



The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

February 2021

Cindy Plank and Nancy Kleiber, Presidents

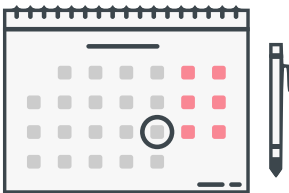
Jary Stavely and Lee Tepper, Editors

February meeting ...

Exploration of Redistricting

*Tuesday, February 9th,
at 6:00 PM on Zoom:*

[Click here for the link](#)



*and click the calendar
to see other upcoming
events*

The League's next meeting, February 9 at 6:00 PM on Zoom, will feature a presentation on Redistricting by California League Board veteran Helen Hutchison. Redistricting is a key focus for the State League this year, as new information from the 2020 census affects the number and shapes of Congressional and Legislative districts. The League "believes that districts should be drawn by politically independent special commissions that use fair criteria to help keep communities intact and to ensure that everyone is equally represented," and it was a key leader in establishing California's independent Citizens Redistricting Commission, "in order to ensure that the process is transparent, the players are accountable, partisanship is minimized, and our election district maps are drawn fairly." The LWVC website goes on to state that "the League works for fair maps at every level of government. California's state-level independent, non-partisan redistricting system has garnered national recognition." It is proud to have built in rules to guarantee that Commission members reflect California's diversity.

The Mendocino County League is pleased to have Helen join us again on Zoom. Please join in on the second Tuesday of this month, as she shares recent developments in re-apportionment on the state level, and how communities can work for fair district boundaries on the local level as well. Questions and thoughtful discussion are encouraged, and are sure to take place.



A Time for Recovery



by Nancy Kleiber

Intentionally or not, over the last four years we've all become political junkies. We have, on a daily basis, been receiving (and coming to need) ever increasing doses of political hyperbole and theater. We started by encountering the unusual and the unconventional, slid our way up to norm-shattering surprises, and ended with the inconceivable, reprehensible, and unconstitutional events of January 6.

Now we have to go through rapid withdrawal back to the everyday business of good governance. I feel sorriest for the late night talk show hosts, but find it's not much easier for myself. How can the filling of potholes in Washington (or on your street) compare to a late-breaking, insulting Twitter message. It's not fake news, but is it newsworthy? Yes, it is. We need to help each other through this withdrawal process. Share with us the real news, the small victories, the undramatic progress in your neighborhood and town. Post it on [our Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/LWVMendo1) (<https://www.facebook.com/LWVMendo1>). Come to our meeting on February 9 [see p.1]. Let's recover together.

Engaging with Government

Beyond electoral politics

by LWV of Montgomery County, Indiana

In view of the upcoming meeting on redistricting, and the President's reminder of our commitment to good governance, the Voter is sharing this excerpt from a thoughtful article published by an Indiana League. [The full article](#) includes a clear explanation of the difference between lobbying and advocacy. — editor

There's a difference between government and politics, despite what Senator John Cornyn (R-Texas) said in these words, "You can't take the politics out of politics ..." In fact, we can. We can engage with our government without only appealing to our preferred party, if we even favor one. We can participate on commissions, listen to or read the communications from our mayors, governors, and others. We can read laws that affect us.

One critical way to participate in democracy this year is to advocate for fair redistricting. Sen. Cornyn finished that previous provocative statement about politics with "and there's nothing more political than

redistricting.” In short, he meant to say redistricting was a competition between parties to out-maneuver each other. If we want better representation, we citizens need to hold our officials accountable starting with redistricting.

Here’s how. First, participate in each decade’s census. With accurate counts, we are allocated fair federal funding and seats in the House of Representatives. Second, call for non-partisan redistricting in the following year. 2021 is such a year. This year’s nine-member commission for redistricting [in Indiana] drew the interest of 300-plus citizens who want a fair vote and zero gerrymandering. While we can’t all be on that commission, we can stay informed via the League of Women Voters, FairVote Indiana, and, in a more entertaining twist, learn via games. Check out gametheorytest.com/gerry/, or play Mapmaker—The Gerrymandering Game online at boardgamearena.com. Third, once we understand the process, contact our representatives, and speak as an informed citizen about why it matters to have a fair vote and how it improves government for all.

Our previous meeting ...

Program Planning

Choosing our focus topics and forming action teams

by Jary Stavely

At least 37 League members and local citizens gathered together on Zoom the evening of January 12, in order to help set local and state priorities for the upcoming 2021-2022 League program year. Co-President Nancy Kleiber moderated the event, and Vice-President Dorine Real served as the zoom co-ordinator.

