

The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

Empowering voters, defending democracy

Charlene McAllister, President

May 2026

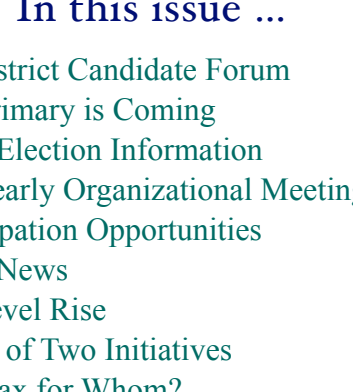
Jary Stavelly and Dorine Real, Editors

League will present

5th District Candidate Forum

The Mendocino League will hold an online forum for 5th District Supervisor candidates Ted Williams, Kevin Evans, and Todd Lyly on Monday, May 11, beginning at 6 pm. Candidates will introduce themselves, take turns responding to questions, and give final summaries. Mendocino Coast Healthcare District Administrator Kathy Wylie will moderate, Jary Stavelly will monitor time, while Charlene McAllister and Pat Dunbar will organize questions from the Zoom audience. The public is cordially invited to "zoom in," and virtually interact with the candidates. The Zoom link for participating is provided in the sidebar to the left. Information about some forums already held for the District 3 seat, and for this one, can be found below in this issue of the Voter.

Zoom from home



Monday, May 11 6:00 pm

CLICK HERE to join

In this issue ...

- 5th District Candidate Forum
- The Primary is Coming
- Local Election Information
- Our Yearly Organizational Meeting
- Participation Opportunities
- Local News
- A Tale of Two Initiatives
- Low Tax for Whom?
- California League News
- Transition to Dirty Energy
- LWVUS Updates
- LWVVC Information

Click these entries to jump to the

League board meetings are always open to the public. League members and other interested folks are cordially invited to tune in and learn how the board operates. The next one will be held on Tuesday, May 12 at 6 pm on Zoom.

Calendar

May 7	2 pm	Zoom
Webinar on <i>Callais decision</i> *		
May 7 (Thursday)	5:30 pm	Town Hall, Fort Bragg
Project <i>HERE</i> presentation to City Council *		
May 8 (Friday)	3:30-5:00	Online
Candidate forum: Superintendent of Public Instruction *		
May 9 (Saturday)	12:30-1:30 pm	Noyo Bridge
Signs of Fascism / Human Rights *		
May 11 (Monday)	6 pm	Zoom
LWVVC 5th District Supervisor candidate forum *		
May 14 (Thursday)	5-6 pm	Caspar Community Center
LISTOS of California emergency preparedness program *		
May 18 (Monday)		
Registration deadline for primary		
May 30 (Saturday)	10-noon	Meadow Farm
Growing quinoa class *		
June 2 (Tuesday)	until 8 pm	California
Primary election		
June 14 (Sunday)	2 pm	Caspar Community Center
LWVVC Annual Meeting *		

The public is welcome at these events. Please invite your friends and neighbors. Click on the * to see a relevant article.

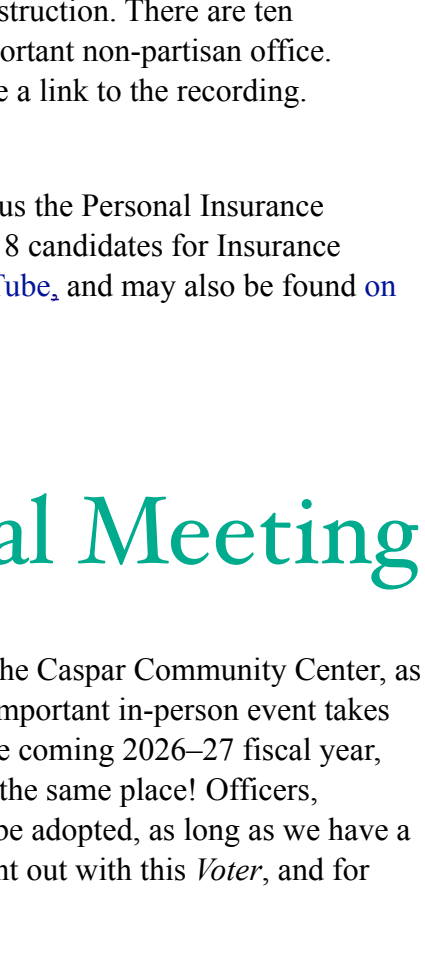
President's message ...

