragg and the County are both required to submit a revised work program, budget and schedule, for review and approval of the CCC's executive director, so there is still time for people & organizations to review the projects and make suggestions to the City, the County and/or the CCC for improvements.
- Both the County and the City projects rely on contracting for consultants to perform much of the work. Project consultant contracts should be executed by June 30, 2023.
- Proposed policy and narrative for LCP elements are to be completed by March 31, 2024.
- Public involvement and engagement can begin immediately and be continuous for the entire project, but at a minimum, the County must complete at least 3 public workshops on proposed LCP revisions by February 28, 2026. Fort Bragg is obligated to conduct between 3 and 5 public workshops under its grant agreement.
- An LCP with accompanying Environmental Impact Report must be submitted to the CCC for consideration by March 31, 2026 for the County and by June, 2026 for the City of Fort Bragg.

GRI Public Involvement Initiative

On Saturday, December 3, the Grassroots Institute's Climate Crisis Working Group held a Zoom meeting to discuss how to promote meaningful public input to the planning process. In a letter to city officials inviting them to attend, League member George Reinhardt stressed the need to have extensive community input: "As you ... know, the essential component of community engagement means so much more than just a report at a council meeting. We will need a number of community workshops where civilians can ask questions, drill down into the long term consequences, and make the changes to the plan that are inevitable. \$150,000 is allocated, already, for community engagement. And more can be obtained, quickly, from the Coastal Commission, if we need more." He included some questions:

- · First, how [does] the City intend to incorporate public involvement in the LCP agreement due to be finalized with the CCC executive director by January 15th?
- Second, how the City plans to incorporate the public in the development of RFPs to contract with LCP consultants?
- Third, will the City designate a single point of contact to handle public requests for information about the LCP throughout the course of the project, or a committee charged with this duty, and how will the process work?
- Fourth, how can community-based organizations such as the GrassRoots Institute, the League of Women Voters, the Sierra Club, Coast Democrats, Climate Action Mendocino ... engage with the City on the LCP project throughout the update process and gain access to, review, and comment on relevant LCP documents and recommended actions?
- Fifth, how will coordination between the coastal cities and the county be

managed, and specifically how will the public be engaged in that process? Forty-two Zoom participants attended the meeting, including County Planning Director Julia Krog, County CEO Darcie Antle, coastal Supervisors Ted Williams and Dan Gjerde, as well as Fort Bragg City Council members Jessica Morsell-Haye and Tess Albin-Smith. Jason Godeke, recently elected to replace Ms. Morsell-Haye, also attended. Peter McNamee hosted the discussion.

Sea level rise accelerates blufftop retreat like that seen on Old Highway 1 at Westport-Union Landing State Beach, 2021.



Ms. Krog, who grew up in Elk, presented general information about the 3-4 year process the county is embarking on. She and her staff will manage the process, without hiring an outside manager, although outside consultants will be hired for technical areas. The county has applied for a separate \$200K grant for a Sea Level Rise Resiliency Strategy, which will provide an important basis for the actual LCP update. Once it is assured of this separate funding, the county will issue a request for proposals (RFP) from consultants, and the ball will be rolling.

Ms. Krog listed six different tasks which the plan will address, and explained which ones will need technical data from outside experts. A plan for formal public involvement is scheduled to be developed during the first quarter of 2023, with

community input actually taking place afterwards, so times and places have not yet been mapped out. Other opportunities for public input are built-in, due to the various public hearings which will be held by the Coastal Commission, the County Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors, as well as the EIR determinations which must be made. County staff will establish a dedicated website and email address for public access; until then Ms. Krog will also be continuously available through her county email address, krogj@mendocinocounty.org. Initial informative sessions for the public at various

locations will be scheduled in January and February. According to Ms. Morsell-Haye, the update to Fort Bragg's LCP will involve the Noyo Ocean Collective, which sponsored the recent Blue Economy Symposium. That group is a partnership which includes the City of Fort Bragg, the Noyo Harbor District, the Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo, Mendocino College, the West Business Development Center, and the Noyo Center for Marine Science. City Planner Sarah McCormick and Harbor Master Anna Neumann will lead that LCP effort, with a special focus to expand ideas in the Blue Economy vision. Although she was not at the meeting, Ms. McCormick has offered to present more information on the city update plan at a future GRI meeting. The city's timeline for developing public input is similar to the county's.

