The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

Empowering voters, defending democracy

Charlene McAllister, President | October 2026 | Jary Stavely and Dorine Real, Editors

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Issues We're Following
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LWVMC Information

Click **these** *entries to jump to the articles.*

Calendar

October 1 (Thursday) 6-7:30 Town Hall, Fort Bragg
Fort Bragg City Council forum
6:30pm Gualala Coast Life Support District
Sea Level Rise public information/input

October 2 (Fri.) 6pm Mendocino HS Performing Arts Center
Sea Level Rise public information/input

October 3 (Sat.) 12pm Point Arena Community Chest
Sea Level Rise public information/input

October 5 (Monday) Mendocino County
Mailing of ballots begins
Ballot drop boxes active
5:00pm Zoom
Sea Level Rise public information/input online workshop

October 6 (Tuesday) 5:30-9:00 Ukiah Civic Center
Multi-race forum: 1st Congressional District, Ukiah USD, County Board of Education

October 8 (Tuesday) County Admin. Bldg.
Mendocino County Supervisors meet

October 8-12 North Coast locations
Kelpfest

October 10 (Saturday) 1–4:30 Caspar Community Center
Mendocino Trails Stewards meeting and comment workshop

October 11 2:00 (see article)
Concert for immigration/legal fees

October 12 (Monday) 6:30-8:00 Ft. Bragg Town Hall
Voting Matters: a Proposition Workshop with CalMatters

October 18 (Sunday) 5-7:30 Whale House, Noyo Headlands
Ribbon cutting/fundraiser for Noyo Center

October 19 (Monday) California
Last day to register and get a mail ballot sent to you

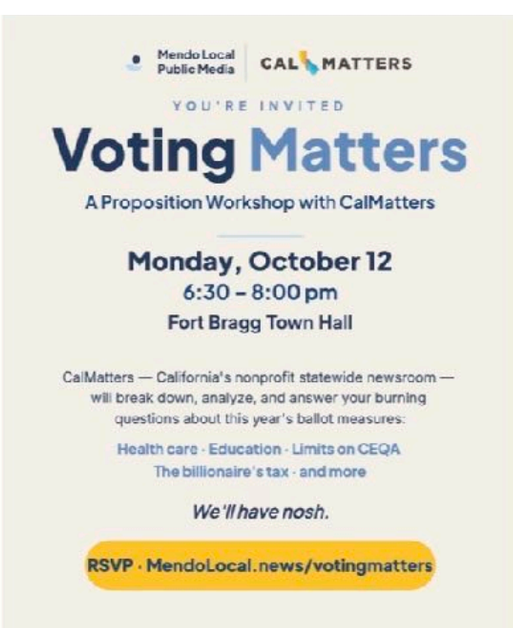
October 20 (Tuesday) County Admin. Bldg.
Mendocino County Supervisors meet

November 3 (Tuesday) United States
Election Day

The public is welcome at these events. Please invite your friends and neighbors.

What's on the Ballot?

And how to learn more



Propositions

On September 30, the LWV units of Sonoma and Marin Counties presented an online Pros & Cons discussion of the 14 statewide propositions in the upcoming General Election. The zoom event was recorded, and may be viewed on the Sonoma League website.

Also, on October 12, The Mendo Local news organization will host a CalMatters presentation about the same ballot measures from 6:30 til 8 pm at Town Hall in Fort Bragg. An RSVP is requested at their website—see the accompanying graphic.

The California League has taken positions on all of the measures except Proposition 40, the so-called billionaire tax. It offers several different degrees of background on its recommendations at its Vote with the League page. The League particularly opposes Prop. 39, which would require a government-issued ID to vote — the right to vote is a core issue for us.

The five local measures have been summarized in an article by Roger Coryell of the Mendocino Voice. All of these are revenue measures that apply to specific districts, not to the whole county.