The Primary is Coming!

by Charlene McAllister

Here are some reminders!

- Primary Election
 - Date: Tuesday, June 2, 2026
 - This is California's statewide primary, where voters narrow candidates for offices like governor, Congress, and state legislature.
- Key Dates to Know
 - Ballots mailed out: starting May 4, 2026
 - Ballot drop-boxes open: May 5, 2026
 - Voter registration deadline: May 18, 2026
 - Early in-person voting begins: around May 23, 2026 (in Ukiah)
 - Election Day (last day to vote): June 2 (polls open 7am-8pm)
- How You Can Vote
 - Vote by mail: All registered voters automatically receive a ballot
 - Drop box: Return your ballot at official drop locations
 - In person: Vote centers open before and on Election Day. Polling place information will come with your ballot.



Local Election Information

available online

Local journalists have published articles about the various Mendocino County contests on the June 2 primary ballot.

District 3 Supervisor

In the *Willits Weekly*, Jennifer Poole reported on the District 3 Supervisor candidate forum held at the Little Lake Grange on April 16. * Elise Cox of Mendocino Local conducted her own interviews with the District 3 Candidates, and published their responses on April 1; the link includes photos and audio clips of the four candidates.

District 5 Supervisor

Mendocino Local collaborated with the Independent Coast Observer on a video featuring District 5 candidates on April 17. They will also participate in a League-sponsored forum on May 11 [see *Voter* article above].

Superior Court Judge, Room 3

The Mendocino Coast News interviewed candidates Patrick Pekin and Colby Friend. Linda Little's piece includes photos, and their responses to questions about jury shortages, courthouse access, transparency, and qualifications.

Mendocino College Bond Measure

The Mendocino League supports Measure A—it is consistent with State and National Positions. The community college has published an information page online.

*The April *Voter* incorrectly listed the *Willits Library* as a co-sponsor of the event—the editors regret the error.

Local Leagues present

Forums for State Offices

Local Leagues are presenting online forums for California state offices:

Superintendent of Public Instruction

On Friday, May 8 from 3:30 to 5:30, the LWV of San Francisco, along with Parents for Public Schools of San Francisco, will present an online candidate forum for California Superintendent of Public Instruction. There are ten candidates competing in the primary for this important non-partisan office. Register here; if you can't attend you will receive a link to the recording.

State Insurance Commissioner

On April 29 a coalition of California Leagues, plus the Personal Insurance Federation of California, presented a forum with 8 candidates for Insurance Commissioner. The event was recorded on YouTube, and may also be found on the Stanislaus County League's website.

Annual Meeting ...

Our Yearly Organizational Meeting

(It's also a party)

League members, please save 2 pm, June 14, at the Caspar Community Center, as the date and time for our Annual Meeting. This important in-person event takes care of our non-profit business obligations for the coming 2026-27 fiscal year, and will give us an opportunity to be together in the same place! Officers, Directors, Budget, and Program will, hopefully, be adopted, as long as we have a quorum. Look for the Annual Meeting Packet sent out with this *Voter*, and for more information in our June issue.

Participation Opportunities

Emergency Preparedness

from the Mendocino Announce List

On Thursday, May 14, from 5-6 pm, LISTOS of California will give a short presentation at the Caspar Community Center about natural disasters that have impacted California, the history of damage they've caused, and why it's important to be prepared for future disasters. All participants will receive emergency resource items and will be entered in a raffle for Go Bags.

Fort Bragg Mill Site Cleanup Discussion

from Project HERE

Project-HERE invites you, the community, to Town Hall on Thursday, May 7, at 5:30 pm to a presentation by our Technical Advisor, Steffany Aguilar, to the City Council Ad Hoc Committee on the Mill Site. Mayor Jason Godeke and Council Member Lindy Peters will participate in a discussion with Steffany, as part of the presentation. Members of the community will be able to submit questions to be addressed. The meeting will also be available via Zoom for those who are interested, but unable to attend in person. We will focus on the remaining contamination, and options for remediation of the land section still under orders from the California Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) for cleanup by the responsible parties.