Issues Raised at the Meeting In general discussion, former Supervisor Norman DeVall recounted a history of the Mendocino County LCP over the years, and called for the update to do something about the housing crisis. Karen Bowers emphatically agreed. Supervisor Gjerde suggested that "mitigation banking," as Caltrans has cooperated with in the past, might be a cost-effective strategy to provide more living units on the coast. Responding to a separate question, Ms. Krog made it clear that the Noyo Headlands are not included in the county LCP update, as they remain within the area of Fort Bragg's LCP. The separate Sea Level Rise Resiliency Strategy study would, however, apply to the old mill-site area. Citizen Advisory Committee areas, which were identified during an update in the 1980's, may be used as part of the process, as well, once they have been reviewed and updated for use. Mr. McNamee emphasized the importance of identifying a single point of contact for questions and information, one for each project, as soon as possible.

During the ensuing discussion about providing sufficient public input, League members Cindy Plank, Dorine Real, Lee Tepper, Karen Bowers, Judy Tarbell, and George Reinhardt, among others, volunteered to join Peter McNamee in an ongoing working group. Mary Rose Kaczorowski made an urgent call to find ways to incorporate younger people into the process, and Cindy suggested that the League's efforts to register young voters could be a stepping stone to their involvement in the updates. Peter proposed, and Julia agreed, that county libraries could be useful conduits for information to facilitate engagement. The two-hour meeting was recorded. The presentation and accompanying chat, which contains important timelines and links, can be accessed on the Zoom

Young Voters Video Challenge



recording site.

challenge: Back row: Raul Medina, Jackson Deverle, Markus Pfitzner (Intro to Video Production instructor), Frej Barty

Winning team of the GOTV video

On bench: Trinity Ross, Cindy Plank, Tamara Fites

Cindy Plank sent us this message about the winners of a video production challenge offered at Mendocino College: "We are very excited to share with you the winning video of our GET OUT THE VOTE video contest for Mendocino College students. The winning video is called "Change the Chart," submitted by students in Markus Pfitzner's Intro to Video Production class. Take a look to see why young people were inspired to vote for what is important to them."

And some comments from online viewers: *YES!* — Ruby Gold

Wow! Deserves to go viral. Please forward. - Liz Helenchild

This is great >>>> I'm sending it out near and far. Bravo, video makers! ---Cynthia Gair Good and very important video but I still voted against gaming online. - Linda Jupiter Excellent; just shared with a non-voting grandson and he was impressed ... opened up a conversation. Charlene McAllister

A Note of Appreciation

by Jary Stavely

In November we mailed written appeals for League members to send their dues as soon as possible. The results have been terrific. As of December 15, more than 50 members and households have remitted their dues. We are very grateful for all who have responded. Also, on behalf of the board, I would like to express the League's warm appreciation to everyone who included a donation above the dues level, to support our local activities.

Sue Arnold, Linda Banta, Johanna & Steve Brekke-Brownell, Paula Cohen, Sharon DiMauro, Pat Dunbar, Rella Gadulka, John Haschak, Jim Havlena, Nancy Kleiber, Kate Lee, Jim Mastin, Charlene McAllister, Peter McNamee, Jane Person, Loreto Rojas, Nancy Severy: Thank You!

Social Media Can Be Constructive Did you know that our Facebook page is a timely source for information on a host of topics of interest to Voter readers? Cindy Plank regularly posts information from many sources, only some of which later shows up in the Voter. You don't have to wait-if you are willing to use Facebook, you can keep up with what's going on as it happens.

> Keep up with the topics covered in the Voter by visiting 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.

Here's an example of something we recently found on the League's page: news about a training program for sustainable construction.

New Housing Completed Fort Bragg development serves many needs

The Plateau, an affordable housing project, recently opened its doors to new residents. The project serves a mix of seniors, the formerly homeless, and working families. With 69 units and indoor and outdoor common spaces, it is a neighborhood in itself. Frank Hartzell wrote a comprehensive article for the Mendocino Voice which includes details about the history of the plan, its construction, and some of the new tenants.

