



The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

August, 2020

Cindy Plank and Nancy Kleiber, Presidents

Jary Stavely and Lee Tepper, Editors

League Annual Meeting Held Online

by Jary Stavely and Jane Person

Twenty-eight members and friends attended the Mendocino County League of Women Voters virtual annual meeting on June 9, by way of Zoom. Co-President Nancy Kleiber presided. The business portion proceeded in a way remarkably similar to past annual meetings. Treasurer Lee Tepper gave a review of the 2019-2020 accounts. Jim Plank then presented the 2020-21 budget, which was adopted by the nineteen members present. Patricia Marien continued with the Nominating Committee's slate of officers, directors, and off-board chairs for the coming year, which was also approved by those present. Paula Cohen has replaced Sharon Gilligan as a director, and Jim Havlena has stepped into Jim Plank's shoes as budget committee chair. The current list of officers and directors, and their contact information, is on page 2.

The membership approved the following Issues for Local Emphasis, as discussed at the February meeting:

- Environment/Climate Emergency
- Promoting Democracy/Civil Discourse/Redistricting
- Health Services/Housing/Homelessness
- Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (DEI).

During the discussion, participants suggested that these topics could provide programs featuring local health care providers, November election ballot measures, explorations of racism on the local as well as cultural level, and continued youth voter registration, among others. Please see page 2 for the board's initial plans to pursue these topics in the upcoming program year.

After the adjournment of the business meeting, member Matt Drewno gave an overview of how the Victory Gardens for Peace project can help preserve the environment. This presentation is reviewed on p. 5.

Summer *Voter* is Bursting with Democracy

The *Voter* is experimenting with publishing a mid-summer edition both to keep us connected in this isolating time and to share the work of some members who have been energized by current events. We include:

- Local League news and plans, starting on p.2
- Articles on racial justice and antiracism, starting on p.3
- Articles on climate and sustainable agriculture, starting on p.6
- Items on our centennial, on p.7
- Articles on voting, starting on p.8
- Report on the LWV national convention and other LWVUS news, starting on p.10
- News from other local organizations, with ways to help, on p.13

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.



Stay Connected

In this time when our routines have been disrupted and we may be experiencing anxiety and disorientation, it is more important than ever to stay connected to our friends and activities we find meaningful. We hope you will make LWVMC part of your emotional survival plan by participating in the activities below.

Nancy



Cindy

Ideas for Forthcoming League Meetings

The League Board met online June 23, and mapped out a tentative schedule of meetings for the upcoming program year. During such times as these, the dates and topics of focus are especially subject to change. With that in mind, here is a list of what we may be up to in the months ahead.

September 15: Kick off the year by **Re-Imagining Health Care**, a forum with Judy Leach, Administrator of Adventist Health Mendocino Coast; Lucresha Rentería, CEO of Coast Clinics; and Jessica Grinberg, President of MCHD. This is a chance to review what services they offer, to learn where they see the unmet needs, and to share their vision for the future. Paula Cohen will moderate the forum, and there will be time for questions at the end.

October 13: November **Propositions—Pros & Cons**, led by the League’s Voter Services Committee

November 17: **Election Review**—how well did we do locally with voter access and counting?, with possible presentation by Mendocino County Recorder Katrina Bartolomie

January ?? (second week): **Virtual Meet & Greet**, including new office holders

February 9: **local and state program planning**: our chance to reimagine our activities for a new year

March 9/April 13: **to be determined** among climate, redistricting, and racism issues

May 9: **Annual Meeting** with program TBD.

Note especially that March, April, and May don’t have definite program topics. This is your chance to put forward the topics and presenters that interest you.

Contact Your League

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Racism and Antiracism

by Cindy Plank

“Racist” and “antiracist” are like peel-able name tags that are placed and replaced based on what someone is doing or not doing, supporting or expressing in each moment. These are not permanent tattoos. No one becomes a racist or antiracist. We can only strive to be one or the other. We can unknowingly strive to be a racist. We can knowingly strive to be an antiracist. Like fighting an addiction, being an antiracist requires persistent self-awareness, constant self-criticism, and regular self-examination. — Ibram X. Kendi

Every one of us has our own experiences, different from others. We all process these experiences in our own way. Author Ibram X. Kendi is a Black man who explains his own various racist ideas deriving from his boyhood, through school, college, and into his adult life. Some of his racist ideas came, surprisingly, from growing up in mostly Black neighborhoods. In his book, *How to Be an Antiracist*, he describes how those racist ideas were formed, and the work it takes to come to grips with them in order to strive to become antiracist.