“The League can be a centering ground in this troubled time,” said Nancy, in her introduction to the discussion. She recounted the priorities which the local League had established last year—making democracy work, health services, DEI/racism, and the environment; and explained that one of the evening’s purposes would be to help the California League establish its priorities during the statewide convention in June. LWVC expects to work on housing and homelessness, criminal justice, water, pandemic recovery, and climate change in the coming two-year cycle.

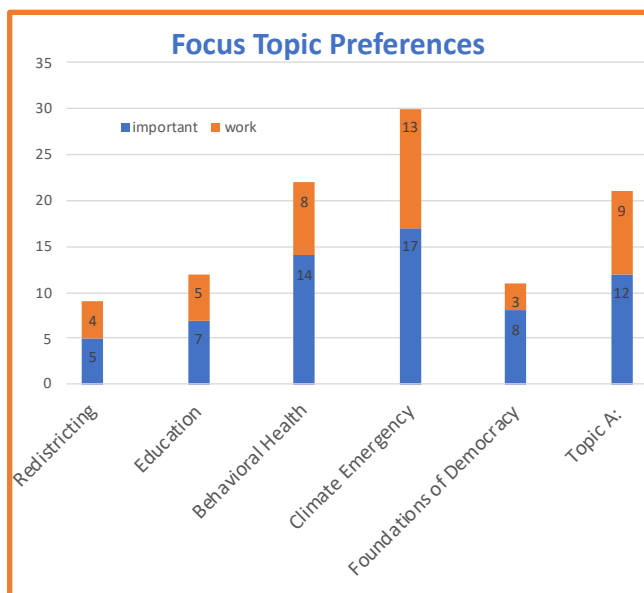
Longtime local member Charlene McAllister explained the League’s processes of decision-making for positions and actions—consensus and concurrence. She said that consensus is a “collective opinion, not necessarily unanimous, which reflects an acceptable level of agreement” by the League body which is taking action. It is a process which often takes a long period of study and discussion among the

participants. Concurrence is subscribing to a previously-formulated statement or position, usually a considerably shorter process (although not necessarily for the original formulators). This is how the recent state position on criminal justice was approved.

The Mendocino County League has reached its collective opinion on program planning in recent years through the placement of colored dots. Each meeting participant has been given a set of colored dots to place on chart paper next to the previously brainstormed potential areas of focus which she or he wishes to support through personal involvement. At the conclusion, participants have discussed and accepted the dot placement as reflecting the will of the group as a whole. This year's virtual meeting was to attempt to reach a similar agreement through the "polling" feature of Zoom.

Dorine screenshared a set of continuing and possible new areas of focus which the board had listed at a prior meeting, and they were briefly explained:

- Education during the Pandemic, including the problems of home learning, internet access, and student loans
- Redistricting after the Census
- Behavioral Health, including how crisis situations are handled, oversight of Measure B, and homelessness
- Responding to the Climate Emergency
- Foundations of Democracy



Those present were then invited to make their own comments and suggestions. Some highlights of the discussion follow. Johanna Jensen of the Housing Action Team told of the work which it was doing in identifying resources and creating a directory of housing help resources. John Wetzler, a local advocate for those with behavioral health needs, announced an upcoming Measure B committee meeting and voiced his concern that the committee has yet to allocate resources directly to the coast, so far having committed to a law enforcement training center in Willits and Crisis Center in Ukiah. Sheriff Kendall reviewed his office's involvement in establishing Mobile Crisis Intervention Teams which will pair his deputies with social workers. Mary Kate McKenna of the local Hospital Foundation also expressed the need for better behavioral health services. George Reinhardt urged that action on the climate emergency be focused on how our local region is contributing to carbon drawdown, and the

opportunities we have to create more employment in implementing and documenting the activity. Fort Bragg City Councilor Tess Albin-Smith offered to co-ordinate climate change activities with the city. Dorine explained how, for her, the foundations of democracy involved more than the national League’s overarching Making Democracy Work, but also re-creating the civility and acceptance of each person’s right to live and work in community—something which has greatly diminished of late. Linda Jupiter stressed the importance of continuing to eliminate racism in our community, and Sydney Grange advocated an emphasis on criminal justice oversight.