New information and analysis will be presented, including recent citizen science sampling of mussels in Soldier Bay. The Committee's and community's questions will be addressed. Instead of having discussions about development, we will concentrate only on the environmental health and safety questions. Cleanup or "remediation" is necessary before any development can take place. For more information, visit <https://www.project-here.org>, or email Project-HERE@mcn.org.



Signs of Fascism and Human Rights

Indivisible Mendocino Coast is planning another Signs of Fascism event in Fort Bragg for Saturday, May 9, from 12:30 to 1:30 pm, with its regular weekly rally. This time the event, billed as street theater, will be on both sides of Noyo Bridge, adding to its west side the Signs of Universal Human Rights ratified by the United Nations in 1948. Other volunteer groups and individuals are welcome to join in. Eighty volunteers are needed to hold 40 signs. Those interested may contact Hannah-Leigh (llamadeara@gmail.com) for more information.

Classes on Raising Quinoa

from Sandy Turner via the Mendocino Announce List

League Vice-President Sydney Grange is teaching a series of classes about growing quinoa at Meadow Farm north of Fort Bragg. The class announcement states that she is a coastal farmer who specializes in the Bio-Intensive organic method, and has particular experience with quinoa. "The class will have three sessions, and include packets of materials with lots of information about the many aspects of planting, growing, harvesting, processing, and eating quinoa. It is a very nutritious food from the Andes in South America and can be successfully grown throughout California. The first two sessions will have some lecture and some hands on work planting quinoa in flats, and transplanting some that we will have started a week earlier."

- Session 1 (already held): Starting Quinoa from Seed and Transplanting into Flats.
- Session 2: Bed Preparation and Transplanting Quinoa, will be on Saturday, May 30th from 10 till noon.
- Session 3: Harvesting and Processing Quinoa, will be in September on a date to be determined.

Meadow Farm suggests a donation of \$20/session. For more information, please call, text, or email Sandy Turner at 707-235-9080, or peace@mcn.org. Photos from a previous series of classes are on the Meadow Farm website.

Local News

Montgomery Woods Enlarged

A 453-acre donation will expand Montgomery Woods State Natural Reserve by 16%, protecting habitat for endangered salmon, and adding to the total of land preserved for biodiversity, nature access, and climate resilience under the state's 30 x 30 program. Save the Redwoods' article is online.

Upgrades for Beach/Trail Access

Carole Brodsky reports in the Ukiah Daily Journal that MendocinoParks received \$30K in funding to purchase accessibility equipment, including motorized track systems and portable access mats, to help people with mobility challenges safely reach beaches and trails.

Blues Beach Update

Continuing his series of features on the massive Caltrans project south of Westport, Frank Hartzell reported in early April that the major seawall project at Blues Beach is wrapping up, as a long-delayed land transfer to a tribal nonprofit moves forward. "One of the biggest seawalls ever built in California is now complete at Blues Beach. The massive construction site is in its final hours. And at the same time, the Kai Poma tribal nonprofit has signed the long-delayed agreement to take ownership of the land Caltrans has been trying to transfer for four years."

Mendo Food Network Seeks New Leader

According to the Mendocino Voice, the Mendo Food Network, of which the Fort Bragg Food Bank is part, has launched a search for a new executive director, someone to lead efforts to expand equitable access to healthy food across the county. Officials say they are seeking a strategic, mission-driven leader to build on existing partnerships and guide the organization's next phase of growth.

State Demonstration Forest Management Review

During a zoom call with GRI leaders last week Assemblymember Chris Rogers and his aide Scott Alonso reported on the status of AB 2494 [see April '26 *Voter*]. The bill has been approved by the Assembly Natural Resources Committee, and is now under consideration by the Appropriations Committee, where a vote is expected by May 14. It is undergoing revision, as various representatives' concerns are being considered. They hope for an Assembly vote by Memorial Day, and California Senate approval by the end of August, so it can go to the Governor right afterwards. The timber industry is opposed, because it would have to give up clearcutting (though only in state forests, a very small portion of state timberland). Elise Cox filed a story on the Fort Bragg City Council's 3-2 vote not to support AB 2494 at this time.