Kendi’s experiences were different from mine, growing up in a white family in a completely white neighborhood in segregated Arkansas. The racist ideas that were formed from my upbringing and my experiences require a different kind of coming to grips with, in order for me to work at becoming antiracist. Every one of us has work to do in our own way.

Evidently, the idea of racism began in the 1400s. Gomes Eanes de Zurara was an obedient commander in Portuguese Prince Henry’s Military Order of Christ. Prince Henry created the first transatlantic slave-trading policies, and Zurara wrote the first European book on Africa, *The Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea*. In it, he bragged about the Portuguese being early in enslaving Africans from the Western Sahara Cape. Even though it was common in that time to conquer and enslave anyone and everyone, including eastern Europeans, Zurara convinced others that what made Portugal different from their European neighbors in terms of slave trading was that the Portuguese saw enslaving Africans as missionary work—a mission from God to help civilize the African “savages,” and, thereby, to save their souls. Zurara was the first person to write about and defend Black human ownership, and this single document began the recorded history of anti-Black racist ideas.

In his book about Prince Henry and his “mission,” Zurara grouped all the peoples from various parts of Africa as having negative qualities in order to justify Prince Henry’s cause, to normalize and rationalize enslaving Africans, and to justify the power of hierarchy and overlordship. The root problem, according to Kendi, has always been the self-interest of racist power. “Powerful and brilliant intellectuals produced racist ideas to justify the racist policies of their era, to redirect the blame for their era’s racial inequities away from those policies and onto people.”

Kendi explains that the opposite of “racist” isn’t “not racist”. The opposite of “racist” is “antiracist.” “Not ,racist” signifies neutrality, but there is really no in-between space. The function of racist ideas and the reason everyone, no matter their skin color, can hold them, is to manipulate all of us into seeing **people** as the problem, instead of the **policies that ensnare people** as being the problem. Racist ideas negatively affect all of us, no matter what color our skin is. Until we can change pervasive racist attitudes and policies, Americans of all colors will continue to experience their negative effects.

According to Kendi’s analysis, the word “racist” should not be the equivalent of a slur, nor should it be the worst word in the English language. The attempt to describe it as a slur freezes us into inaction. “It is descriptive, and the only way to undo racism is to consistently identify and describe it – and then dismantle it.” He contrasts **racist** and **antiracist** this way:

Being racist means believing in racial hierarchy; it suggests that problems are rooted in groups of people themselves; its effect is to allow racial inequalities to continue.

Being antiracist means believing in racial equality; it suggests that problems are rooted in particular policies and the unjust wielding of power; it involves confronting racial inequities.

I love, and because I love, I resist. There have been many theories on what's fueling the growing demonstrations against racism in public and private. Let me offer another one: love. We love. We know the lives of our loved ones, especially our black loved ones, are in danger under the violence of racism. People ask me all the time what fuels me. It is the same: love ... love of all the little and big people who I want to live full lives in the fullness of their humanity, not barred by racist policies, not degraded by racist ideas, not terrorized by racist violence. Let us be anti-racist. Let us defend life. Let us defend our human rights to live and live fully, because we love ... At the heart of being anti-racist is love, is loving one's country, loving one's humanity, loving one's relatives and family and friends, and certainly loving oneself. And I consider love to be a verb. I'm helping another, and even myself, to constantly grow into a better form of myself, of themselves, that they've expressed [as] who they want to be. And so, to love this country and to love humanity, is to push humanity constructively to be a better form of itself, and there's no way we're going to be a better form, there's no way we can build a better humanity, while we still have on the shackles of racism. — Ibram X. Kendi

New Local Group for Allies

SURJ — Showing Up for Racial Justice — is a national organization created with the intention of organizing white folks to engage and move towards racial justice action while being accountable to Black, Indigenous and People of Color organizers and communities. After the murder of George Floyd by the police on May 25, 2020, we understood the importance of having a container on the coast to hold people who want to be organizing for racial justice locally. Our Mendocino Coast SURJ group is new, and we want everyone who wants to, to be involved. We are not yet officially registered with national SURJ, as we are still deciding collectively what our goals and long term community needs are. If you are interested in being part of racial justice organizing on the Coast, please email surjmendocost@gmail.com. Topics that we are currently discussing are police accountability, school curriculums that honor the truth of our history, storytelling projects that amplify Indigenous voices, and protest and demonstration support. We meet every other Tuesday on Zoom, and the meetings are open to everyone. On the alternate Tuesday we have a workgroup which is discussing *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla Saad. If you are new to activism, this is a safe and welcoming space to get educated and get involved. If you have been involved with activism for a while, please join us as well. It is going to take everyone working together to make long-lasting, positive change for racial equity in our community and world.