Fort Bragg City Council

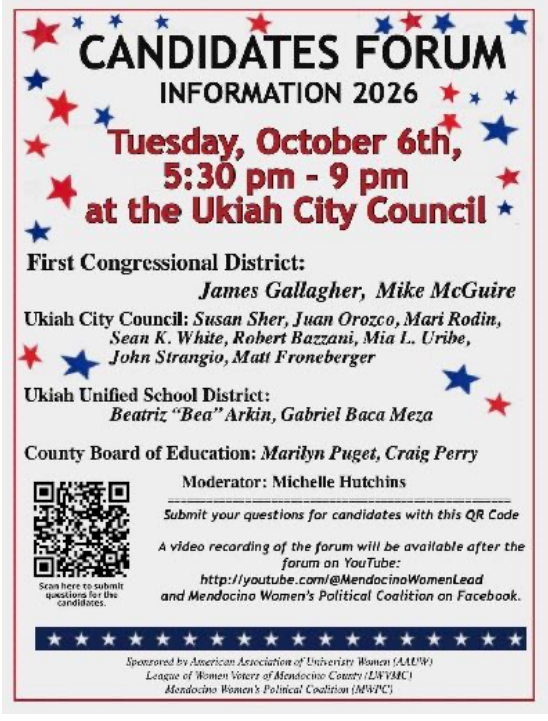
The Mendocino League is hosting a Candidate Forum for the eight city council candidates at Town Hall in Fort Bragg, on October 1 at 6 pm. Pat Dunbar is the moderator, and Kate Lee the timekeeper, for the event, which will feature questions from those attending. A recording will be available on Mendocino Coast Media.

In addition, GRI's Pro-Democracy workgroup has organized a series of one-hour sessions introducing the individual candidates, one-at-a-time on zoom, with prepared questions, as well as called-in ones. The recordings may be found on the GRI website.

Another collection of individual interviews with the Fort Bragg City Council candidates has been published by the Mendocino Voice, featuring seven of the eight contestants.

Inland

An all-purpose forum was held in Willits on September 20, with candidates for 3rd District Supervisor, Willits Unified School District, and Willits City Council all appearing. It was recorded, and may be viewed online.



Another broad forum will be held on Tuesday, October 6, from 5:30 til 9 pm at the Ukiah Civic Center. First Congressional District candidates James Gallagher and Mike McGuire, the eight candidates for Ukiah City Council, and the two candidates each for Ukiah U.S.D. and County Board of Education District Area 1, are all expected to appear. See the accompanying flyer for more information, including a QR code for submitting questions, and the location of recordings.

Follow the Money

To learn about statewide candidates, their jobs, positions, and financial backers, try CalMatters 2026 Voting Guide.

Don't forget VOTE 411

The League's voter information website has information on **candidates**, their positions, and their total financing. It also shows the **propositions,** arguments for and against, and their total financing.

Local candidates and issues are included, too, based on your exact address.

You can even check your registration and register if necessary.

How Will You Vote?

How will you gather the information you need to vote (*see the article above)*, when will you fill in your ballot, and how will you return it? Planning ahead will make the process easier and safer.

There are three choices for returning ballots:

Secure Drop Boxes

Drop Offs may be made starting October 5. These official locations will be available any time:

- County Administration Bldg, 501 Low Gap Rd., Ukiah
- Ukiah City Hall, 300 Seminary Ave.
- Willits City Hall, 111 E. Commercial St.
- Fort Bragg City Hall, 416 N. Franklin St.
- Point Arena City Hall, 451 School St.

These will be open M–F, 9–5:

- Mendocino College, 1000 Hensley Creek Rd., Ukiah
- Boonville Fairgrounds Office, 14400 Hwy. 128, Boonville

The Round Valley Justice Court, 76270 Grange St., Covelo, will be available only on Election Day.

US Mail

Legally you can mail your ballot up to election day; but if you allow time for the County to notify you your ballot has been received, you will feel more confident, and you'll help the Elections Department complete the count in a timely way.