Mendocino Railway Ownership

Elise Cox and Frank Hartzell have both written about a change in the ownership of the parent of the Skunk Train. Elise's April 9 story begins, "A private equity firm specializing in infrastructure investment has acquired the Sierra Railroad Company, owner of the Mendocino Railway, in a multistep transaction that transfers control of the company to new management and converts the company from a California entity to a Delaware corporation." Her story includes responses from MR CEO Robert Pinoli, and Fort Bragg City Manager Isaac Whippy. Frank's story includes speculation about how the deal might affect local railroad operations. In a subsequent story Elise follows up on how the deal so far has affected local parcel deed records.

Transportation Plan Published

MCOG has published the final draft of the Transportation Plan it will submit to the Board of Supervisors.

Potter Valley Water Project

Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins created a swirl of stories about the Potter Valley Water Project on April 21 by announcing that the federal government had found a potential buyer for the facilities on the upper Eel River which currently divert some water away from its natural northward flow into the Russian River watershed. P.G. & E. has not found a buyer yet, and has taken steps to abandon the obsolete hydroelectric facility and its associated dams, prompting widespread discussions about future water supplies led downstream in Mendocino and Sonoma Counties, discussions which have led to the so-called Two-Basin Solution, a process to find ways to continue to divert some water without impounding it behind the dams which would be removed. Rollins' announcement led to an article by Amie Windsor in the Press-Democrat, and a combative response from U.S. Congressman Jared Huffman, who has worked extensively with stakeholders in support of the Two-Basin solution. Elise Cox followed with a story about the announcement and Huffman's response, and followed that with one about the Elinore Valley [Riverside County] Water District buyer's interest. Justine Frederiksen of the Ukiah Daily Journal covered P.G. & E.'s response, which was that it has so far received no formal proposal.

On April 28, Rep. Huffman called for an investigation of how the Southern Mendocino district's interest, which he called a "water grab," was prompted.

Sea Level Rise

studies continue

Elise Cox has published a summary of the sea level rise resilience strategy report, released in draft form to the community Advisory Committee last month. [Voter readers may recall its funding and progress in our series of LCP Update progress reports.] Her recapitulation begins, "A new county-commissioned study projects that the number of coastal residential buildings vulnerable to sea level rise will increase more than tenfold by the end of the century, with bluff erosion posing the greatest threat to homes perched along Mendocino's rugged shoreline." In addition to bluff erosion, lower-lying areas in the county, such as Noyo Harbor, are subject to tidal inundation and storm flooding. The report assesses risks to agricultural/built environment, critical infrastructure, public access, habitat, and housing/real estate, and outlines some possible mitigation policies.

The entire draft report will be available on the county's LCP Update page once the Advisory Committee's input has been incorporated.

As part of a related, but separate, study of sea level rise risks to county roads undertaken by the Mendocino Council of Governments, a public meeting was held in Fort Bragg in late March. Mandala Linder reported on that meeting for the Mendocino Voice.

A Tale of Two Initiatives

by Jenny Farrell, California League Executive Director

The California Voter ID initiative advanced by Assemblymember Carl DeMaio has officially qualified for the November ballot. Our coalition of organizations opposing this measure of relaxed California IDs to vote, expose voters to potential identity theft, and cost taxpayers tens of millions of dollars.

There was a nice piece today published by Annenberg Media about the other ballot initiative that LWV is leading the way on—the campaign to pass the California Fair Elections Act, which would remove the ban on public financing of campaigns in non-charter cities. When you look at these two initiatives side by side, the contrast is striking: One—the voter ID initiative—makes participation in our democracy harder. The other—removing the ban on public financing—makes participation easier. And that is the choice before voters this November.

Low Tax for Whom?

California vs Texas

Voter readers with contacts in other parts of the U.S. may want to read an opinion piece by Cassidy Shepherd which we found online. It begins, "California Gov. Gavin Newsom went to Texas recently and addressed some false claims that Lone Star State leaders like to make about taxes. 'Texas taxes poor folks more than we tax our richest,' he said. He's right. In fact, poor families in Texas pay a higher share of their income in taxes—12.8 percent—than is paid by any income group in California." The complete blog entry is on the Institute on Taxation & Economic Policy website.

