



The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

October 2023

Charlene McAllister, President

Jary Stavely and Dorine Real, Editors

October meeting ...

Water Resilience

by Dorine Real

According to a report released by the UN this year, about 2 billion people around the world do not have access to clean and safe drinking water. From this standpoint, we are all water rich. In the cities and even in small water districts our taps provide drinking water of high quality in unlimited quantity at any time. Even in outlying areas we enjoy reasonable quality groundwater in ample quantities — usually. But we know this picture is misleading. A year of drought, or two, or five, can leave us as communities scrambling for elaborate, expensive solutions (*On a train? Really?*). In the background is the prospect of becoming climate refugees.

Building water resilience will be the topic of our October meeting on Tuesday, October 17 at 6:00 via Zoom.

We will also discuss Measure Q, the only issue on this November's ballot.

Zoom from home

**Tuesday
October 17
6:00 pm**

CLICK HERE

Calendar

- October 9 (Wednesday)
Indigenous Peoples' Day (Columbus Day)
- October 10 (Tuesday) 6:00 PM Fort Bragg Library
League Board meeting
- October 15 (Sunday)
Ada Lovelace Day
- October 17 (Thursday) 6:00 Zoom
Members' meeting: Water
- October 19 (Thursday) 5:30 Cafe Beaujolais
100 Women Strong Award Selection
- October 22 (Sunday) noon Caspar CC
GRI monthly meeting

The public is welcome at LWV/MC events, both live and virtual. Please invite your friends and neighbors. Our Zoom meetings all use the same link, so copy and save it if you wish.

In this issue ...

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President's message ...

Inform, Empower, Energize Voters

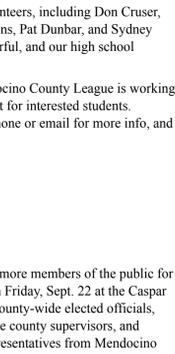
by Charlene McAllister

Working with Mendocino County youth has been a long term project for our League. In partnership with Mendocino County Office of Education, LWVMC volunteers have furnished every public high school in the county with packets of voter information (and a piece of chocolate to sweeten things) for their 11th & 12th grade students. Cindy Plank & I were recently invited to visit a high school classroom to talk directly to the students about the League and why it is so important to vote. More than one student expressed concern about the aging of elected officials, and thought there should be an upper age limit for voting. After sharing the demographic data—that there are more possible voters under 40 than over 65 (compared to the actual voting turnout by age) they realized the power of their voice/their vote.

Recognizing that 2024 will be an important election year, both nationally and locally, in order to keep our community informed on the issues, and conduct voter registration drives and candidates forums, we will need your assistance. We encourage you to be thinking now about joining in voter services activities. You will have the opportunity to collaborate with others who share your interests, as well as to contribute valuable services to our community. It's not too early to start planning for the busy election year ahead.

Dues Payable

League members and friends who wish to join, it is time to send in your yearly dues. Please see details and a payment form in a separate document accompanying this issue.

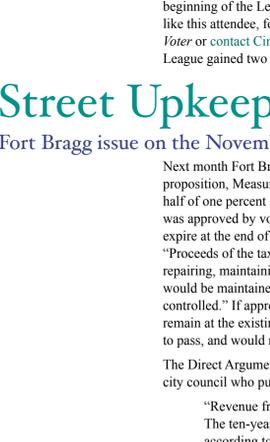


Youth Outreach in Action

by Cindy Plank

I want to give a huge THANK YOU to the Youth Outreach Team of Paula Cohen, Jane Person, Carole Press, Lauren Noorlag, Val Muchowski, and Nancy Kleiber, who have been delivering the almost 2,000 Voter Packets to all 11th and 12th grade public high school students in Mendocino County during National Voter Registration month! The packets were assembled by some of these same students as well as many other volunteers, including Don Cruser, Jessica Morton, Dale Perkins, Pat Dunbar, and Sydney Grange. You all are wonderful, and our high school students thank you!

In related news, the Mendocino County League is working on offering a Civics project for interested students. Contact Cindy Plank by phone or email for more info, and to share ideas.

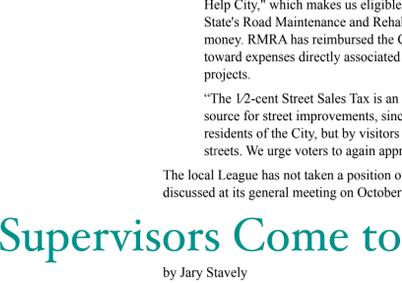


League kicks off program year ...