National League Statement on Acting Against Racism

This spring and summer, people from all over this country have exercised their First Amendment rights as they protest the murder of George Floyd and the countless other Black lives that have been taken at the hands of police. We have seen peaceful demonstrators take to the streets demanding change. We've also seen civil unrest in some places and, sadly, acts of police violence against protestors. We must not let those images derail the fight against systemic racial injustice and inequality. Speaking out is an important first step, but this moment requires more than words—it requires us to change.

We must do the work of introspection and make real, lasting change within our organization. As a democracy and voting rights organization, we must be part of the progress that is catalyzed at this moment. We will listen to civil rights leaders spearheading this effort, and we will use our power, our talents, and our collective voices to support and amplify their work.

Learning More about Racism

The Mendocino County League has made a commitment to focus on the problem of racism in our area and in our country. The *Voter* would like to share some more suggestions of groups, links, and books which explore/address the problem:

- Local League members have started a book club. They're planning to read *Me and White Supremacy* by Layla Saad. Gallery Bookshop can add your order for the next shipment. All community members are invited, encouraged and welcomed to join in on the hard work required of us to be anti-racist. For more info email Cindy Plank, or leave a message at 937-4952.
- Trevor Noah made this widely approved statement on national TV: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4amCfVbA_c
- Meg Courtney suggests this video clip from Kimberly Jones: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sb9_qGOa9Go&feature=youtu.be
- Cindy says, "I also love this heartwarming song by a choir of young people, recently broadcast on PBS": <https://www.pbs.org/video/i-can-t-breathe-1595451895/>
- Cindy also recommends the following (nearly hour-long) dialog from citizens in the Minneapolis area: <https://onbeing.org/programs/robin-diangelo-and-resmaa-menakem-in-conversation/>
- The Netflix movie *13th* is director Ava DuVernay's examination of the U.S. prison system and how the country's history of racial inequality drives the high rate of incarceration in America. It's also available on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krfcq5pF8u8&feature=youtu.be>
- *The Long Shadow*, a movie exploring the legacy of slavery, is available on Amazon Prime.

Fort Bragg Considers Changing Its Name

Amid the controversy over Confederate monuments and names, many coastal residents have expressed the desire to change Fort Bragg's name. Like previous name-change efforts, this one objects to honoring not only Confederate General and slaveholder Braxton Bragg, but the fort itself, which played a key role in the subjugation and dislocation of the coastal native community. Here is the City's June 25 press release:

The Fort Bragg City Council dedicated most of its Monday, June 22, 2020 regularly scheduled City Council meeting to considering how to address the widespread response it received on the topic of the City's name and its connection to Confederate General Braxton Bragg. After listening to several hours of thoughtful and respectful public comment in favor and against changing the City's name, the City Council made the following decisions.

The City Council asked staff to draft a proclamation disassociating and denouncing any tie between the City of Fort Bragg, California, Confederate General Braxton Bragg and racism. Council further directed staff to include in the proclamation a reminder of its commitment to embrace the diversity of backgrounds, perspectives and experiences of all people – both native born and immigrants as set forth in the 2017 City Council Resolution.

Mayor Lee appointed Vice Mayor Norvell and Council Member Morsell-Haye to an ad hoc committee with direction to determine the best model for creating a Citizen Commission that would not only provide a recommendation on the best path forward for the name change matter but also address the deeper systemic issue of racism. This ad hoc committee was also tasked with defining the scope of work for the Citizen Commission, how citizen participants should be selected and the protocol for how the working group would function. The ad hoc committee will make a recommendation to the full City Council as to how to proceed with the Citizen Commission at a future City Council meeting.

The City Council agreed that they would not place a name change ballot question on the November 3, 2020 general election, so that more comprehensive conversations could take place on this important subject matter.

Backyard Gardening Illuminated at League Meeting

by Jary Stavelly

At the conclusion of the League's Annual Meeting June 9 on Zoom, Matt Drewno presented a comprehensive overview of his Victory Gardens for Peace initiative. He has been the head gardener at the Stanford Inn Gardens for a number of years, and was a leading organizer of the movement to designate Fort Bragg as a Garden Friendly City (*see May 2019 Voter, p.6*). He is also Vice President of the educational organization Ecology Action.