Vote in Person

A complete list of the polling places to vote in person on Election Day, November 3, is on the County website. If you have voted at the Starr Center in the past, note that it will not be used this year — vote at the Fort Bragg Veterans' Building or Grace Community Church instead.

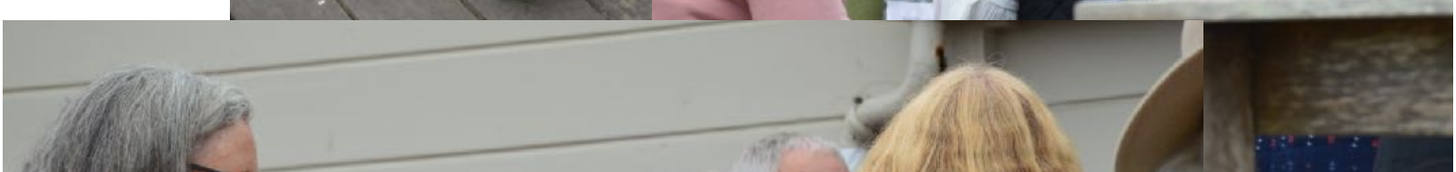
Local League hosts

Meet and Greet

Your Elected Officials

Over 50 people turned out for the League's Meet & Greet Your Local Officials reception on September 18 at the Caspar Community Center, including 20 officials and candidates, both coastal and county-wide. Many attendees reported satisfaction with the conversation, the refreshments, and the atmosphere. Special thanks are due to Charlene McAllister, Jary Stavely, Cindy Plank, Kate Lee, Morning Nichols, and Paula Cohen for organizing, setting up, and cleaning up afterwards. And to all the generous members who provided snacks.

Photos, Lee Tepper



California League Updates

Legislative Summary

In a fundraising letter to League supporters, State Executive Director Jenny Farrell writes: "Over the past two years, the League took positions on ninety bills before the California Legislature. Of those, sixty had the outcome we fought for, whether that meant helping a good bill move forward or stopping harmful legislation in its tracks. Our advocacy spanned the breadth of issues Californians care about, including housing, health care, the environment, immigration, racial justice, and more. But far and away, this legislative session was defined by our core mission: defending democracy and protecting voting rights. At a moment when voting rights are being rolled back and the rules of our elections are under attack across the country, we have worked to make California a place where those rights are not merely defended but strengthened and embedded in state law. The graphic below highlights 12 of the most critical bills we helped advance as a co-sponsor or major supporter. Together, these measures strengthen language access for voters, protect communities of color from voter suppression and vote dilution, guard polling places against intimidation and interference, expand access to voter registration, improve ballot-curing options, create fairer redistricting, and protect our election systems from improper interference." The graphic she refers to may be found in the LWVC September newsletter under "Advocacy Update."

Proposition Information

In another email, Jenny talks about the League's work on the November ballot measures: "The League of Women Voters of California has been studying the measures, sorting through the details, and asking the questions voters need answered. And today, I'm excited to share the result: Vote with the League, our guide to all 14 statewide ballot measures, is now available." The Pros & Cons page is also online.

Save the date: LWVC Convention

The 2027 LWVC Convention will be held in Anaheim, June 25–26, 2027 (with pre-convention events on June 24). This heads-up came from the State League's monthly newsletter, found on the "News" page of the LWVC website.

Voting Videos

The Sonoma League has shared a short video on how to use Vote 411. They have also done a series of short videos on the propositions on this year's ballot.

LWVUS News

Mail-In Voting

The U.S. League issued a statement after the Supreme Court upheld a lower court decision on mail-in voting. “In a major win for voting rights, election integrity, and democracy, the US Supreme Court today left in place a preliminary injunction that blocks the US Postal Service (USPS) from enforcing key parts of a new rule that would have significantly restricted mail voting and disenfranchised voters who rely on mail ballots. The preliminary injunction will remain in place through the November 3 election. The decision means that all 50 states can continue to use their existing processes for mail voting, which have proven for decades to be safe, secure, and reliable. Hundreds of thousands of mail ballots are already being delivered to eligible voters, with millions more to follow this month. Many Americans rely on mail voting because disability, distance, or work or caregiving schedules make it difficult or impossible to get to their polling site in person.

