



# The Voter

## THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

September, 2020

Cindy Plank and Nancy Kleiber, Presidents

Jary Stavely and Lee Tepper, Editors

## League Kickoff Meeting to Focus on Health Care

by *Charlene McAllister*

As residents face changes in health care delivery, along with the stresses of the pandemic, questions arise as to what is the future for medical care here on the coast. With the management change at the hospital, what will be the role of the Healthcare District? Where do clinics fit in the picture? (Can you name the three health care clinics on the coast?). How is care coordinated between the entities?

To answer these and other questions, join Judy Leach, Administrator of Adventist Health Mendocino Coast; Lucresha Renteria, Executive Director of Mendocino Coast Clinics, and Jessica Grinberg, President of Mendocino Coast Healthcare District. We will have the opportunity to learn what services they offer, where they see unmet needs, and how the future of health care on the coast looks to them. Paula Cohen will moderate the forum, and there will be time for questions at the end.

The panelists for the League's September 15 kickoff program have leadership positions in our three largest health institutions and will bring a variety of training and experience to the forum.

Judy Leach, Adventist Hospital Administrator, has more than 30 years of experience in healthcare, including nearly 15 years with Adventist Health. She most recently served as communications executive for the organization's 22 hospitals and hundreds of clinics. Prior to that role, Leach led strategy execution for Adventist Health's urban and rural hospitals and clinics in Oregon, Washington and Hawaii while serving as vice president for strategic planning and communications.

Lucresha Renteria is the Executive Director of Mendocino Coast Clinics. Having started as an interpreter in 1992, before the organization became an independent non-profit health center in 1994, her responsibilities grew along with the clinic. She became the Director of Administrative Services in 2004 and Executive Director on January 1, 2016. Lucresha has long been a community advocate for bilingual/bi-cultural services, and served as chairperson of the First 5 Mendocino Commission for six years.

Jessica Grinberg currently serves as the President of the Mendocino Coast Healthcare District, which was responsible for running the Mendocino Coast Hospital until July of this year. She has also been a longtime member of the Mendocino Unified School District Board, and is a prosthetics and orthotics specialist for Align Orthotics, with offices in Fort Bragg and Willits.

### Health Care on the Coast: An Overview

Tuesday September 15, 2020 at 6PM via Zoom

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86060109781?pwd=eXB3ZmJrZnVzWkpUkVQbGJRMHpZQT09>

Meeting ID: 860 6010 9781 / Passcode: 981166

Phone in: (669) 900-6833

### LWW Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, strives to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

*President's message ...*

## **Election Protection**

*By Nancy Kleiber*

*Struggle is a never ending process. Freedom is never really won; you earn it and win it in every generation.* —Coretta Scott King

*Freedom is a fragile thing and is never more than one generation away from extinction. It is not ours by inheritance; it must be fought for and defended constantly by each generation, for it comes only once to a people.* —Ronald Reagan

*Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.*

While this last phrase has been attributed to various authors over the centuries, I find the most *a propos* context to be in the following excerpt from Frederick Douglass' speech given in Washington D.C. on the 26th anniversary of emancipation—April 16, 1888:

It is well said that 'a people may lose its liberty in a day and not miss it in half a century,' and that 'the price of liberty is eternal vigilance.' In my judgment, with my knowledge of what has already taken place in the South, these wise and wide-awake sentiments were never more apt and timely than now ....

I have no taste for the role of an alarmist. If my wishes could be allowed to dictate my speech I would tell you something quite the reverse of what I now intend. I would tell you that everything is lovely with the Negro in the South; I would tell you that the rights of the Negro are respected, and that he has no wrongs to redress; I would tell you that he is honestly paid for his labor; that he is secure in his liberty; that he is tried by a jury of his peers when accused of crime; that he is no longer subject to lynch law; that he has freedom of speech; that the gates of knowledge are open to him; that he goes to the ballot box unmolested; that his vote is duly counted and given its proper weight in determining result; I would tell you that he is making splendid progress in the acquisition of knowledge, wealth and influence; I would tell you that his bitterest enemies have become his warmest friends; that the desire to make him a slave no longer exists anywhere in the South; that the Democratic party is a better friend to him than the Republican party, and that each party is competing with the other to see which can do the most to make his liberty a blessing to himself and to the country and the world. But in telling you all this I should be telling you what is absolutely false, and what you know to be false, and the only thing which would save such a story from being a lie would be its utter inability to deceive.

So even as we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, recognizing women's right to vote, we are again being called to account. We League members are the torch bearers and banner holders for that hard-won right for women, for people of color, for all citizens, whether native-born or not. It is ours to lose. This election is **our** generational test.