Alan Chadwick's bio-dynamic gardens and John Jeavons were key influences in teaching him the basics of backyard gardening. He and Rachel Laase founded the Victory Gardens for Peace Initiative (VGFPI) in 2016 in order to create "patterns for local, sustainable food production which can apply to communities around the world to help increase access to healthy food and promote a culture of gardening for peace to help alleviate the challenges the world is facing now and into the future." The organization provides its demonstration site at the Stanford Inn, a number of educational workshops, a free community seed bank, and more formal training programs to promote sustainable living through backyard gardening.

Matt told his audience that micro-scale agriculture is the key to achieving sustainability on Earth in the times ahead. It saves enormous quantities of water compared to traditional agriculture, it sequesters carbon in the soil, unlike traditional agriculture, and it leads to more consumption of locally grown food, thereby reducing the burning of fossil fuels to bring food from farther away.

He shared eight principles which he, his staff, and his volunteers follow in food production at the Stanford Inn Gardens:

- 1) Deep Soil Preparation—"double dig" the plots for aeration before planting.
- 2) Close Plant Spacing—hexagonal placement instead of in rows, which helps plants mulch each other.
- 3) Companion Planting—arranging the succession of plants in a way which benefits all the ones involved—think of the famous indigenous method taught to the Pilgrims in elementary history lessons.
- 4) Composting—he recommends a 50–50 combination of green and brown plant material.
- 5) Carbon Farming—choosing plants like quinoa which have sturdy physical structures which benefit the soil.
- 6) Calorie Farming—including carbohydrate-rich plants like potatoes, garlic, and grains; he looks for a balance of 60% calorie/carbon plants / 30% root crops / 10% leafy veggies.
- 7) Seed Saving—they keep a bank of seeds to share at their site, and the Fort Bragg Library also maintains a seed bank.
- 8) Whole Systems Perspective—follow a plan which considers the totality of what is grown, both in area and over time.

The VGFPI Growing Guide, as well as information about the seed bank, workshops, visitations, and photos is available at <https://victorygardensforpeace.com/>. Matt encourages those interested to contact him by phone at (847) 404-2586, by email at matt@victorygardensforpeace.com, or through the post office at P.O. Box 1253, Mendocino, CA 95460. Additional information about bio-intensive gardening can be found at www.growbiointensive.org.

League Supports City's Attempt to Keep Trash out of the Sea

In late June the Mendocino County League sent a letter of support for the City of Fort Bragg's application to put trash capture devices in place to keep detritus from going into the Pacific Ocean. The project would be under the auspices of the State Water Resources Control Board. The board found that the national League's position on Resource Management aligned with the proposed projects goals. Write to this newsletter, voter@mcn.org, to see a copy of the League's letter.

Political Action Against Global Warming

On July 16, Congressman Jared Huffman held a Virtual Town Hall on the subject of the Climate Action Plan recently published by a House Select Committee of which he is a member. It is said to be a comprehensive blueprint with detailed plans for putting our nation on track to meet the guidelines of the Paris Accords to combat climate change. It contains provisions for zero emissions by definite dates, the promise of economic growth through the stimulation of new green industries, and the enhancement of economic justice to poor communities on the front lines of climate change. During the course of the meeting, Huffman spoke with Gina McCarthy, the CEO of the National Resources Defense Council, and with Fran Pavley, a former California legislator who helped effect the passage of our state's landmark environmental law, AB 32. Both contributors agreed with the Representative that the new Plan held great promise for the future. The one hour fifteen minute Town Hall may be viewed on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/user/RepHuffman/>.

The Plan itself, along with summaries of its various parts, is at <https://climatecrisis.house.gov/report>.

The Drawdown Project, the climate solutions organization founded by Paul Hawken, is publishing an update on their research called the Drawdown Review. A link to download it is at <https://drawdown.org/downloads>.



Celebrate the 19th

Voter readers have been looking forward to celebrating the centennial of woman suffrage (and the League's founding) in August. Plans for the every-five-year observance in Mendocino are on hold; Linda Jupiter shares this online alternative:

This August, we commemorate the suffrage centennial with The 19th Represents, presented by Intuit, a week of virtual events that raises the voices of women—past and present—who are reshaping the American story. Join us Aug. 10-14 for a series of conversations with prominent women in politics, civic engagement, journalism, and the arts. View the full schedule and our outstanding lineup of speakers at <https://www.19thnews.org/>. Registration is absolutely free!

One hundred years ago, we added women's right to vote to our Constitution; England had beaten us to it. Today we are (still) trying to add women's equality to the Constitution: 168 countries have beaten us to it. Yes, 168! You can watch a short video at <https://voteequality.us/>. Look for a glimpse of an LWV banner.