“With the injunction in place, USPS cannot refuse to deliver mail ballots for the November election. Nor can it require states to upload personal voter information into its new and untested online portal.”

A reflection about the decision, with more background, was published on the LWVUS blog site several days later, entitled What Happened with Mail-In Ballots at SCOTUS.

SCOTUS Decision Regarding SAVE Database

Although the U.S. League has yet to release a public statement about the Supreme Court ruling in favor of the federal government, a consortium it belongs to has sent a guidance sheet for local Leagues. Here are some excerpts:

“On September 25th, the Supreme Court released a decision that will allow the Trump Administration to deploy its expanded and unreliable SAVE database, which could result in states improperly removing eligible voters from their voter rolls. … This decision allows the administration to work with states to use its expanded SAVE database combining sensitive personal data to potentially remove eligible voters from the rolls. The expanded SAVE system has repeatedly been found to be incomplete, unreliable, and to create significant privacy and security risks — the government itself has admitted this in internal documents and court filings. Due to this unreliability, election officials have found the database routinely misidentifies citizens as potentially ineligible to vote. Advocates in states using SAVE should encourage local election officials to treat SAVE results cautiously, and decline to remove voters from voter rolls solely on the basis of SAVE results. It’s important to note that, under the NVRA, systematic citizenship checks and mass voter purges are still banned during the 90-day period before a federal election and that is still true today. Indeed, the Supreme Court explicitly confirmed this ‘moratorium’ would prevent using the expanded SAVE database for mass voter purges ahead of the midterms.…As always, in every election, it’s important for voters to check their voter registration status in advance and update it as necessary. Naturalized citizen voters and voters who derived citizenship through their parents, in particular, should make sure to check their status in advance of the election. If you have questions about this lawsuit, please reach out to info@citizensforethics.org.”

Election Focus

A September 23 press release summarizes the U.S. League’s efforts to further democracy in the lead-up to the November election: “With the 2026 midterm elections fast approaching, the League of Women Voters is launching a nationwide effort to equip voters with trusted information, combat misinformation and ensure Americans can cast their ballots safely and confidently. As confusion about voting rules grows and targeted disinformation spreads, the League and its more than 800 state and local Leagues are mobilizing communities around one urgent message: Your vote is your power and now is the time to use it.

Throughout October, the League will drive voter education and engagement across the country, urging Americans to check their registration, understand what's on their ballot, make a voting plan and vote early where available. The organization will also spotlight the essential role of election workers and help voters navigate last−minute misinformation as Election Day approaches." The article continues online with more specifics about October activities.

Ocean Related

Coastal Planning Revisited

by Jary Stavely

Mendo Vision's September 17 Coastal Planning Review Zoom session included presentations by County Planner Liam Crowley about the ongoing LCP Update, by MCOG staffers JD DeFrieze and Hector Ortega on their agency's separate Sea Level Rise Transportation Study, by a panel of experts concerning federal efforts to renew offshore extraction of oil/minerals and to decertify the Coastal Commission's management of coastal waters, and by Assemblyperson Chris Rogers on the windup of this legislative year.

This was Liam's first time at the bi-monthly meeting—he is replacing recently resigned Julia Krog as the Planning Department's representative. He presented a review of the LCP Update process, and of the Coastal Commission grants which have funded studies for it, and announced that, in terms of the comprehensive studies grant, all the outside consultants have finished their work, with the exception of those working on Biological Resources. The two studies being conducted in-house, Agricultural and Coastal Access/Visitor Serving, are in process. The next steps include finalizing analyses and drafting initial policy language. Public Workshops for input on this portion of the LCP Update are not likely to be scheduled until early 2027.