*But, before we start talking about the pending election, let's talk about all the elections to come for the next decade. You need to count and be counted (just like your ballot). Census 2020 has a new, tighter deadline (see the article below), so please do it right now and then get back to me once you've been counted for Mendocino County and California.*

Thank you. Now on to November. We both know this election is one of the most significant in our recent history—at all levels—national, state, local. And it is fraught with perils and threats, loud with competing cries of, "Fraud!" and, "Suppression!" So this edition of the *Voter* is dedicated to giving you the resources and information on the process and how we can protect ourselves and our vote.

Thanks to all our League members for your steadfast vigilance. For me (without conjuring creepy images of the Gollum) the vote is "my precious."



# November Voting Procedures

compiled by Co-Presidents Nancy Kleiber & Cindy Plank

- **Registering** and making sure you're registered with up-to-date info

You can't point fingers at the Registrar or the Postal Service if the problem might be your own registration. You can easily check your status online at the California Secretary of State's website:

<https://registertovote.ca.gov/>.

If you're not listed, or you need to update your name, party, or address, you can register online, or by contacting one of our League members. Although the deadline is October 19, 2020, do it **now** so there is no excuse to dump your vote into the "Provisional Pile." That is the last day for you to get all of your family, neighbors and friends registered.

- **Reviewing** pre-election material

The Official Sample Ballots and Voter Pamphlets are scheduled to be mailed on September 24. But you can get a head start. A list of the statewide propositions is in this *Voter*, and a complete downloadable list of candidates and measures is on the County's website at <https://www.mendocinocounty.org/home/showdocument?id=37277>. The State League has more detailed information in the Voters' Guide, which you can access online at [votersedge.org](http://votersedge.org), or get a hard copy from us. Our Mendocino County League will be presenting the Proposition Pros & Cons at our general meeting on October 13 at 6 PM (via Zoom).

- **Receiving** your ballot

Mail-in ballots will be sent to all registered voters in California on October 5, 2020. It's predicted that ballots may take up to 7 days to be received. So, cutting the USPS a little slack, if you haven't received it within 10 days (*i.e.* by October 15), call the Registrar of Voters at 707-234-6819 to have it mailed again, or you can pick it up from the Registrar of Voters, at 100 Low Gap Road, Ukiah.

- **Voting** your ballot

**Vote as early as you can**, to make sure your ballot is received in time to be counted. If you spoil your ballot, you can get a fresh one from the Elections Department or vote a provisional ballot.

- **Returning** your ballot

"Mail-in" voters will have four choices for returning their ballots: official Mendocino County drop boxes, the USPS, or delivery in person to either the County Elections office in Ukiah or any polling location.

- *Drop Boxes*: Starting October 5, Ballot Depositories (not U.S. mail containers) for receipt of completed ballots will be available at the Fort Bragg, Willits, and Pt. Arena City Halls, the Fairgrounds office in Boonville, the Justice Court in Covelo, and the County offices on Low Gap Rd. in Ukiah, for you to drop off your completed ballot. City clerks will collect ballots from drop boxes in the county's three smaller cities (they and city managers are certified election officials), and county election personnel will pick up ballots from them and from the other locations. They will gather them every few days and will begin to count them on October 23, the legal date to begin counting. This will enable a smooth and timely ballot counting process..
- *US Postal Service*: National level authorities have advised mailing ballots at least a week before their due date. All vote-by-mail ballots come with prepaid postage return envelopes—no stamp is required.
- *Polling Places*: There will be locations similar to those in other elections. Polling place information and drop box locations will be included with sample ballots and ballots.

For in-person voting, voters will be asked to wear a mask (unless medically unable); masks will be provided, if needed. Voters will be encouraged to use the available hand sanitizer before and after voting their ballot; each will also be given their own pen to keep. Booths will be cleaned after each voter. Poll workers will have PPE, sneeze guards, sanitizer, *etc.* Note: Folks interested in being a poll worker can call Gina Bartolomie in the Clerk Recorder's office at her direct line: 707-234-6808.

For absentee (“mail-in”) voting, big black drop boxes will be set up at each location. You can drop your ballot at any polling place in Mendocino County.

Provisional ballots will be available at every polling location. If a voter's ballot has been lost, or they forgot whether they voted, or their eligibility is challenged, they can update a registration card, fill out the requested info, and vote a provisional ballot.