In the polling which followed, the three top focus issues which participants chose as most important, and which they would act on, were the Climate Emergency, Behavioral Health, and DEI/Racism [shown on the accompanying graph as ‘Topic A’ because it was added to the poll during the meeting]. As all the focus issues connect with one another, the polling results will not preclude action and study in other areas, such as redistricting (still a State League priority) and housing (closely related to homelessness and behavioral health).

This meeting was the beginning of the process of selecting areas of focus. According to Co-President Cindy Plank, “fine tuning will occur and members will make the final decision at our May Annual meeting. We will continue to keep Voting Rights and Democracy at the forefront, and our League can always lean on adopted local, state and national positions to speak to or support/oppose local issues that may come up.” Several attendees of the Program Planning meeting did not participate in the polling. If you did not have the time or access, and wish to express your preferences as to which three areas the local League should focus on, and which ones you would devote your personal time and effort to, please contact Cindy at cindyplank@gmail.com or 357-4282.

California Focus Topic:

Water

The California League’s interest in Water as a topic of concern or focus was listed during the recent program planning meeting [*see the preceding article*]. *Voter* readers who wish to learn why are invited to read a short article from the state climate change group’s Water Committee, furnished to us by LWVC Natural Resources Director Diz Swift. It is entitled [Managing the Water Under Our Feet: Groundwater](#), and discusses groundwater drawdown, recharge, and the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

The Hill We Climb



*If we're to live up to our own time
Then victory won't lie in the blade
But in all the bridges we've made
That is the promised glade
The hill we climb
If only we dare
It's because being American is more
than a pride we inherit,
it's the past we step into
and how we repair it.*



The inaugural poem calls us to meet the moment

Twenty-two year-old Amanda Gorman delivered an Inaugural Poem during the festivities in Washington on January 20. Co-Presidents Cindy Plank and Nancy Kleiber had these thoughts:

“For four years we’ve had a surfeit of prose—provocative, partisan, prideful, prosecutorial and, yes, at times perverse. On Inauguration Day a highlight (for us) was the poetry. So let’s begin a new period trying to marshal our energies to move forward with less prose, fewer words, and more poetry.”

Read the complete poem;

Watch her give the poem life;

Learn from the poet’s TED talk on “using your voice.”

National Priorities

League Invites New Administration to Share Agenda for 2021

Ahead of the Inauguration, the League of Women Voters of the United States sent a letter to President Biden and the Transition Team, congratulating them on their victory and outlining the ways in which

the League hopes to work together with the new administration to advance our democracy towards a brighter future for all. After a challenging year exacerbated by COVID-19 and deadlock in the U.S. Congress, our democracy faced many trials but stood firm. Despite a global pandemic and expansive civil unrest, more voters turned out to vote than ever before in U.S. history. Now, in 2021, a new year also ushers in a new era. At the League, it is our hope that we will be able to work in step with the current administration to achieve these initiatives, outlined as follows. At left are the nine LWV priorities aimed at working toward a better democracy, together.

LWVUS Policy Priorities

- Pass the For the People Act
- Restore the Voting Rights Act
- Implement Fair Redistricting
- Ensure Equal Rights for All (ERA Amendment)
- Comprehensive Immigration Reform
- Address Climate Change Crisis
- Ensure Quality Health Care for All Americans
- End Gun Violence in America
- Secure Peace and Climate Justice Abroad

For a full explanation of what these initiatives entail, read [the lwvus blog](#).

Harris Inaugurated

First Woman Elected to National Office

On January 20 the California League issued the following statement about the inauguration of Kamala Harris:

Today we will witness history as the first woman ever is sworn-in as Vice President of the United States. After a historic election, with the most voter participation ever, America has elected the first woman in the White House, 100 years after winning the right to vote. No matter your political beliefs, this is a moment to celebrate as young girls, and women of color can see themselves running and winning a presidential election.

We will continue in our fight to protect our democracy and ensure that women in high offices are no longer the exception, but the rule. Read [our blog](#) highlighting this historic moment.



When folks don't understand why it's a big deal that Harris is the VP (no matter your political affiliation), it's helpful to use a simple visual aid. We're a young country with growing pains.

See the red box? until then, she would have been enslaved.

See the blue box? until then, she couldn't vote.

The yellow box? until then, she had to attend a segregated school.

And the green one? until then she couldn't have her own bank account.

This is why change is necessary.