California League News

California League Promotes Mock Election

California Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D., in partnership with the California Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond, issued a letter encouraging all California high schools to participate in the California Student Mock Election. Registration to participate in the 2026 Student Mock Election opened on Monday, April 13, 2026, and the election will take place on Tuesday, October 6, 2026, approximately one month before the November General Election. The purpose of the California Student Mock Election is to help students discover the importance of elections and the power of their vote. For many students, this experience will be their first step toward becoming lifelong voters. Students will get to cast their vote for "real" ballot measures and candidates. Their votes will then be counted, compared to, and compiled with schools across California to provide statewide election results. More information is on the 2026 Student Mock Election Fact Sheet. A video made from past Student Mock Elections is on the project's idea page.

Fundraiser for Basketball Fans

LWV Night at the Chase Center: Golden State Valkyries vs. Dallas Wings Monday, August 17, 2026, 7 pm, at the Chase Center, San Francisco

Benefits include:

- Preferred seating with fellow League members in Section 216
- Opportunity to go court-side to watch the teams warm up
- Enjoy League messaging on the scoreboard and Jumbotron

Ticket price: \$100 per person (fees waived), includes a \$50 tax-deductible donation to the LWV California

Happy hour at Splash Sports Bar, 191 Warriors Way (next to Chase Center) starting at 5 pm

Link to Purchase: <https://am.ticketmaster.com/valkyries/buy/quickbuy?id=MzgxUnderFilters1>, enter the promo code: leagueofwomensvoters

Under "View Available Seats" select section 216 and choose your seat. (Some seats are being held in section 203, in case of overflow.)

Our special offer is available only until July 16. Questions? Contact us at lwvc@lwv.org.

Riverside County Ballots

The League of Women Voters of California is taking action. We recently submitted an *amicus* ("friend of the court") brief to the California Supreme Court in *Cervantes v. Bianco*, standing firmly in defense of the rule of law and the integrity of our election systems. Our message is clear: elections must be administered by trained, nonpartisan professionals—not subject to interference, intimidation, or political agendas.

California Voting Rights

We are proud members of the California Democracy Partnership, a powerhouse coalition of civil rights, labor, and community leaders dedicated to safeguarding the vote. As coalition members, we are co-sponsors of two bills within the California Voting Rights Act of 2026 package. This is a landmark package of bills designed to confront discriminatory barriers before they reach the ballot box. Proactive protection: the package of bills requires jurisdictions with recent histories of discrimination to get pre-approval for voting changes, stopping violations before they occur. Restoring Enforcement: with federal protections eroding, the bills ensure that Californians can use state courts to enforce their rights, with a mandate for courts to favor broad, equal access. Expanding the Table: the bills make massive strides in language access by lowering the threshold for required language assistance materials; expanding coverage to all language groups; and creating a legal pathway for unserved communities to prove their need for assistance.

Co-Sponsorships

We are also championing two bills that address systemic inequities in our courts and our local representation:

AB 1958 (Katra) – Making the Racial Justice Act Work

The original Racial Justice Act was a breakthrough, but practical hurdles have slowed its impact. This bill fixes the "plumbing" of the law. It ends repeated, costly litigation over data requests, making it easier to see where disparities exist; it removes the burden of presenting both statistical and non-statistical evidence in every case, allowing claims to be evaluated on their actual merits; and it explicitly applies the RJA to the entire process, including plea bargaining and other pretrial resolutions, where much of the system's bias is often hidden.

SB 1414 (Reyes) – Independent Redistricting for San Bernardino County

In one of California's largest and most diverse counties, supervisors currently draw their own district lines—a clear conflict of interest. This bill replaces the supervisor-led process with an Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to hand-draw maps. By using strict conflict-of-interest safeguards, the bill ensures district lines protect communities of interest rather than the political careers of incumbents. This transition is a vital step toward ensuring a large, diverse population is fairly represented by a process that serves the public interest, not political self-protection.

Taxpayers pay for

Transition to Dirty Energy

The Trump administration is spending nearly \$2 billion to get energy companies to walk away from U.S. offshore wind projects, including one off California. All U.S. offshore wind leases have been made essentially worthless by the administration's use of various methods, some of which have been struck down by courts, to stymie the developments.