- **Tracking** your ballot

You can check on the status of your ballot at the California Secretary of State site:

<https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-status/wheres-my-ballot/>. Each ballot has its own code. Also, ballots can be checked for receipt by Mendocino County Registrar of Voters at

<https://www.mendocinocounty.org/government/assessor-county-clerk-recorder-elections/elections/vote-by-mail-absentee-status>

- **Counting** the votes

Counting mail-in ballots in Mendocino County goes like this:

- 1) The ballot envelope will be scanned as soon as it is received.
- 2) The privacy flap is removed to verify the signature.
- 3) Ballots are sorted by precinct.
- 4) In this November election only, ballots can begin to be counted immediately (in normal elections, they have to wait until the time established by law to begin counting absentee/mail-in ballots).
- 5) Ballot counts cannot be uploaded until 8 pm on election day, by law.
- 6) Provisional ballots are counted last. All voter info, including the possibility of double voting, will be verified before being counted.
- 7) Any ballots not counted are usually because the voter didn't sign the ballot, or voter didn't respond to the Registrar's request to verify their signature. If Registrar of Voters has a voter's phone number, that person will be called if there are any questions.
- 8) Proving (verifying) the numbers released on election night begins the day after the election: ballots are recounted; there is a 1% manual tally of at least 3 precincts, and at least one precinct is manually counted in each race. Mendocino County has a reputation for accurate counts. In 1992, Liz Henry won the 4th District Supervisor race by *one* vote. The vote was counted/recounted *three* times with the same *one*-vote result. The county has 28 days by law to certify the vote count.

Mendocino Registrar of Voters has been reimbursed by Federal/State COVID funds to allow the purchase of machines, equipment and extra poll workers needed this year. In California, ballots postmarked by election day, November 3, and received within 17 days (time has been extended for this election only), will be counted.

## **Time for Census Shortened**

During the League's August 11 Board meeting, Paula Cohen reported that the census data collection period has been shortened by 30 days, and is now slated to end on September 30, instead of October 31. This curtailment (which has been reported by the media to be due to a desire to report numbers during the current administration's tenure) has increased the pressure to get an adequate response rate from Mendocino County. At the time of her report, the overall response rate was at 53%, well below the 71.8% reached in 2010. Current rates vary considerably across the county, from 91% on the south coast to 25% in the Covelo/Branscomb area.

Paula urges everyone to continue to prompt their friends, neighbors, and relatives to report living in our county at [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov). Local enumerators are in the field now, following up on possibly uncounted residents and properties, and the census is still seeking to hire more. She can answer questions, provide info, and even schedule a safe presentation about the census, if you contact her at 937-1914 or [pcohen@mcn.org](mailto:pcohen@mcn.org).



## Poll Workers Needed Urgently

Poll workers for the November elections are being sought on the national, state, and local levels. The national League has stressed the need to fill shortages during the pandemic in this informative blog post:

<https://www.lwv.org/blog/were-facing-historic-shortage-poll-workers-can-voters-count-you>.

The California Secretary of State has launched a portal to help counties recruit election volunteers, including high school students, at <https://pollworker.sos.ca.gov/s/>. High school students should check out the flyer:

<https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/pdfs/student-poll-worker-flyer.pdf>. You must be 16 years old and have good grades (2.5 GPA).

And the Mendocino County Clerk/Recorder's office welcomes potential poll workers to contact them at (707) 234-6819. Thorough protocols have been established to protect both voters and poll workers at polling places during the November 3 election: see the discussion of *Polling Places* on p.3 of this *Voter*.

## Voter Registration on the Coast

By Cindy Plank



*Jane Person and Nancy Milano at their registration table at the Farmers' Market*

Want to register to vote? You can find voter registration opportunities at the Fort Bragg Farmers Market each Wednesday afternoon, where Jane Person and new League member Nancy Milano have registration forms and answers to your questions.

Bilingual voter registration is available in front of the Fort Bragg Post Office on certain Friday afternoons through the efforts of Gregoria Cordoba and Kristan Larson. The next one is planned for September 11 at 1:30 PM.

Also, new League member Elizabeth Apis, Wendy DeWitt, and Kacey Rogers are now

registering voters in front of the Ukiah post office during the late afternoon on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

For those who can't get out to a location, it's an easy & quick process to register, check your status, or update your registration at: <https://registertovote.ca.gov/>. Share with your family and friends and encourage them to do the same.

Voting is an important right of every American citizen. **If you don't vote, you basically decide that it's OK for other people to speak for you.** Don't give up that right. Speak for yourself, and then hold those elected to public office accountable for representing you and your interests.

Thank you to a few folks who have expressed possible interest in joining Jane, Nancy, Gregoria, Kristan, Meg, and the Youth Voter Registration team in helping voters register. If you, too, are interested, email us at [info@lwvmendo.org](mailto:info@lwvmendo.org). We'll show you the ropes and give you some VOTE buttons, plus other great info to share. Set up in a spot convenient to you and help get people registered! There are so many good places around Mendocino County.