Meet & Greet

by Jary Stavely

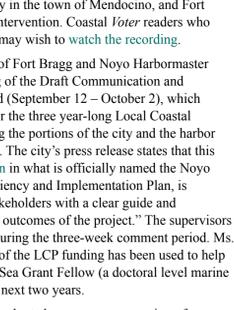
Nineteen public officials joined a crowd of 50 or more members of the public for the League's annual Meet & Greet get-together on Friday, Sept. 22 at the Caspar Community Center. The attendees included four county-wide elected officials, three county supervisors, and representatives from Mendocino College, the county school board, the city of Fort Bragg, the coastal healthcare district, the MCRPD, Mendocino Fire, and the Historical Review Board. All who came enjoyed the pleasant outdoor atmosphere, refreshments, and the opportunity to chat in a friendly way. Special thanks are due to Jane Person for organizing the refreshments; Nancy Kleiber for wrangling the wine; Grant Miller and Barb Rice for pouring; Pat Dunbar, Dorine Real, Lee Tepper, Carole Press, Nancy Severy, Cindy Plank, and Charlene McAllister for both setting and clearing up; and to all the League members and friends who brought delicious snacks and sweets to share.



Meet and Greet 2023 on the deck. Photo by Nancy Severy

Mendocino County Schools Superintendent Nicole Glentzer put this photo and comment on Facebook:

"It was great to spend the evening with so many dedicated leaders at the elected officials Meet & Greet by the League of Women Voters of Mendocino County. Holly Madrigal with Leadership Mendocino is doing great work building connections among leaders and agencies on our county."



This event also marked the beginning of the League's annual dues collection season. If you, Gentle Reader, like this order, forgot to bring your checkbook, please see the reminder in this *Voter* or contact Cindy, in order to arrange to pay your annual League dues. The *Voter* gained two new members during the gathering.

Street Upkeep Funding

Fort Bragg issue on the November 2023 Ballot

Next month Fort Bragg residents will have an election to decide a single proposition, Measure Q. Approval of Measure Q would extend the city's existing half of one percent (0.5%) Streets Maintenance Tax indefinitely. This sales tax was approved by voters in 2004, and renewed by them in 2013, and is set to expire at the end of 2024. According to the city attorney's impartial analysis, "Proceeds of the tax would be available to the City solely for the purpose of repairing, maintaining, and reconstructing streets in Fort Bragg. These proceeds would be maintained in a special fund or account, which would be locally controlled." If approved, the combined sales tax imposed within the city would remain at the existing 8.75%. It will require a 2/3 vote of the electorate in order to pass, and would remain in effect, this time, until repealed.

The Direct Argument in favor of the measure, signed by all five members of the city council who put it on the ballot, states in part:

"Revenue from this tax has been crucial in funding street improvements. The ten-year average annual revenue from the tax is \$962,700, and according to the City's most recent Pavement Management Report, Fort Bragg streets and alleys are in need of \$25.3 million in repairs and/or reconstruction over the next ten years.

"Additionally, the local 'voter-approved tax' qualifies the City as a 'Self-Help City,' which makes us eligible for annual appropriations from the State's Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account (RMRA) sales tax money. RMRA has reimbursed the City \$888,000 since 2017, to use toward expenses directly associated with large street rehabilitation projects.

"The 1/2-cent Street Sales Tax is an essential, and appropriate, funding source for street improvements, since it is revenue provided not only by residents of the City, but by visitors to our town, who also use the city streets. We urge voters to again approve the Fort Bragg Street Sales Tax."

The local League has not taken a position on the measure, which will also be discussed at its general meeting on October 17.

Supervisors Come to the Coast

by Jary Stavely

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors met in St. Anthony's Hall in Mendocino on Sept. 12. Among its items for consideration were the Local Coastal Plan Update, the dining tent controversy in the town of Mendocino, and Fort Bragg's innovative program for crisis intervention. Coastal *Voter* readers who were not present in person or on zoom may wish to watch the recording.

First, Sarah McCormick of the City of Fort Bragg and Noyo Harbormaster Anna Neumann announced the opening of the Draft Communication and Engagement Plan Public Review Period (September 12 – October 2), which proposes ways to gather public input for the three year-long Local Coastal Program (LCP) update process covering the portions of the city and the harbor under Coastal Commission supervision. The city's press release states that this outline for engaging public participation in what is officially named the Noyo Harbor Blue Economy Visioning, Resiliency and Implementation Plan, is designed to "provide the public and stakeholders with a clear guide and understanding of the roles, actions, and outcomes of the project." The supervisors were encouraged to provide feedback during the three-week comment period. Ms. McCormick also announced that some of the LCP funding has been used to help secure the participation of a California Sea Grant Fellow (a doctoral level marine scientist) to work on the project for the next two years.