Climate Emergency

Another Youth-inspired Lawsuit Against Climate Change

Voter readers who have been following [Juliana](#), the lawsuit filed by young people in Oregon regarding the damage they are incurring from climate change, may be interested in learning about a similar action which was brought by young activists in Portugal. They have filed the first [climate change case](#) at the European court of human rights in Strasbourg, demanding that 33 countries make more ambitious emissions cuts to safeguard their future physical and mental wellbeing. The filing took place last September.

LWVUS Statement on Climate Executive Orders

More than 1,300 climate-related lawsuits have been filed worldwide since 1990. The most successful so far was [in the Netherlands](#), where the Urgenda Foundation forced the government into scaling back coal-fired power plants and taking other compliance measures worth about three billion euros.

On January 27 LWVUS president Dr. Deborah Ann Turner issued the following statement in response to President Biden's Executive Orders on Climate Change:

“The latest executive orders clearly establish climate change as a major priority for our nation. Climate change is the most pressing global issue of our time, and the League recognizes that the federal government is best positioned to lead with climate policies that are consistent with the best available climate science. “This executive order is an important step, which the League supports and hopes will be the first of many in the long and necessary effort to ensure a safe and improved climate system for future generations.”

The League of Women Voters sent a memo to the Biden Administration in December outlining the priority areas where we hope to work together including addressing the climate change crisis. Read our list of priorities for the new administration [HERE](#).

LWVUS Climate Teams Need You

Diz Swift, of the state Climate Change Committee, is also helping lead the national League's climate team. She has issued the following appeal for interested League members to participate in the countrywide effort:

The League of Women Voters declared a climate emergency and made climate change a key priority at our 2020 Annual Convention.

Chairs of Climate Teams

- **Carbon Pricing** – Diz Swift, dismoreswift@att.net
- **Food, Soils, and Agriculture** – Mary O’Kicki, okickim@gmail.com
- **Wildfire** – Dan Zalles, danroyzal@gmail.com
- **Climate Justice** – April Oquenda, apriloquenda@gmail.com
- **Renewable Energy** – Marty Gibbins, mgibbins@lwwva.org
- **Climate Action Plans** – Kathy Berlin, kathymberlin@yahoo.com
- **Transportation** – Launa Zimmaro, launa@zimmaro.com
- **Water** – Leona Whichard, lpwhichard@bellsouth.net
- **Health and Climate** – Adrienne Wald, awald@mercy.edu
- **Oceans** – Carolyn Caywood, cacaywood@cox.net

LWV US Climate Team Co-Chairs – Diz Swift, Eleanor Revelle

To advance League action on this urgent issue, we have formed a nationwide collaboration effort—the LWV U.S. Climate Team. We are a large and growing group of League members from all but seven states, working together to fight climate change. We currently have ten nationwide teams on subjects of joint interest. Together we inform each other, share information and strategies, and analyze federal legislation and policy for maximum impact.

All League members are welcome. To be added to our email list [fill out the form here](#). To join the Google Group click on [this link](#) and then click on "Join Group". If you have an interest, please email the Team Chair directly. They are listed at right from oldest team to newest.

Note: The Climate Teams don't have a presence on the LWVUS website, but the Climate Change Task Force has made available a [toolkit for local Leagues](#).

LWVUS Speaks Up

The Senate must hold the ex-President accountable

The US League issued the following statement about the upcoming impeachment trial in the Senate:

“Although Donald Trump has left office, it is essential that the U.S. Senate acknowledge that no one is above the law and engage in the legal process of holding a swift impeachment trial and, when the evidence bears, convict the former president of his crimes. Donald Trump violated his oath of office to uphold the U.S. Constitution earlier this month when he incited an insurrectionist mob to storm the U.S. Capitol, threaten the lives of both staff and legislators, and attempt to overturn a free and fair election.

“The Senate must weigh the evidence, serve as impartial jurors not tied to party lines, and convict him as indicated, ensuring that Donald Trump is banned from running for federal office again. This will also ensure no future president can engage in such anti-democracy actions without accountability.”

Behavioral Health

County Funds Supportive Services with Measure B Funds

In December Mendocino County 3rd District Supervisor John Haschak published the following announcement in his newsletter to constituents:

In December, the Board passed Supervisor Williams and my sponsored agenda item to fund two mental health programs. This is with Measure B funds. These two programs are needed whether we have an in-county psychiatric hospital facility (PHF) or not. These are wrap-around services that the PHF will need in order to be successful. The goal is to decrease the number of people needing to go to a PHF and, once released, decrease the number who will need to be readmitted. One is the Community Education, Awareness and Support program which will provide prevention and early intervention support to the community. The other is Crisis Assessment and Psychiatric Hospital aftercare program which is for linkage, care management, and medication management services for individuals needing support to connect to a system of care. More on the PHF will be forthcoming.