Jennifer McDermott of AP reports that "Under a deal made public in March, French company TotalEnergies is getting \$1 billion—essentially a refund if its leases for offshore wind projects off North Carolina and New York—if it invests the money in fossil fuel projects instead." (Emphasis added) Similar deals have been struck with Bluepoint Wind and Golden State Wind. The fossil-based replacement project for Golden State's California plan will be built in Florida.

LWVUS Updates

Convention Invitation

As we prepare for Convention this June, we're celebrating the generations of leadership that power the League. If your family includes intergenerational League members—grandmothers, mothers, daughters, or beyond—we'd love to feature you. Please send one photo that includes all family members to events@lwv.org for inclusion in a slideshow in the plenary space. Registration for Convention is still open. Visit the [event website](https://www.lwv.org) to register to book your hotel accommodations, sign up for the wars market, access pre-convention webinar recordings, and more! Leagues are also encouraged to fundraise to support Convention expenses for their delegates. Local members Charlene McAllister and Scott Miller are attending virtually. Anyone else?

Executive Order on Mail-In Ballots

On April 2 a coalition of voting rights groups, including the League, challenged the March 31 Executive Order on Mail-In Ballots as illegal interference in elections. President Trump's unlawful executive order would take control of mail-in ballots from the states and create an unvetted, error-prone system that would risk disenfranchising eligible voters. The story is from the Massachusetts ACLU.

Weldon Amendment

On April 10 the League signed onto a letter to US Congress urging them to ensure that the Weldon Amendment is not included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 budget. The Weldon Amendment is an appropriations rider that threatens the loss of federal funding for federal agencies and programs or state and local governments that require health insurance plans, health care institutions, or health care professionals to cover, provide, or refer for abortions.

Action to Reform I.C.E. and C.B.P.

For months, communities across the country have lived in terror as federal immigration enforcement agents have patrolled, surveilled, detained, disappeared, injured, and killed civilians, as well as denied people's constitutional rights by attacking and arresting peaceful protesters. Yet Congress is considering a fast-track legislative process to allocate billions of additional dollars to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the very agencies that are terrorizing our communities. All the while, millions of Americans are struggling to meet their basic needs. We need you to stand with the League to demand that Congress reject any additional funding for ICE and CBP. Voter readers can answer the call online.

Student-Led High School Voter Registration

LWV is collaborating with The Civics Center to foster student-led voter registration in US high schools and empower the next generation of American voters to participate fully in public life. The Civics Center and the League of Women Voters have developed a toolkit for LWV members to support students, teachers, and administrators in holding voter registration drives in high schools across the country. Find our toolkit here. Contact Morgan Murray at smurray@lwv.org with any questions.

SAVE America Act

In late April the SAVE America Act failed to pass the Senate. While it was being considered, the U.S. League posted a powerful statement on Facebook. "Read how the SAVE Act targets another community of eligible voters who already face institutional barriers when navigating our legal and advocacy systems: survivors of domestic violence." The statement can be read without logging in to Facebook. On April 9 the Mendocino Voice published a well-written op-ed on the legislation by Janet Rosen.

SCOTUS Voting Rights Decision

On April 29, League of Women Voters President Diana Wynn and CEO Celina Stewart issued the following joint statement in response to the US Supreme Court's 6-3 decision in *Louisiana v. Callais*, a case concerning the constitutionality of Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. "In recent months and years, we have watched this Court become less faithful to its constitutional mandate, but today, we have witnessed the final nail in the coffin of its legitimacy. By weakening Section 2 to the point of ineffectuality, the Court sends a clear message: racial discrimination in redistricting against Black voters and other voters of color is acceptable as long as you don't say it out loud. This will immediately open the door to racist redistricting; indeed, we have already seen it happening in anticipation of this decision." The U.S. League has scheduled a webinar about the decision on May 7, at 2 pm, and promises an educational blog on *Callais* from its Litigation team soon.

Practical effects of the decision are just beginning to be felt. So far, the governor of Louisiana has ordered the current congressional primary election to be suspended while new maps are adopted; voting rights groups including the LWV of Louisiana have filed an emergency challenge to the order. Despite some misleading headlines, the other races in the election, including state constitutional amendments, are still going forward.

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 unceded territory of indigenous peoples since time began. We are surrounded by the traditional, ancestral territory and current homeland of many indigenous nations.

Contact LWVVC

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