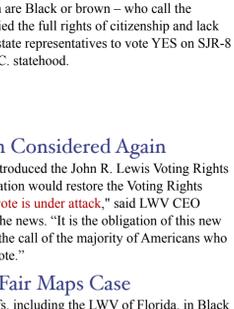
Second, the supervisors considered and adopted a one-year suspension of enforcement of county ordinances which no longer allow outdoor tent dining in the town of Mendocino. The adopted measure specifies that Supervisor Williams and county officials will clarify with the Mendocino Community Services District and affected restaurants to work the water requirements and actual usages involved in tent dining, so that a longer term solution to the controversy can be reached. Public comment on the issue seemed to this observer to be concerned, thoughtful, and civil. A detailed account of this portion of the meeting has been written by Frank Hartzell.

Third, Frank Hartzell Chief of Police Neil Kervenka gave the supervisors a summary of the work which the city's Care Response Unit (CRU) has been doing in addressing the needs of the homeless and the mentally ill. The CRU, largely assisted by outreach workers Hannah Nanez and Janette Ornelas, has prompted a 27% drop in police calls due to homeless problems, and 20% fewer arrests of homeless persons. The Chief attributes a 25% reduction in traffic collisions to his force having more time to attend to traffic problems. Original funding for the two outreach workers will disappear in the spring of 2024, so the presentation was given in an attempt to secure its continuation from County Measure B monies.

Celebrating Democracy on the South Coast

by Jane Person

Cindy Plank, Charlene McAllister, and Jane Person represented the League at the I Am Democracy festival in Manchester on September 23. Subtitled "Our Diversity Is our Superpower," it was held to celebrate and support democracy and each other in our south coast community, and the beautiful people who are America." The nonpartisan event included environmental speakers like Peter McNamee from a Grass Roots Institute, a group of children doing folkloric dancing, a drag entertainer, and Sidney Michele Regelbrugge, Mendocino County Youth Poet Laureate (whose first book is newly published). About 20 or so booths provided information on many topics, including books (from the Mendocino County Library) currently banned in some areas of the country. We even signed up a new member. Many people stopped by and we gave out flyers, and provided information on voter registration, as well.



Coastal Program Update

Meeting Discusses Plans to Plan and how you can help

by Peter McNamee

On September 13 the GrassRoots Institute held its fifth public meeting to explore how Sea Level Rise, Climate Change and the coming alterations to Mendocino's Coast will be addressed as we adapt to future coastal challenges. The Institute's Mendocino Vision Workgroup invited representatives from Mendocino County, the City of Point Arena and the City of Fort Bragg to provide updates on the status of their Local Coastal Program updates funded by more than \$3 million in California Coastal Commission grants. The purpose of the grants are to fund public education initiatives, undertake science based studies of Sea Level Rise and Climate Change impacts on Mendocino's coastal zone, and to update land use and management programs to more effectively cope with the challenges of the 21st Century.

Mendocino County Planning Department Director Julia Krog updated the workgroup on her department's plan to undertake a Sea Level Rise study of the entire Mendocino coast recently funded through a \$350,000 augmentation by the California Coastal Commission in September. The funding for this specific vulnerability assessment on the effects of Sea Level Rise and how to adapt to it, an addition to the \$1.9M LCP update grant awarded by the CCC last fall, has been expected to inform both the County's and the city of Fort Bragg's major LCP update effort. She also announced that the County has issued Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to contract for coastal traffic, water, and archeological impacts of Sea Level Rise and Climate Change, and she anticipates data collection and assessments will be started as soon as expert support is secured.

The City of Point Arena then presented their preliminary assessment of risks and vulnerability from Sea Level Rise and Climate Change impacts on the Arena Harbor. Point Arena is about a year ahead in their update assessment process compared to Mendocino County and the City of Fort Bragg. Their preliminary assessment provided graphic data, demonstrating the challenges and potential for devastating climate destruction to harbors on Mendocino's coast.