Jackson State Forest

Webinar on Pomo Landback

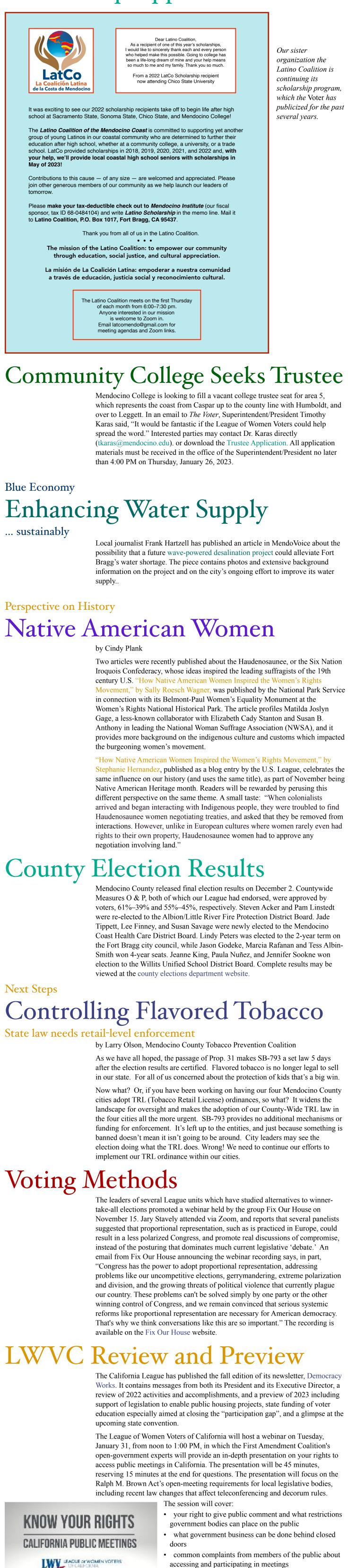
The Mendocino Trail Stewards are promoting an online event regarding indigenous input in the management of Jackson Demonstration State forest (JDSF). Their announcement follows:

- Stop Commercial Logging and the Destruction of Pomo Sacred Sites in Jackson State Forest!
- Join Tribal Elder Priscilla Hunter and the Coalition to Save Jackson State Forest on Wednesday, January 25th at 6pm for an informative webinar about the Pomo Landback movement in JDSF. The fight to Save Jackson is NOT over - logging has restarted and we need your help. Want to get involved? Attend the zoom on January 25th, link below:
- Learn how you can help protect the forest and Sacred Pomo Sites.
- Zoom Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ tZ0rfuCprDwuGNA4aVcd-e2bEfUHog9QeKGK
- Actions you can take now:
- Sign and share the new petition Donate to the Tribe's legal strategy
- Promote our webinars on Dec. 8th and Jan. 25th: zoom link is same for both
- dates
- Want to help in the woods? Email Anna Marie: ams@mcn.org • Other ways to Volunteer: sign up form
 - Contact if you want us to visit your organization's meeting:
 - surjmendocoast@gmail.com For more info see: https://savejackson.org/please-read/
 - Fire Safety

Lastly, we invite you to take a look at this informative article recently published in the LA Times about the reality of fuel break failures. From the article: "Consider the case of Paradise. Officials there spent years doing exactly what Cal Fire contractors have been doing this summer-thinning vegetation along roads and near development where firefighters can take a stand. It didn't work. The

wind-whipped Camp fire hurtled over the fuel breaks and destroyed the town, killing 86 people and burning nearly 19,000 homes, businesses and other structures. Chopping down trees and shrubs is "an easy approach because people think 'Oh, the thing we can change is vegetation' ... and people want the problem to be fixed," research scientist Alexandra Syphard said. "But unfortunately, it's more complex than that. ... Thermal images show how a blizzard of embers flew over the fuel breaks as if they didn't exist, igniting fires all over town."

Scholarship Appeal





where First Amendment speech protections intersect with the government's ability to manage proceedings Register here.