## California Propositions on the November Ballot

*adapted from Ballotpedia*

- 14: Issues \$5.5 billion in bonds for state stem cell research institute
- 15: Requires commercial and industrial properties to be taxed based on market value and dedicates revenue to schools and local government agencies
- 16: Repeals Proposition 209 (1996), which prohibited the state from considering race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in public employment, education, or contracting
- 17: Restores the right to vote to people convicted of felonies who are on parole
- 18: Allows 17-year-olds who will be 18 at the time of the next general election to vote in primaries and special elections
- 19: Changes tax assessment transfers and inheritance rules
- 20: Makes changes to policies related to criminal sentencing charges, prison release, and DNA collection
- 21: Expands local governments' power to use rent control
- 22: Considers app-based drivers to be independent contractors and enacts several labor policies related to app-based companies
- 23: Requires physician on-site at dialysis clinics and consent from the state for a clinic to close
- 24: Expands the provisions of the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) and creates the California Privacy Protection Agency to implement and enforce the CCPA
- 25: Replaces cash bail with risk assessments for suspects awaiting trial

### Finding Out More about Prop 15

Passage of the Schools and Communities First Initiative (SCF), Prop 15 on the November ballot, is high on the California League's list of priorities. An informative article on the initiative and the history behind its development by Jim Schultz of the Democracy Center can be found on the Cal Matters website:

<https://calmatters.org/commentary/my-turn/2020/08/how-prop-13-gave-californias-richest-corporations-a-multibillion-dollar-tax-break-they-didnt-want/>.

A Question & Answer with California League President Carol Moon Goldberg and veteran state League leader Helen Hutchinson will take place on Wednesday, September 2 from 11 AM to noon. Jane Person will be attending via Zoom. You can, too, by using the information below.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88490091032?pwd=Vmp0K1lpdDkvM3plVVdwZittMkd0dz09>

Meeting ID: 884 9009 1032 / Passcode: 001451

Dial in: +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)



## League Supports the Postal Service

League of Women Voters CEO Virginia Kase issued the following statement in response to the announcement by Postmaster General Louis DeJoy to delay operational changes to the U.S. Postal Service until after the 2020 election:

“The United States Postal Service is one of our nation’s most trusted institutions. Americans know and depend on their postal workers to deliver their bills, letters, medications, and—this year more than ever—their ballots.

“The changes proposed by the Postmaster General were highly concerning because of the catastrophic effect they would have on our elections this year. Indeed, many voters were left wondering whether their mailed ballot would arrive in time to be counted. The resultant threat on voter confidence still lingers, making the reversal of these changes too little and too late.

“While we are pleased that the wide scale disruptive changes made by the Postmaster General will temporarily cease, questions remain around how to make the United States Postal Service whole again—including restoring the deficiencies which these decisions caused in the middle of a pandemic and just months before a national election. The agency must present a clear plan for how it will replace the discarded equipment, reverse the damage done, and restore the American public’s confidence in our postal system.”



*Maria Cazerres registers to vote outside the USPS in Fort Bragg*

## State-by-State Fights to Secure our Election

*from LWVUS*

COVID-19 remains a threat as we head toward the general election, and it is critical that our fall elections are carried out in a way that assures voters and election workers can participate safely. Here are a few of the cases we’ve filed on behalf of voters:

LWV Connecticut, with partners, filed a federal lawsuit seeking to make mail-in voting available to every eligible Connecticut voter during the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though 45,000 Connecticut residents have contracted COVID-19—including over 4,300 deaths so far—the state has retained one of the most restrictive mail voting systems in the nation for the November general election.

LWV New York State joined an individual plaintiff in a federal lawsuit to ensure absentee voters have the opportunity to fix their ballots if they are rejected for a signature-related issue for the remaining 2020 election cycle. For the past two election cycles, New York’s ballot rejection rate has been among the highest in the country. Voters need the opportunity to ensure their vote is counted and their voice is heard—when a ballot is challenged, the voter should be notified and have sufficient time to correct the error.

LWV Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania State Conference of NAACP, Common Cause Pennsylvania, and three individual applicants filed a motion to intervene in a case brought by the President’s re-election campaign seeking to prevent voters from using ballot drop-off locations other than county election board offices, severely



limiting their options for casting mail-in ballots. The League and partners are asking to join this case to preserve voter access by ensuring that adequate drop-box locations are maintained in Pennsylvania.