Behavioral Health Discussion Begins Online

Cindy Plank recently shared via email a message which Val Muchowski had posted to Facebook. It was written by Janelle Hanchett, a blogger and author, who is living in the Netherlands.

Been thinking about a conversation I had recently with the head of the psychiatric unit connected to the hospital here. It's a place where people go if they are having a mental health crisis—like an ER but for mental health. Though it's part of the hospital, it's designed to feel more like a hotel so patients feel more comfortable and less stigmatized and institutionalized.

When people in the community are having a mental health crisis and the police are called, the police immediately call a doctor from this facility and the doctor drives to the scene. The doctors try to go in regular cars (not ambulances), to “reduce stigma.” He actually said that.

The police stay on the scene to help as they can, but mostly they just wait with the person because “they aren't trained for that and they certainly don't want them in jails! It's not where they belong. And they aren't breaking any real laws.” (Public nuisance, etc., being “not a real law” if somebody is mentally ill. I have observed the reasonable application of laws more than once here—for example, hard drugs vs. soft, personal-use drugs decriminalized but selling is illegal, etc.).

If there is violence or potential for violence in the crisis, the psychiatric professional and police work together. Anyway what stood out to me is that it was absolutely obvious and taken as a given that police wouldn't handle mental health crises because they aren't trained for it. Imagine that.

I know America is massive but I refuse to believe we don't have the resources to send psych professionals into our communities the way we deploy police, EMTs, etc. But first we have to stop seeing mentally ill people as criminals, the police as catch-all handlers, and jails as reasonable holding locations for sick people (including addicts) who need treatment, not punishment.

This message prompted comments from Charlene McAllister and Paula Cohen, recalling the psychiatric health facility which the county used to operate in Ukiah (and the need for which Measure B is supposed to address), and the Red House that served Fort Bragg during the 70's and/or 80's. Pat Dunbar commented, "It is just common sense, and what a civilized country would always do. In our country, we put both law enforcement people, and homeless, mentally ill people in impossible positions, to the detriment of all. Until we are willing to invest in services for mental illness, not much will change."

To join the Behavioral Health conversation, let Cindy know about your interest: cindyplank@gmail.com



Education ...

An [article on Edsource](#) explains how the new administration could help California children learn better by relieving their anxieties about their families' immigration status.

LWV Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization,
encourages informed and active participation in government.

Vaccination Information

Meg Courtney has passed along the following information from attending State Sen. Mike McGuire's recent online event concerning COVID vaccinations:

Access to vaccine appointments have been opened up on an on-line platform in California. Signing in puts one in line to make a scheduled appointment for a vaccine. Initially, Los Angeles and San Diego will be the first areas to offer appointments at various locations such as pharmacies, hospitals, and doctors' offices. Beginning in February, appointments will be made for the rest of California.



Importantly, you can go onto the site now and sign in and you will be scheduled for an appointment in our region beginning in early February. The online platform to receive an appointment for a Covid vaccination is: MYTURN.CA.GOV

Meg adds that 5th District Supervisor Ted Williams has established a site for county residents to register for vaccinations at VaccinateMendo.com. It allows you to enter information regarding your priority in the county tier levels, and promises notification when local vaccination events for which you are eligible come up. She and Bob Bushansky, as well as several other League households, have signed up.

Adventist Health is currently organizing Mass Vaccination Clinics around Mendocino County to help protect our community following prioritization guidelines from the California Department of Health and Mendocino County Public Health. If you sign up at <https://form.jotform.com/210268012993050>, they will send you an email with a link to make an appointment for an upcoming Vaccine Clinic.

Finally, patients of North Coast Family Health Center (adjacent to the hospital) have a way to request being put on a Covid vaccine list: call 964-4361, press 7, listen to Dr. Miller, then say your full name, date of birth and phone number.