LWVC also invites you to an Interest Group All-Hands Training on Thursday, February 16 at 7 PM. Join this webinar to learn more about the purpose and operation of LWVC Interest Groups across all areas. As Advocacy Interest groups grow, they continue to provide an important forum for members to support each

US League Updates

DACA action The League continues to call on Congress to pass legislation protecting recipients of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, otherwise known as Dreamers. In a press release, CEO Virginia Kase Solomón said, "A true democracy includes fair and equitable immigration policies with a path to citizenship. With just a few short working weeks left this year, we call on Congress to take immediate action to protect the Dreamers for once and for all."

Voter Intimidation

On November 4 the Arizona League won an important court order blocking voter intimidation at state ballot dropboxes. "Today's U.S. District Court decision is a victory for the voters of Arizona who have the right to cast their ballots free from intimidation, threats, or coercion," said Pinny Sheoran, President of the League of Women Voters of Arizona. "The League of Women Voters of Arizona is proud to have challenged activities that are presently interfering with voters' right to cast a ballot safely and without fear, and we encourage voters to continue using drop boxes to vote."

Shortly after, a Missouri judge blocked the enforcement of several provisions criminalizing voter engagement; LWV were plaintiffs on this case. On the same day, the LWV of Tennessee and ACLU of Tennessee secured the right to vote for the citizens of Davidson County, hundreds of whom had received incorrect ballots.

Election Highlights In a fundraising letter dated November 23, LWVUS CEO Virginia Kase Solomón highlighted more points about the election:

On November 8th, you and millions of Americans helped make history in the 2022 midterm elections. Forty-two million people voted early, shattering previous records. Women and first-time voters had an incredibly strong turnout. Despite anti-voter laws, mis- and dis-information, and poll worker shortages, American voters showed up and made their voices heard.

Notable Barriers Broken in the Mid-Terms: Becca Balint, the first woman in Congress from Vermont

Maura Healey, the first lesbian governor in the US, and first woman governor in Massachusetts

Summer Lee, Pennsylvania's first Black woman in Congress

Delia Ramirez, the first Latina woman in Congress from Illinois Maxwell Alejandro Frost, first Gen Z member of Congress at 25 Kathy Hochul, the first woman elected governor of New York

And, voters in four states voted to protect reproductive rights.

Supreme Court

In a fundraising appeal, U.S. League CEO Virginia Kase Solomón recently highlighted the stakes involved in a case the Supreme Court is hearing this month: On December 7, as the Supreme Court [heard] oral arguments in *Moore v. Harper*, the League [rallied] at the Supreme Court. *Moore v. Harper* centers on the fringe "Independent State Legislature Theory" (ISLT), which would give state legislatures nearly unrestricted authority to set the rules for federal elections. If the ISLT-which has been rejected repeatedly by the US Supreme Court—is adopted by the Court, it would allow state legislatures to choose their voters rather than the other way around. It would remove the checks and balances that protect your right to vote and will allow legislatures to disenfranchise communities of voters. The League is pushing back against these efforts to rob voters of their power. If SCOTUS rules to adopt ISLT, voters could be left defenseless against harmful voting laws. That's why the League filed an amicus brief and is rallying to protect your right to vote. The press release has more information.

Ballc	ot Me	asures

Midterm results ...

State conventions — voters don't want them

According to Ballotpedia, voters in November rejected their three state ballot measures calling for conventions to amend the state constitutions. Fourteen states have a constitutional requirement to periodically ask voters to weigh in on whether there ought to be a state constitutional convention. Three states had such questions on the ballot in 2022, but voters in Alaska, Missouri, and New Hampshire rejected the measures, denying conventions in those states from convening.

The Big Losers

Ballotpedia found that just over a billion dollars was spent on state ballot measures in 2022, 2/3 of that in California. The four most expensive measures, all in California, all lost. although in two of them (26, sports betting on Indian lands; and 30, tax on income over \$2 million) their supporters significantly outspent their opposition. The online sports betting initiative was the most expensive in the country, costing a total of \$418 million (the opposition outspent the support about 3:2).

Voting method change

Nevada voters approved a new voting method for state elections. A nonpartisan primary would select the top five candidates for each position, and the winners would be determined by ranked-choice voting.

A total of 16 states contain cities that use ranked-choice voting, but only two states (Alaska and Maine) currently use it. Alaska also combines a nonpartisan primary (in their case, top-four) with a ranked-choice general. In Nevada voters must approve any initiative constitutional amendment in two

elections, so this change will only become law if it wins again in 2024. Ballotpedia has good discussions of this ballot measure and of ranked-choice voting in general.