After LWV Rhode Island and partners filed a lawsuit this month, the state of Rhode Island agreed to eliminate witness/notary requirements for vote-by-mail throughout the 2020 elections due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This agreement is especially important for Black, Latinx, elderly, and disabled voters, who will rely on mail-in ballots to vote safely this year. Now Rhode Island voters can be assured that their safely-cast ballots will count.

LWV Ohio filed a lawsuit challenging Ohio's flawed system of matching voter signatures on absentee ballots and absentee ballot applications. Election officials—who have no handwriting-analysis expertise—are currently allowed to reject an absentee ballot or ballot application, sometimes without notifying the voter, if they think there is a signature mismatch on the voter's paperwork. Especially during a global pandemic, Ohio voters must be able to efficiently secure absentee ballots and have assurance that their votes will count.

Whenever voters are forced to choose between their health and their right to vote, our democracy is weakened, so we'll continue on fighting to make upcoming elections as safe and secure as possible.

## California League Advocacy Report

The LWVC-sponsored Racial Justice Act (after being sidelined for awhile) has re-emerged, and is gaining traction. This important bill, which would prohibit racial discrimination in convictions and sentencing, and create a process to challenge convictions and sentencing on the grounds of racial discrimination, is now under a new name, AB 2542. It re-emerged on August 1, and cleared the Senate Public Safety Committee and goes to the Appropriations Committee. Assuming it clears Appropriations, we will call on local Leagues to support it on the floor vote.

Covid-19 has had a huge impact on the numbers and types of legislation coming out of Sacramento. Our Advocacy Team has been busy trying to keep up with many "gut and amend" bills moving quickly through the limited, and significantly truncated, legislative session. We've taken positions on a number of bills, while many others are simply "dead." For list of bills we support, see

<https://ctweb.capitoltrack.com/public/publish.aspx?session=19&id=98de2ed5-3eba-4ad4-882a-72737a757074>

The LWVC Board has approved a new Homeless Action Plan, as presented to the Board by the Homelessness Task Force chaired by Anne Omstead. The Action Plan will enable and support local leagues taking action on problems of homelessness. Special thanks to the task force and its 12–15 hardworking members, for their excellent work. In addition to the Plan itself, the committee has developed resources and a glossary of terms and is working on a tool kit to support work in this critical area.

Read the Plan at: <https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/lwvc-homelessness-action-policy.pdf>.

## County Acknowledges Climate Emergency

In July the Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted a Climate Emergency Resolution, which had been formulated by the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee or MCCAAC. According to an article published in the Willits News, "The resolution acknowledges climate science and California's 2045 statewide targets for carbon neutrality and clean electricity, and notes several local effects of climate change: drought, wildfires, electric power interruptions, and risk of further coastal damage caused by sea level rise. The supervisors have declared that a 'climate emergency threatens humanity and the natural and built environments,' and [that it] joins 'a worldwide call for a just transition away from fossil fuels.'"

The MCCAAC was created last fall with the appointment of three members from each of the five supervisorial districts. Coastal residents Marie Jones and Michael Potts serve on the committee as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively. The full article can be read at

<https://www.willitsnews.com/2020/07/30/mendocino-county-board-of-supervisors-recognizes-climate-change/>.



## Film Series on Biointensive Gardening Worldwide

Matt Drewno has invited everyone with an interest in sustainable gardening to join a 3-part Friday Night Film Feature showing "En Nuestras Manos," a film documenting community-based biointensive farm and gardening projects around the world. He promises, "This beautiful film will inspire you!"

### Part 1— September 4, 7 PM

Soil Preparation and Composting in Kenya, Mexico, Peru, and the US

To join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87910391034?pwd=cjY4bnJROStZMmdwT1BpR2YyRUNmZz09>

Meeting ID: 879 1039 1034      Passcode: 461766

### Part 2— September 11, 7 PM

Propagation, Companion Planting, and Carbon Farming in Peru, Nicaragua, Ecuador, and Mexico

To join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81111657413?pwd=RlpQWctWLzgyNktwRk5USitmcDdjdz09>

Meeting ID: 811 1165 7413      Passcode: 537394

### Part 3— Sept. 18, 7 PM

Calorie Farming, Seed Saving and Whole Systems in Peru, Ecuador, Mexico, Kenya and the US—

To join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84313467498?pwd=MjFQZ05NT1JPC3d1UEpXSm9PRjFRdz09>

Meeting ID: 843 1346 7498      Passcode: 321801

## Environment

### Community Garden Proposed for Fort Bragg

by Jary Stavely

League member and sustainable gardening advocate Matt Drewno presented a detailed plan for establishing a community garden at the C.V. Starr Center at the MCRPD Board Meeting on August 19. The proposal grew out of the Garden Friendly Community Resolution which the City of Fort Bragg adopted last year. The Garden Friendly Community Committee has been working with the city on several possible sites for establishing a garden which would be accessible to local residents who lack the space or means to grow food by themselves.