Two weeks in advance of the meeting, the City of Fort Bragg was extended an invitation to make a presentation at the workgroup meeting. They were asked to share an update on the progress of their Local Coastal Program Update, but they failed to participate in the meeting. The City of Fort Bragg was officially awarded almost \$900,000 in Coastal Commission grant funding six months ago for a Noyo Harbor Local Coastal Program update of harbor regulation and "Blue Economy" options. City officials did present news about the Blue Economy project at the Board of Supervisors meeting the previous day [see BOS meeting article in this *Voter*].

As a conclusion to the meeting Peter McNamee proposed that coastal residents begin to monitor parts of the coastline by writing down questions and concerns, recording observations, and taking photographs, all of which could provide useful information to the consultants and officials preparing the vulnerability assessment. He will try to keep track of the Noyo Harbor, and Aviv Kleinman offered to pay attention to the mouth of Little River. Peter is willing to coordinate the collection of such information. Readers interested to joining the effort may contact him at pmcnamee@sbcglobal.net.

Local public radio station KZYX covered the meeting; a news segment on the Point Arena portion aired on their Community News program on September 22. A complete recording of the meeting is available on the GRI website.

County News Items

Important Scholarship Won by County Native

William Feather of the Round Valley Indian-Ribe member named one of four recipients of the Morongo Band of Mission Indians. A press release republished by MendoFever states that he "is working on an Educational Doctorate in Organizational Leadership at Chaminade University. He is focusing on enhancing education services for Native American students in K-12 and correctional education systems. Feather simultaneously serves as the Special Education – Mental Health Counselor at the Ukiah Unified School District, Special Education Department. He also serves as the Tribal Cultural Coach for Mendocino County Child Welfare Services, a Disabilities Contractor with the California Tribal Families Coalition and a professional Academic Coach for Cal Poly Humboldt, Department of Social Work. He plans to continue championing tribal students in educational systems, while working towards creating educational pathways for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated tribal people."

The MendoFever article also has background on the scholarship program, now in its 18th year; profiles of the other recipients; and a photo of Dr. Feather.

Healthcare District Board Transitions

At its meeting on September 21, the Mendocino Coast Healthcare District Board named Fort Bragg resident Paul Garza, Jr. to fill a recently vacated seat. Mr. Garza attended the League's Meet & Greet event the next night to make contact with the public. At the same board meeting Paul Katzeff announced his resignation from the board, leaving another vacancy.

Local Seeds for Local Food

Garden Friends Community Fort Bragg (GFCFB) has announced the launch of a project to save, keep, and distribute local seeds. It is called the Mendo Seed Savers Mobile. "This project is a collaboration between experienced local seed savers—Going to Seed, Xa Kako Dile, GFC Fort Bragg, and the Yokayo Seed Project.—Mendo Seed Mobile will make locally adapted & community selected seeds available more widely, along with the resources and education needed to save and clean these seeds. For more information and to help make this project possible and local food system! Thanks for being a part of the effort."

Giving Circle to Support Local Organizations

On Thursday, October 19 from 5:30 till 7 pm, 100 Women Strong Mendocino Coast will hold a fundraiser at Cafe Beaujolais in Mendocino. Those who attend will be invited to choose which of three civic organization will receive money pooled from the \$100 provided by each individual (or group of individuals) on hand. In the target, 100 women each contributing \$100 would raise \$10,000. If more than the targeted amount is raised, the excess will be divided between the runners-up. The three organizations vying are the Mendocino Coast Humane Society, the Mendocino Coast Writers' Conference, and the Noyo Center for Marine Science. Last year Xa Kako Dile was awarded the prize. Pizza and wine are to be served.

The organization is part of "a global movement of collective impact giving, with over 350 groups worldwide. 100 Women Strong Mendocino Coast is a grassroots initiative powered by the Community Foundation to inspire collective investment in the coastal nonprofit community." More information about the event and how to donate is provided on its website, and those interested are also invited to contact Holly Madrigal.

California League Action

The state League office has published the following summary of recently recommended contacts to make with state officials. Links are embedded in each heading. The *Voter* apologizes for any redundancy with emails its readers may have already received.

Ensure Fair Redistricting

AB 764 and AB 1248 are crucial to our democracy as they will ensure all Californians have a fair voice in shaping our communities' futures through local redistricting. AB 764 strengthens the FAIR MAPS Act to prohibit partisan gerrymandering, increase transparency, and expand provisions to include educational and special districts. AB 1248 requires larger cities, counties, and educational districts to establish independent redistricting commissions (IRCs) to give voters and communities a say in choosing their elected representatives. Please ask Governor Newsom to sign AB 764 and AB 1248 and ensure fair representation for all.