Get Involved

Vacancy on Fund Oversight Committee The Mendocino Coast Health Care District Measure C Oversight Committee is seeking two members to fill vacancies. Jessica Grinberg and Norman deVall, who sit on the MCHCD (formerly MCDH) board, have both issued calls for citizens to fill the vacancies created by the resignations of Myra Beals and Robert Becker. The committee has oversight of the money raised by Measure C in support of the old hospital, funds which Adventist Health does not have direct access to. This could be a good opportunity for individuals who care about OB/GYN services (an issue of concern during the Measure C election) and health care in general to make a difference in our coastal community. To find out more, contact Jessica Grinberg jgrinberg@mcdh.org.

Hubs & Routes Development Continues The Hubs & Routes project is seeking a variety of helpers to assist in the development of its emergency network. At a zoom meeting for the Fort Bragg Island section of the coastal area held on Jan. 25, Jennifer Kreger asked participants to help find a) facilitators who can assist in the “private hub” sign-ups of map-builders, lawyers, and insurers to call on in emergencies; b) public hub leaders; c) nutrition experts; d) cartoonists to assist with informational posters. For more information about the project, and to find dates and times for informational meetings for different potential “islands” in the area, go to hubsandroutes.net.

Correction

The quote which introduced the story about the County DEI Task Force in the January *Voter* has given several readers the impression that there are eight different Latinx organizations represented in the task force itself. The quote refers to the group of Latinx leaders who originally contacted the Board of Supervisors. It should have read, “This past summer, a group of 8 community leaders from several LatinX groups came together to advocate for more timely, accessible, and professional Spanish COVID-19 information from the County, and to request the formation of a task force to look at equity, diversity, and inclusion in the County.” Although the DEI Task Force has members from a variety of groups which include and/or serve the LatinX community, there are not eight separate organizations represented on the task force itself. The *Voter* regrets the error, and any confusion it has caused.

Sturdy Links

If the link in the article doesn't work, try pasting the address into your browser. You may need to edit out spaces.

Advocacy and lobbying: https://www.journalreview.com/stories/between-elections-our-democracy-still-needs-us,143226?utm_content=bufferbd80b&utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook.com&utm_campaign=buffer&fbclid=IwAR36bRdNJoFrWsEWoZNqU-pfWivl21GU2Fq7b9kyoWfN-aHbp1hfGD1-KPY

Inaugural poem: <https://thehill.com/homenews/news/535052-read-transcript-of-amanda-gormans-inaugural-poem>

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/arts/watch-amanda-gorman-reads-inauguration-poem-the-hill-we-climb?>

[ted.com/talks/amanda_gorman_using_your_voice_is_a_political_choice/transcript](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/arts/watch-amanda-gorman-reads-inauguration-poem-the-hill-we-climb?ted.com/talks/amanda_gorman_using_your_voice_is_a_political_choice/transcript)

LWVC blog on VP: <https://bit.ly/3sEPUHp>.

European youth climate lawsuit: <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2020/sep/03/portuguese-children-sue-33-countries-over-climate-change-at-european-court#>

Juliana: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/571d109b04426270152febe0/t/5e5e6bf0df133120a5b53f9c/1583246321420/Juliana+Press+Release+3-3-20.pdf>

Dutch climate lawsuit: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/24/dutch-officials-reveal-measures-to-cut-emissions-after-court-ruling>

LWVUS Climate teams: <https://lwvc.org/national-lwv-climate-teams>

Climate teams e-mail list: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdJ3zpze6WqdVpMUKoCiTD9ZagtCeqO7JA1YVAjIGgbsr0yAA/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1&flr=0>

Climate teams Google group: <https://groups.google.com/g/lwvus-climate-change?pli=1>

Climate toolkit: http://participate.lwv.org/c/9217/p/salsa/web/common/public/content?content_item_KEY=3805

Immigration and education: edsources.org/2021/immigration-reform-proposed-by-biden-could-alleviate-anxiety-fear-for-thousands-of-california-children/647335?

Vaccinations:

State: [MYTURN.CA.GOV](https://www.myturn.ca.gov/)

County: [VaccinateMendo.com](https://www.vaccinatemendo.com/)

Adventist Health: <https://form.jotform.com/210268012993050>

Hubs & Routes: [hubsandroutenet.net](https://www.hubsandroutenet.com/)

Mendocino County League's website: <https://my.lwv.org/california/mendocino-county>

League positions can be found at <https://lwvc.org/our-work/positions>.

To join the LWVMC Zoom meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89709597226?pwd=V25pSUEwOGpHUHpxdmYrRHlrNzJLQT09>