Matt told Board members Barbara Burkey, Kirk Marshall, Bob Bushansky, and Leslie Yates that the project, to be located on the south side of the pool building, would have several advantages: it's centrally located for city residents; the exercise of gardening fits nicely into the recreation district's mission; it would benefit public health and promote both physical and mental well-being. The Committee promises to provide most of what establishing the garden would require: plans, a network of volunteers to create the infrastructure, and a cadre of Garden Corps interns to teach and coach community gardeners. Provisions for water, insurance, and maintenance would need to be worked out with the City and the Recreation District. In the ensuing discussion, City Council member Jessica Morsell-Haye said that the city will pay for half the water costs, and GFC committee members said that they have already procured insurance to cover the construction of the project.

The plans call for three phases of development. The initial phase, which includes the construction of a tool shed, the creation of a series of raised beds, and fencing and gates, is projected to cost \$7500. The committee has set up a GoFundMe account, and Matt, who was visibly moved, announced that the Mendocino Coast Children's Fund has agreed to cover the entire cost. Phases 2 & 3 would include further development, including ADA accessible walkways and soil beds.

More than ten community members spoke in favor of the project on Zoom, including a toddler from Mendocino, the City Manager, Council-member Morsell-Haye, and three League members. All four board members expressed approval, as well. A formal resolution will be voted on at the September MCRPD meeting, after questions about ADA approval and insurance are fully explored.

*Diversity, Equity, Inclusion*

## **Something to Think About**

*furnished by Cindy Plank*

An analogy about expectations for my fellow white folks just diving into anti-racism education:

Imagine showing up to a class an hour late. How would you expect the professor to respond to your entrance? Would you expect them to greet you at the door, tell you how happy they are that you arrived, walk you to your seat and make sure you were seated comfortably? Ask you if you have everything you need, and thank you for showing up? Would you expect them to take time away from the class to do that, and would that even feel appropriate?

OR would you expect them to say, “Hi, take a seat.” Or perhaps nothing at all—maybe just give you a glance while they get on with the class as you find a place to sit?

And how would you enter that class if you were an hour late? Would you walk in and announce, “Hey, I’m here!” and then give a big explanation for why you are taking the class and what took you so long to get there, diverting the class’s attention and taking away valuable class time? Would you walk straight up to the professor and say, “Sorry I’m late, but could you please go over what you’ve covered in the last hour with me?” (Imagine the professor’s face if you did that, and hold that thought.)

OR would you quickly and quietly sit down, open your book, and do your best to keep up with where the class is now, knowing you’re going to have to catch up on the first hour’s material on your own (maybe borrowing someone’s notes to help with what you’ve missed)?

Would the professor be glad that you were in the class? Sure. Better late than never. But would you expect them to express gratitude or happiness that you finally showed up? Of course not.

Now imagine the professor’s life depends on people like you showing up for class. Imagine that they’ve seen countless students arrive late, sit down for a few minutes, decide the desk is too uncomfortable or the subject matter is too hard, then walk out, over and over and over. Would you expect them to feel relieved at your arrival? Would you expect to be met with a warm welcome, or some understandable skepticism?

White folks, we are that late student. Only we are far more than an hour late.

If you’re just diving into anti-racism activism and it all feels a bit pricklier or less patient or less welcoming than you expected, this is why. We don’t get a cookie for showing up to a place we already should have been. We should not expect an open-armed, warm welcome because we’ve finally arrived.

We might be embarrassed when we realize how late we are. We might feel like we have some good reasons for it. But lengthy apologies and explanations just waste valuable class time and no one really wants to hear it, no matter how heartfelt or sincere. The class just wants to move on.

We’re undoubtedly going to feel a little lost. But if we raise our hands to ask questions about stuff that was covered in the hour we missed, we should expect the response to be a simple, “You’re going to need to get someone’s notes on that,” or, “That was covered in Chapter 1—go back and read it.” No one would expect a professor to go over material that’s already been covered for the student who showed up an hour into class. And no one should expect them not to find those questions annoying.

Yes, it is good that we’re here. There’s no question about that. But we’re late to a class that’s already in session and that’s the dynamic we should expect. The most respectful thing we can do is recognize our lateness, then quickly take a seat, open our books, and listen like someone’s life depends on it.