Land Acknowledgement

The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County wishes to honor the land we are on and its native peoples. We want to offer recognition and respect; to counter the "doctrine of discovery" with the true story of the people who were already here; to support larger truthtelling and reconciliation efforts; and to remind ourselves that colonization is still happening. We acknowledge that the land where we live and work is un-ceded territory of indigenous peoples since time began. We are surrounded by the traditional, ancestral territory and current homeland of many indigenous nations.

- Contact LWVMC
- By mail: P.O. Box 1128, Fort Bragg CA 95437
- By email: voter@mcn.org

Our website: lwvmendo.org Our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/LWVMendo1

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

Links		
LCP involvement meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/play/ dCDGxzerug05kOy8V9v6XWPp9jOWTJjwRi_X5a7hskaujO94T7jHANi63Zwx_0-vqtf9- RSTFqnD8_oE.eDYNA3zon_obw5fL? continueMode=true&_x_zm_rtaid=hz1DhVtuQpq1bVWbZv9IGQ.1671172124883.e5d2ff8af2f0a81984 e642853db49ab6&_x_zm_rthaid=640		
Desalination: mendovoice.com/2022/12/fort-bragg-considering-wave-energy-powered-desalination-in- latest-novel-water-move/		
Mendocino College trustee application: https://www.mendocino.edu/sites/default/files/ letter_and_application_trustee_area_no5.pdf		
Native American Women articles: home.nps.gov/articles/000/how-native-american-women-inspired-the- women-s-rights-movement.htm (NPS); lwv.org/blog/how-native-american-women-inspired-womens- suffrage-movement (LWV)		
County elections: https://www.mendocinocounty.org/government/assessor-county-clerk-recorder-elections/ current-election-results		
GOTV movie: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4P3s5f2Huuc		
Sustainable construction: mendovoice.com/2022/12/how-to-be-the-jack-of-all-trades-a-look-at-mendocino-colleges-sustainable-construction-program/		
Plateau housing: mendovoice.com/2022/11/fort-braggs-new-housing-project-moves-homeless-into-a- neighborhood-of-seniors-families/		
Pomo landback: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0rfuCprDwuGNA4aVcd- e2bEfUHog9QeKGK; legal fund: https://www.gofundme.com/f/gr4bbn-pomo-land-back-legal-fund; more info: https://savejackson.org/please-read/; signup form: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/ 1FAIpQLSdDD1USBRT20P1Zaizt4xdCowIPXHYX0xd37NMnQrAF-65ffQ/viewform		
Proportional representation: fixourhouse.org		
LWVC: lwvc.org/sites/default/files/LWVC_Newsletter_November2022.pdf (newsletter); https:// firstamendmentcoalition-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/tZAucOutrTgqG9wNdIGtWD1JlycgJH3xgvb (Brown Act webinar); https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ tZcoduCqrjMiGNCSQ3_nG84eAO3Dcgodyarr (interest group webinar)		
Voter protection: lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/federal-court-issues-order-barring-defendants- confronting-photographing (Arizona); https://default.salsalabs.org/T9377052d-cf0b-4e06-b2b3- fade36364aad/086f275c-f8da-45c5-96d1-cf71240e0459 (Missouri); https://default.salsalabs.org/ T9f9415cd-08ac-4d09-bf59-5c0c054e795a/086f275c-f8da-45c5-96d1-cf71240e0459 (Tennessee); lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/league-women-voters-files-amicus-brief-moore-v-harper (U.S.)		
Constitutional conventions: https://ballotpedia.org/ Mandatory_vote_about_whether_a_statewide_constitutional_convention_shall_be_held; ballot measure finance: https://ballotpedia.org/Ballot_measure_campaign_finance, 2022; ranked-choice voting: https:// ballotpedia.org/Nevada_Question_3,_Top-Five_Ranked_Choice_Voting_Initiative_(2022) (Nevada); https://ballotpedia.org/Ranked-choice_voting_(RCV) (system)		

https://ballotpedia.org/Ranked-choice_voting_(RCV) (system)