Women's Participation: the Next 100 Years

LWVUS President Deborah Turner invites you to an online event:

As we approach the anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment next month, we are launching Women Power the Vote: Defining the Next 100 Years, a discussion series to explore the work we need to do over the next 100 years to ensure fair elections with participation by all, particularly those who have been disenfranchised in the past.

Continuing the #WomenPowertheVote movement, we will kick off the series on August 12th with a conversation between Chief Executive Officer Virginia Kase and me on Facebook Live at 10 AM PDT. We will be discussing what lies ahead for democracy in America, and how all women can be active participants.

<https://m.facebook.com/events/s/women-power-the-vote-discussio/732976480769373/>



12 at One Blow

Volunteers Gregoria Cordoba, who received her citizenship this past year with assistance from the Mendocino Coast Justices, and Kristan Larson recently registered 12 voters at the Fort Bragg Post Office, and distributed forms and information which will reach more family members and friends. Cindy Plank caught them on camera for the *Voter*.

Voter Guide Ready for Public Review

Voters who want to view the November Voter Information Guide ahead of time, can see it online. The guide, which will be mailed to every voting household in California, includes arguments for and against Propositions 14 through 25, and other important election information such as the Voter Bill of Rights and how to find your polling place. California's Official Voter Information Guide is available in 10 languages – English, Spanish, Chinese, Hindi, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Tagalog, Thai and Vietnamese. According to Secretary of

State Alex Padilla, "This General Election, Californians will vote on 12 statewide propositions; federal, state, and local elected offices; and local ballot measures. It is crucial that every Californian have access to the information to help them decide where they stand on the issues."

The guide will be available for public examination from July 21 through August 10 at:

<https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/upcoming-elections/general-election-november-3-2020/public-display/>.

During this public display period, anyone may challenge any portion of the Official Voter Information Guide in Sacramento Superior Court. On August 10, the guide will be finalized and printed.

Youth Employment this Fall

Mendocino County Registrar of Voters is looking for Election Day poll workers at all locations, including high school students. Share widely & check out the attached for student poll worker requirements. Call 707-234-6819 for more info.

From CA document 062420:

California Elections Code section 12302 allows eligible high school students to serve as poll workers on Election Day. Student poll workers learn firsthand how elections are run, and provide much needed support at polling place locations. They end their day with a better understanding of the importance of voting and the vital role poll workers play in making our elections run smoothly.

To serve, a student must be a U.S. citizen or legal permanent resident, be at least 16 years old on Election Day, attend a public or private high school, have at least a 2.5 grade point average, have school and parental permission, and attend a training session. Student poll workers can be paid a stipend that ranges from \$65 to \$150, depending on the county.

National League Call to Action on Funding November Election

For too many of us, voting in the primaries was mishap after mishap. Whether you didn't receive your requested absentee ballot, had to drive far away because your polling place was cut, waited for hours to vote in person, or were near poll workers without adequate PPE, you fought to have your voice heard. We can't let this happen in November.

With the Presidential election only three months away; it is critical that Congress acts to provide funding to our election system that is responsive to the COVID-19 public health crisis, and ensures voting remains fair, accessible, and safe for all. We saw in the execution of the primaries that the funding provided by Congress earlier this year to safeguard our elections was nowhere near enough.

Contact your Senators today and ask them to include \$3.6 billion of election funding in our next stimulus bill to ensure our 2020 elections can be administered effectively without compromising your and your community's health.

In this time of crisis, where millions of people are out of work and states are funneling resources into managing the pandemic, Congress needs to step in so everyone can participate in our democracy. We know we have emailed you about this before, but we still need your help. If Congress doesn't act now, our elections are at risk of being unprotected. To take action, go to <https://www.lwv.org/> and click the "Action" button.

Census Update

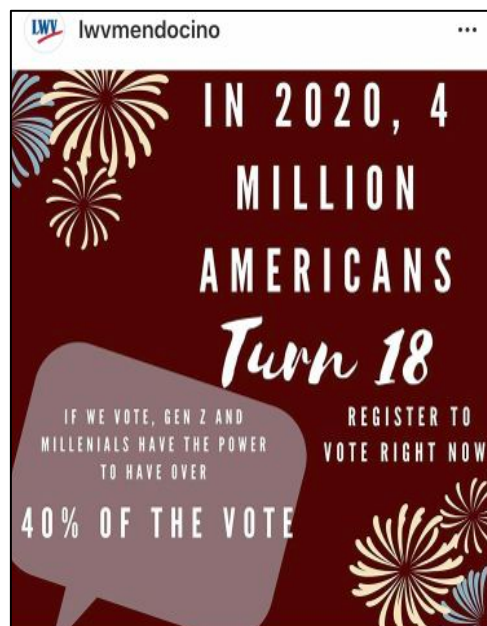
by Paula Cohen

As of last week, Census CA response rate is 63.6% and Mendocino County is 51%. The Feds are ramping up their workers to have a presence in areas that are lagging behind. So far, the South Coast, Boonville, The Woods in Little River, and Covelo are current targets for sending teams out to work.