Policies for the Sea Level Rise Risk Analysis were adopted by the County Planning Commission on Aug. 20, and will be presented to the Supervisors in October, and if approved, will subsequently be considered by the Coastal Commission. Workshops for stakeholders and general public input on risks and strategies were to be scheduled soon [*during the last week of September and first week of October—see story below*]. He expected that this SLR portion of the LCP Update could be completed by the end of the year. In response to a question by Peter McNamee regarding the minimal mention of saltwater intrusion into coastal water and septic systems as a significant risk, Liam agreed that it would be good to add, but cautioned that the data needed for doing so might be lacking.

MCOG's study of how sea level rise is, and will be, affecting county- and city-managed coastal roads has identified 5 sites for further investigation—Pt. Cabrillo Dr. south of Caspar, Old Coast Hwy. in Gualala, Port Rd. in Pt. Arena, Lighthouse Rd. north of Pt. Arena, and Ocean View Dr. in Fort Bragg. Potential remediation measures include elevating or realigning the roadways, plus other possibilities. A Feasibility Study for what can be done is due to be completed by late 2026 or early 2027. The MCOG SLR Transportation Study is online.

League Gives Input on SLR Policies

The Mendocino League has sent the following letter to the Board of Supervisors regarding the Sea Level Rise Risk policies to be considered in October:

The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County has reviewed the proposed Sea Level Rise LCP baseline policies. We are aware that the threats posed by Sea Level Rise are both imminent and potentially catastrophic in scale and impact on coastal residents and visitors. While we are supportive of the proposed baseline Sea Level Rise policies that are proposed, we have concerns over the need to address Saltwater Intrusion as a hazard. We have noted that this is not fully addressed in the proposed baseline policies and we have particular concerns regarding the former Georgia Pacific Mill Site and the release of contaminants.

Former Coastal Commission Chair, and Fort Bragg resident, Donne Brownsey moderated the panel discussion about developments in offshore leasing and management. First, Richard Charter, the executive director of the Save My Coast Coalition, and a Senior Fellow at The Ocean Foundation, presented a slide show about the federal lease sales which have been scheduled for the next few years. Although the feds have shortened the public comment process, governments up and down the California coast have opposed the sales, including Mendocino County and the City of Fort Bragg [*see story below*]. Public opposition has included billboards, litigation, and legislative action prohibiting the use of any existing infrastructure for processing extracted material. The next step in the lease sale process, a 2nd Analysis & Proposal, is due around Thanksgiving. An additional element now, as opposed to during the 1988 offshore lease sale controversy, is the possibility of mining for rare earth minerals in offshore seabeds like the Gorda Ridge, which is why Santa Cruz voters will consider a Measure D this November, to preclude the use of existing infrastructure for processing minerals.

Dr. Mark Gold, of the Scripps Institute Marine Observation Program, then presented information about the federal review of how California is managing coastal waters, largely through the Coastal Commission. The way it has been done, through the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), has been a model for all other states with ocean boundaries, and was re-certified, with high praise, by the first Trump Administration in 2018. Nevertheless the NOAA was forced to hold a review for possible de-certification, apparently in response to limitations on Space X rocket launches, and offshore mineral extraction placed by the Coastal Commission. Companies with direct ties to the current administration stand to reap substantial profits, if restrictions on seabed mining are lifted. Regardless of the fact that they are mere office operations, with no resources for rectifying any spills which could occur. The panel discussed several questions from the zoom audience, including who is making the real decisions about the NOAA review.

Chris Rogers concluded the meeting with remarks about the bills he authored during the recently concluded legislative session. AB 2494, which would revise the mandate for operating demonstration state forests, made it through both houses to the governor's desk, where it was recently vetoed [*see story below*]. He promised to keep working on it in the coming years. AB 1699, expanding the authorization for prescribed burns for cultural reasons, also made it to the governor's desk, where it was signed. AB 1761, which would have brought transparency to the way the Power Charge Indifference Adjustment (PCIA) on energy bills is calculated, and AB 2369, which would have reformed how renewable energy transfers are charged, also made it to the governor's desk, where they were ultimately vetoed. He noted that, although his public-financing-of-elections bill, AB 1984, never got through the Assembly, a nearly identical law was recently enacted in Hawaii. If he returns to the Assembly next year he would like to continue working on these issues, as well as on protecting natural resources, improving inadequacies in the energy transmission grid, and addressing the problems posed by A.I.