## City Name Change Update

A Citizens Commission to explore whether and/or how Fort Bragg should change its name has been created. The City Council members Jessica Haye-Morsell and Bernie Norvell, who made up a subcommittee to propose members of the Commission [August 2020 *Voter*], announced their names at the regular City Council meeting on August 10. Membership on the commission was not restricted to residents who live within the city limits.

### Fort Bragg Citizens Commission Members

: Jessica Morsell-Haye, Council Member, Proposed Chair	
Melanie Rafanan (Chair of the Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians)	
Ed Murrell	Lucy Stanley
Ryan Bushnell	Marshal Carr
Bernadette Rafanan	Scott Taubold
Keily Becerra Sanchez	Gabriel Quinn Maroney
Tara Larson	Misty Dawn Cook
Ray Richards	Elena Gonzalez
Javier Silva	Nicki Caito Urbani
Cesar Yanez	

Frank Hartzell's detailed report on the Council Meeting can be read online at

<https://mendovoice.com/2020/08/ft-bragg-council-decides-commission-will-tackle-name-change-stage-1-water-conservation-request-made-fbpd-appreciation-day-proclaimed-with-no-challengers-city-council-ele/>.



*Diversity, Equity, Inclusion*

## This Month's Suggested Reading

Several people have suggested Leonard Pitts' recent opinion piece, "To Be African American Is to Be Appraised," about growing up Black in America:

<https://www.arcamax.com/politics/fromtheleft/leonardpittsjr/s-2403083>.

Cindy Plank says that the following "is a hard read. It takes courage & guts, especially for excellent law enforcement officers & those who love them. But we can't fix problems if we don't see and understand them": "Hidden in Plain Sight: Racism, White Supremacy, and Far-Right Militancy in Law Enforcement":

<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/hidden-plain-sight-racism-white-supremacy-and-far-right-militancy-law>.

For information about the push for the 19th Amendment that isn't talked about much, try this TED talk by Christina Geer: "How One Journalist Risked her Life to Hold Murderers Accountable":

[https://www.ted.com/talks/christina\\_geer\\_how\\_one\\_journalist\\_risked\\_her\\_life\\_to\\_hold\\_murderers\\_accountable/transcript](https://www.ted.com/talks/christina_geer_how_one_journalist_risked_her_life_to_hold_murderers_accountable/transcript)

Linda Jupiter recommends a newsletter about race and women's suffrage from the *New York Times*:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/12/arts/19th-amendment-black-womens-suffrage-photos.html>

This slide show focuses on the intersection of woman suffrage and other DEI issues:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/08/17/us/suffrage-movement-photos-history.html?action=click&module=RelatedLinks&pgtype=Article>

*LWVUS President's letter ...*

## **LWV's Commitment on August 18, 2020**

*by Dr. Deborah Ann Turner*

On this day in 1920, the 19th Amendment was ratified, ending the long and hard-fought campaign to win women the right to vote. Today we celebrate 100 years of women powering the vote. The ratification was the largest enfranchisement of voters in our nation's history, and while today we are clear-eyed about its shortcomings—in particular, women of color were largely excluded from the movement that brought about the amendment—we commemorate this day and the foundation it has built for our modern democracy, where women not only cast ballots but see their names on the top of them.

Yesterday, our CEO Virginia Kase and I reflected on the ways in which the women's vote has shaped our country. Over the last century, we've seen how women bring their stories to the ballot box, elevating issues like education, health care, reproductive rights, children's rights, and wages for working women. Women have used the power of their vote to give voice to the issues they care about, and our country is better for it.

Yet it wasn't until the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act that people of color could fully exercise their right to vote, and our country began to reflect the values of all its people. And still today, we have a lot of work to ensure that every eligible voter can make their voice heard. Our CEO Virginia Case spoke about this with the Today show earlier this week.

That's why I'm asking you today, will you honor the suffragists who fought to gain your right to vote by taking action this election? Carry on their legacy by committing to vote. This election year is like no other. As you and your friends and family navigate your voting plan, the League is here to help you with our premier election information site, [VOTE411.org](https://www.vote411.org). You can check your registration status, find out how to register to vote in your location, request an absentee ballot, research your candidates, and more.

We've been at this for 100 years, and we have learned a few things about how to engage in elections. Here are 100 ways for you to play a role in our democracy and get involved in this election:

<https://www.lwv.org/blog/100-days-and-100-ways-get-ready-election-day>.

So, as we commemorate the amendment that expanded the vote for so many 100 years ago, we commit to defending the vote and expanding access to the ballot until every eligible voter is fully enfranchised.





## Women's Suffrage in the News

compiled by Voter staff

August 18th marked the 100th anniversary of the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Here are some examples of what was published to commemorate the time.