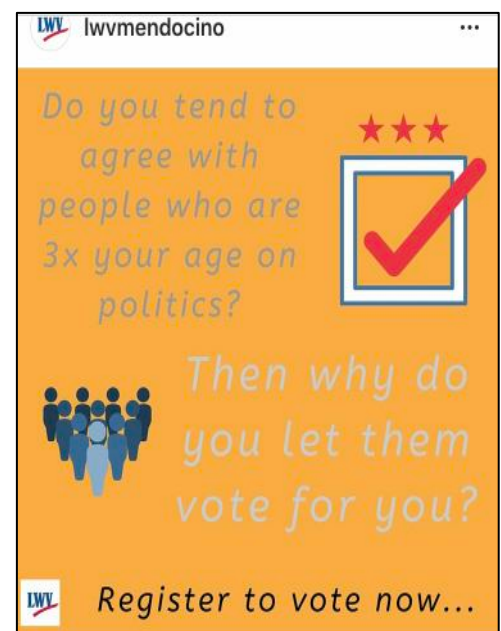
California Democrats are conducting phone banks to remind people of the Census. They call on Wednesday evenings from 6-8 PM. These partisan events are not sponsored by the League, but they might be useful for those individuals who would be willing to help make the Census count more complete. To get involved, sign up at <https://www.mobilize.us/cadems/event/275396>.

Please continue to encourage people and their friends and contacts to complete the Census. For questions contact Paula Cohen (707-937-1914).

Youth Voter Registration News



The League's youth voter registration project has shifted from school visitations (unfeasible at this time) to online contact. New member Megan Dolan, who lives in the Ukiah Valley, has been creating youth-oriented graphics and messages on Instagram and Facebook for us. Check them all out on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LWVMendo1>.



Report on the LWV National Convention

by Paula Cohen

I attended the virtual LWV Convention from June 25–28. Given the staff had only two months to revamp the convention that they had been preparing for over the past two years, it went off very well. Although there were the Zoom glitches for lots of people, the technical staff womaning the convention did a remarkable job.

This convention's overarching theme was the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, and the 55th anniversary of the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. During the breaks, many short videos with congratulatory remarks were shown. There were more than 30 messages from members of Congress during one break! One of the most notable was made by Senator Chuck Grassley, who showed a picture of his mother casting her first vote after the passage of the 19th Amendment.

A short musical video called "*Perfect 36*" *the Story of Suffrage* was shown and is worth viewing (<http://www.perfect36themusical.com>).

The opening event on June 25 featured four women who each had a different message:

Muriel Bowser—Mayor of Washington, D. C. She spoke about HR51—Statehood for the 10 mile square D.C. area. She cited the population of 706,000 (larger than a number of states) who pay more taxes than some states, calling it taxation without representation and voter suppression of its citizens.

Alejandra Castillo—CEO of YWCA of the USA. She talked about the similarities of both organizations having an impact on women, both work at the local level, engagement and building on civic issues. She directed us toward viewing issues through a racial justice lens.

Allison Riggs—Southern Coalition for Social Justice. An attorney who works at the local level with communities, she warned that we must be diligent about the upcoming redistricting process to ensure equity.

Valerie Jarrett—Senior Advisor to President Obama from 2009–2017. She works with Michelle Obama on Civic Engagement and the "When We All Vote" project. Her message was to work to close the 'age and race gap' of voters, citing the need to get younger voters to the polls and to increase voter registration among those who have traditionally been disenfranchised. She encouraged increased efforts at the local level to encourage and discuss registration and voting by mail initiatives. She challenged us to 'learn to listen,' citing it is important for new voters to have a 'feeling of belonging' to get involved. More at whenweallvote.org.

Highlights from the Friday, June 26th meeting:

It was announced there is a total attendance of 2500 people of which there were 1241 delegates from all 50 states. All of the delegates were credentialed at the start of this session within 30 minutes. All of this meeting was conducted via Zoom!