Oppose a Constitutional Convention

We strongly oppose Governor Newsom's proposal, SJR-7, to amend the US Constitution, as it could lead to an era of tension, uncertainty, and protracted legal battles. We're concerned that power would shift from the people to the politicians and special interests, and that the open-ended agenda of a Constitutional Convention could put every right and civil liberty at risk. Take action to tell your legislators that you oppose SJR-7. We must continue to find solutions to our challenges that do not put the foundations of our state in danger.

Support D.C. Statehood and Full Representation

California recently introduced SJR-8, a resolution in support of federal legislation H.R. 51 and S. 51, the Washington, D.C. Admission Act, which would grant statehood and full representation to the people of Washington, D.C. This legislation is an important step towards civil rights and racial justice, as the 700,000 people – the majority of whom are Black or brown – who call the nation's capital home are currently denied the full rights of citizenship and lack representation in Congress. Urge your state representatives to vote YES on SJR-8 and register California's support for D.C. statehood.

LWVUS Updates

Voting Rights Legislation Considered Again

The US House of Representatives re-introduced the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. This essential legislation would restore the Voting Rights Act to its full power. "Our freedom to vote is under attack," said LWV CEO Virginia Kase Solomon in response to the news. "It is the obligation of this new generation of lawmakers to respond to the call of the majority of Americans who support new legislation to protect the vote."

LWV Victory in Florida Fair Maps Case

A Florida trial court sided with plaintiffs, including the LWV of Florida, in Black Voters Matter Capacity Building Institute v. Byrd, ruling that Florida's congressional map violated the Florida constitution by favoring Republicans and disempowering Black voters. "This is not only a win for African Americans and those voting strength was diluted unfairly...but also a win for all Floridians who voted to ensure their state government cannot silence the votes and voices of its own citizens," said LWV of Florida co-president Cecile Scoon.

In Brief

Tell your senators to enshrine sex-based equality by affirming the Equal Rights Amendment as part of our Constitution.

Urge Congress to address the climate crisis and protect our youth.

Reduce the influence of dark money by promoting the DISCLOSE Act.

LWV's president Dr. Deborah Ann Turner discussed the importance of nonpartisan voter registration on PBS NewsHour.

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 truth-telling 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 Message phone: (707) 937-4952
- 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

- Youth Outreach: cindyplank@gmail.com 707-357-4282
- Scholarship: mendocinofound.org/2023/09/25/round-valley-indian-tribe-member-named-one-of-four-recipients-of-rodney-t-mathews-jr-scholarship/
- Poetry book: <https://www.amazon.com/Questions-Midnight-Sidney-Michele-Regelbrugge/dp/B0CH292BMN>
- Supervisors: https://mendocino.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=1&clip_id=341 (meeting recording); <https://noyocollaborative.org/> (Noyo Harbor planning participation); <https://mendocinoveice.com/2023/09/county-will-work-on-water-issue-during-one-year-mendocino-tent-retrieve/> (article)
- Coastal planning: <https://jukebox.kzyx.org/> (scroll to September 22 at 6:00 PM)(Point Arena news coverage); <https://www.grassroots-institute.org/vision> (Zoom meeting)
- Scholarship: mendocinofound.org/2023/09/25/round-valley-indian-tribe-member-named-one-of-four-recipients-of-rodney-t-mathews-jr-scholarship/
- Seed mobile: <https://givebutterm.com/VpTRA9;goingtoseed.org; xakakodile.org; gfcgardensfortbragg.org; 100WomenStrong>; <https://communityfound.org/community/leadership-projects/100-women-strong-mendocino-coast/>; mshollymadrigal@gmail.com
- LWVUS: <https://click.everyaction.com/k/69414586/426080690/-594572124> (redistricting); <https://secure.everyaction.com/brPeFk7m50aAA2JjgTRzVQ2> (Constitutional convention); <https://click.everyaction.com/k/69414589/426080693/-1685540068> (DC statehood)
- LWVUS: <https://default.salsalabs.org/T9ad9033b-8f8e-4fd9-aaf8-f12fb5844e24/34be5bf1-59c8-45df-bf3a-672b9216f0e7> (Voting Rights); <https://default.salsalabs.org/TfPae9c4-9fa9-4344-a344-7e37652972d6/34be5bf1-59c8-45df-bf3a-672b9216f0e7> (Florida Fair Maps); <https://default.salsalabs.org/T951cd45f-0f0a-4019-8c50-42d09ad1057/34be5bf1-59c8-45df-bf3a-672b9216f0e7> (Youth/climate); <https://default.salsalabs.org/>