From the *New York Times*:

The first White House picketers were suffragists. Through a world war and a flu pandemic, they held up signs with slogans like, “Mr. President, how long must women wait for liberty?” “They wanted to be the first thing the president saw every morning and the last thing he saw at night,” said Veronica Chambers, the lead editor on a Times project commemorating the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage.

A century ago today, the United States ratified the 19th Amendment, enshrining a woman’s right to vote in the Constitution. But the decades-long struggle didn’t end there. For years after 1920, many women, including Native Americans and Chinese immigrants, were not able to vote. And for many others, especially African-Americans, casting a ballot was extremely difficult. “Many historians talk about the suffrage movement continuing at least until 1965,” when the Voting Rights Act passed, Veronica said. “The timeline of how long women in the U.S. have had political power and independence is not as long as we tend to think it is.”

Today, the fight for voting rights feels as relevant as ever. Winding lines, malfunctioning voting machines, and laws disenfranchising former felons bar ballot access for many. Weakened federal protections have allowed states to pass restrictions, like voter ID laws, that inordinately create barriers for Black and Hispanic voters.

The *New Yorker* published an essay by Margaret Talbot entitled, “Protest Delivered the Nineteenth Amendment,” with the subhead, “The amendment, ratified a century ago, is often described as having ‘given’ women the right to vote. It was not a gift; it was a hard-won victory, achieved after more than seventy years of suffragist agitation.” The rest of the thoughtful article can be found online at

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/08/03/protest-delivered-the-nineteenth-amendment?>

Finally, Cindy Plank has shared the following email from historian Heather Cox Richardson:

“[President] Trump ... celebrated the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment ... by announcing that he



would pardon suffragist Susan B. Anthony, who was arrested in 1872 for the ‘crime’ of voting. Scholars of suffrage note that Anthony would not want a pardon. ‘Anthony *wanted* to be arrested and convicted and hoped to take her case all the way to the Supreme Court,’ wrote historian Marjorie Spruill, ‘claiming that as a citizen, her right to vote was established by the 14th Amendment. However, because a well-wisher paid her fine without consulting her, her case was closed and she was not able to proceed further through the court system. She was furious.’”

*Cindy recently found this double deck of playing cards in an old League box. Want ‘em in return for supporting the League’s efforts? Contact us: [voter@mcn.org](mailto:voter@mcn.org).*

# Membership Renewal Invitation

September 1, 2020

Dear Members,

Every year at this time we begin a new program year, and we also solicit your annual dues. Please take a minute to mail your annual dues to us at P.O. Box 1128, Fort Bragg, CA. The more we collect at this time, the less we will spend on postage for having to ask later on.

The full amount of your regular dues—\$60.00 for an individual membership or \$90.00 for a 2-member household—is passed on to the U.S. and California Leagues to support their laudable efforts towards making democracy work and preserving our world. So, in addition to our regular and household memberships, we are pleased to include additional levels of contribution for you to consider when you make your renewal. These fund the activities of our local League. Each membership level is named after a woman of the past who chose to make a difference:

- Susan B. Anthony founded the National Woman Suffrage Association along with Elizabeth Cady Stanton.
- Amelia Bloomer was the first woman to own, operate and edit a newspaper, *The Lily*, which promoted women’s rights issues.
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton founded the National Woman Suffrage Association and served as its first president.
- Carrie Chapman Catt founded the League of Women Voters: "Winning the vote is only an opening wedge —learning to use it is a bigger task."

Another individual who chose to make a difference was Frederick Douglass, who spoke at the Seneca Falls women’s rights convention urging women not to compromise on their demand for the vote. Donations to our League’s Frederick Douglass Diversity Fund allow scholarship and “try us” memberships. We are also pleased to say that free memberships for students 16–26 years of age are the official policy of the national League. They are available for the asking.

Thank you for remaining a member of a committed group of women and men who are working to make a difference in the future of our country.

*Jary Stavelly*  
Membership Chair

-----  
**LWVMC Membership Renewal, 2020–2021**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Student Membership	@ 0	_____
Susan B. Anthony Individual Membership	@ \$60	_____
Amelia Bloomer Household Membership	@ \$90	_____
Elizabeth Cady Stanton Membership	@ \$100	_____
Carrie Chapman Catt Membership	@ \$250	_____
Donation to LWVMC		_____
Donation to Frederick Douglass Diversity Fund		_____
Donation to LWVMC Education Fund (tax deductible)		_____
Total		_____

*Please make checks payable to LWVMC, and mail to P.O. Box 1128, Fort Bragg CA 95437.  
Sorry, only Education Fund donations are tax-deductible.*