The meeting began with a review of convention rules and procedures for voting. This was followed by the report of the Nominating Committee who presented a slate of Officers and Directors for the 2020-2022. The new officers will be:

- President Dr. Deborah Turner (NY)
- Vice President Jessica Low-Minor (FL)
- Secretary Jessica Rohloff (MN)
- Treasurer Leah Edwards. (CA)

A report from the Bylaws Committee presented a number of proposed changes. The scope of the changes included expanding age of 'student members', the expansion of the rewording of LWV's Diversity, Equity

and Inclusion statement, clarification of dissolution process for a local League, and wording about Board of Directors conduct. If anyone would like more details, please contact me or refer to the revised Bylaws.

The Board recommended retaining the current National Program for 2020-2022 without modification. It includes:

- Representational Government
- International Relations
- National Resources
- Social Policy

The League-wide “Campaign for “Making Democracy Work” has the following components:

- Voting Rights and the For the People Act
- Improving Elections
- Campaign Finance/Money in Politics
- Redistricting - “People Powered Fair mays Campaign”

Continuing urgent issues include climate change, ERA, healthcare, gun safety and immigration.

There were 3 additional items from the “Not Recommended Items” list that delegates were asked to consider. They were: 1) abolition of the Electoral College, 2) ERA: ‘Walk the Talk’ remove the US Congress deadline for approval of the ERA, and 3) transference of public land.

There was much discussion about the issue of public land among the delegates. The final vote was held on the next day of the convention.

Highlights from Saturday, June 27, 2020:

There was the presentation of the LWV Financials which show the organization in a healthy position. This was followed by a discussion of the upcoming budget for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. There will be no increase in the local ‘per member payment’ to the national organization. There have been adjustments to the budget due to the impact of COVID-19. Direct marketing revenues have decreased due to the change to a virtual 2020 convention. Expenses for the 2022 Convention will be higher as it will be held in Denver, Colorado, which involves traveling and accommodations for staff. Income from foundations will increase and individual income is expected to decrease. There has been an increase of 8 positions for the additional new programs. In anticipation of a full array of voting and redistricting issues, an additional attorney has been hired. The direct mailing campaign has been outsourced and more financial work has been brought in-house. A decision on increasing staff wages has not been finalized at this time. There will also be consideration of whether to increase the number of Board Members. The budget was adopted.

The final discussion of the Platform/Programs for the next two years 2020-2022 was held. As a result of the discussion from the previous day the following additions were proposed: Add to the Campaign for Making Democracy Work: Abolishing the Electoral College; climate change was continued as an urgent issue.

The convention wound up with the presentation of awards. The new officers were seated and President Dr. Deborah Turner gave her first speech. I thank the League for this opportunity to participate in the national convention.

Readers can follow up on Paula Cohen’s report by going on line. You can find new President Dr. Deborah Ann Turner’s speech at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_X3bmBTwE&feature=youtu.be.

The opening day panel discussion featuring Muriel Bowser, Valerie Jarrett, Allison Riggs, and Alejandra Castillo is on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/leagueofwomenvoters/videos/203050890905619/>.

CEO Virginia Kase’s remarks are at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5epVnbqUpY&feature=youtu.be>

LWVUS Review of Recent Supreme Court Decisions

As the United States Supreme Court concludes its 2019-2020 term, we received three landmark victories for civil rights in cases in which we filed *amicus*, or “friend of the court”, briefs:

Bostock v. Georgia & Harris Funeral Homes v. EEOC: The Supreme Court ruled LGBTQ employees are protected under Title VII. Never again can a person be discriminated against at work due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. This victory provides long overdue protections for LGBTQ people in education, housing, and healthcare—and offers much-needed clarity for the LGBTQ+ community in the workplace, and could set the stage to combat the increasing violence in this community.

DHS v. Regents of University of California: On the week that marked the eighth anniversary of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, the Supreme Court decided to overrule the wrongful termination of the crucial program. Since the September 5, 2017, announcement by US Attorney General Sessions on the decision to terminate DACA, more than 700,000 families have held their collective breath on whether they would be here to stay. This ruling makes clear that Congress must act in a bipartisan manner to provide permanent legal protections for DREAMers and their families, without using them as a bargaining chip for enforcement and border wall funding. Now it's time for a permanent solution that includes a path to citizenship for every DACA recipient.

June Medical Services v. Russo: Every woman deserves access and privacy to make her own reproductive choices, and the Supreme Court ruled Louisiana will retain the three clinics in the state that provide abortion care. In striking down the unconstitutional law, the Court is protecting women, especially women of color who are simultaneously grappling with COVID, police brutality, racist violence, and voter suppression.

National League Statement on Federal Agents in Portland

On July 22 the League of Women Voters of the United States board of directors and the League of Women Voters Education Fund board of trustees issued the following statement in response to federal agents attack on peaceful protestors:

“The increasing number of attacks on our democracy by some elected leaders and appointed members of our government are violating the first amendment rights of people in this country and requires our organization to speak out against the actions of this administration.

“On Tuesday the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Customs and Border Protection division confirmed that it deployed officers from three paramilitary-style units to act against protestors in Portland, Oregon. Dressed in unidentifiable military gear, in unmarked vehicles, our government unleashed a wave of fear and intimidation against people exercising their Constitutional right of free speech.

“This administration’s tactics all too closely resemble authoritarianism. We have seen out of control leaders, past and present, who have used their power to intimidate, attack, or arrest their opponents in the name of ‘law and order.’ These actions are unpatriotic and un-American.

“The League of Women Voters is calling on the President and his administration to put an end to these unconstitutional acts. We also call on Congress to exercise its power to hold the administration accountable, immediately investigate the Department of Homeland Security and any other government agency involved in these heinous acts, and stand up for American democracy.

“The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization whose mission is to empower voters and defend democracy. We neither support nor endorse candidates or political parties. For 100 years the League has stood firm in the belief that government has a responsibility to represent and serve the interests of the people, not individuals in power.”

Local Organizations are Giving – and Asking for – Help

A Letter from the Mendocino Coast Children's Fund

League member Annie Liner writes:

For the last 8 weeks, FBUSD and MCCF have been providing 21 summer meals a week to several hundred coast children. 125,000 meals have been distributed. Our organization covered the \$40,000 in labor costs, and FBUSD staff lovingly prepared these meals for community children ages 0–18. Parents picked up or meals were delivered by school bus drivers. Unfortunately, USDA funding for summer food supplies ends tomorrow.

We are committed to making sure that children are fed, and we have a two week gap until school-funded meals for Fort Bragg kids resume, and 4 weeks for those in the Mendocino District. We are working closely with the tireless Fort Bragg Food Bank to bridge the gap, but we can't do it without your help! We have promised the Food Bank we will get them the needed funding.

Please send donations by check or credit card to MCCF, so we can feed children, provide families with diapers, laundry detergent, masks, toothbrushes, and hygiene items. Every dollar you send goes directly for COVID-19 relief. Thank you for entrusting us to turn your good intentions into accountable and effective action.

Mendocino Coast Children's Fund
P.O. Box 1616
Mendocino, CA 95460

Cell/Text: 707-684-6644
www.mccf.info
EIN:68-0367383

mccf@mcn.org

Serving families and neighbors in need since 1992.

Safe Passage Supports Families

The MCJC Justice Group is partnering with Safe Passage. We support their core belief: Making families stronger makes the entire community stronger.

Due to the virus, scores of local businesses have closed and folks have lost their jobs. Many were low-wage earners. In the past, some families used social safety net programs to ease their financial strain, but under the new Public Charge Rules, legal immigrant families that apply for and accept any assistance are ineligible to become US citizens!

Safe Passage has been overwhelmed by families needing help with basic necessities—food and rent. And they have been unable to hold any of their regular fundraising events due to shelter-in-place orders. Please contribute to help struggling families during this pandemic.

Those interested may go to <https://safepassagefb.org/en/help>, to contribute online, or send a check to Safe Passage, PO Box 1718, Fort Bragg CA 95437. Thank you.

Latino Coalition Enables Students

The local Latino Coalition has announced that they were able to award 11 \$500 scholarships to local students for use in the fall semester. A letter to the local community wished a “thank you to each and every one who donated to Latino Coalition Scholarship Fund. We could not have done it without your generosity. You can watch the scholarships award ceremony on YouTube at

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CuccKnMz_CI&feature=youtu.be.”

Countywide, there has been concern that Covid-19 information has not been clearly provided to the Latino community, a result of a lack, and also poor translation, of Spanish signs, posters, and flyers. The Board of Supervisors have promised to work with the Latinx Alliance to improve the situation. Locally, Petra Schulte, of Whole Plant Foods, with the help of the Mendocino County Schools office, has published a Boost Immunity flyer about the virus in both English and Spanish. It can be downloaded in either language at <https://wholeplantfoods.info/covid-19>. The Voter will also send either one upon request: voter@mcn.org.