The two hour meeting was recorded and is on You Tube. The email contact for the County's LCP Update is LCPUpdate@mendocinocounty.gov, while Liam can be reached via crowleyl@mendocinocounty.gov, or 707-234-6650. Hector may be contacted at hortega@dbcteam.net, or 707-463-1859; JD at jdefrieze@dbcteam.net, or 707-234-3434. Richard's email is waterway@monitor.net. Mark's personal email is mgoldhtb@gmail.com, but he takes ocean science questions at m4gold@ucsd.edu.

Other resources online: a list of onshore processing facility ordinances on the Save Our Shores website; a 20-minute film on seabed mining; and a paper about the CZMA.

Sea Level Rise Community Workshops

The Mendocino County Department of Planning and Building Services, along with its partner, Environmental Science Associates (ESA), is hosting a series of public workshops throughout coastal Mendocino County related to the ongoing **Sea Level Rise Resiliency Strategy (SLRRS)** project. The workshops will include a brief presentation on the findings of the Sea Level Rise Analysis & Risk Assessment and draft resilience strategies and an interactive open house featuring maps and informational poster boards. Community members are encouraged to attend, ask questions, and help shape the County's approach to preparing for sea level rise.

Some events have already happened: on Tuesday, September 29 at Fort Bragg Town Hall and on Wednesday, September 30 at the Westport Community Center.

The remaining workshops will take place on the following dates and locations:

- Thursday, October 1 @ 6:30pm – Gualala Coast Life Support District Platt Room during the Gualala Municipal Advisory Council meeting
- Friday, October 2 @ 6pm – Mendocino High School Performing Arts Center
- Saturday, October 3 @ 12pm – Point Arena Community Chest

There will also be an online version via Zoom on Monday, October 5 at 5pm. The link is here.

Kelpfest Returns

The third annual North Coast Kelpfest will be held from Oct. 8–12 in various locations in Mendocino and Fort Bragg. A wide range of events will be offered, including sand sculptures, uni harvesting, fish taco crawl, movies, restoration updates, a surf dance party, a parade, and many more. Details, including background on what has happened to the once extensive bull kelp population, may be found on the Kelpfest website.

Blue Whale Bones Come Home

The Noyo Center for Marine Science is holding a Ribbon Cutting Fall Fundraiser at their new building on the Noyo Headlands on October 18, from 5–7:30 pm. The structure, called the Whale House LaBONEatory, is designed to accommodate the articulation of the Center's blue whale skeleton, which up till now has been stored in a private garage. The website announcement reads, "Join us to celebrate a moment in Mendocino County history as we officially cut the ribbon and welcome the blue whale bones home. The Whale House LaBONEatory is the first building in the Noyo Center Ocean Science Center campus, where we'll articulate our 73' blue whale skeleton, and expand and deepen our marine mammal, marine science, and education programs. Read the full event details at our Fall Fundraiser page." An invitation-only VIP reception begins an hour earlier. The physical address is 331 Jere Melo St., Fort Bragg, adjacent to the Crow's Nest and the city wastewater treatment plant.

Desalinization Buoy Launched

Hikers along Fort Bragg's Coastal Trail on the Noyo Headlands can now see a new yellow object in Soldier Bay. Frank Hartzell's Sept. 5 article describes the September 1 launch of a desalinization buoy, and provides background on this test of using wave-energy power to convert sea water to drinking water. On September 18 and 19, Oneka Technology, the buoy's creator, provided boat trips for officials and the public to board the buoy and sample the water produced.

Local Action Against Offshore Drilling

Elise Cox writes that the Fort Bragg City Council "voted 4-0 on September 14 to send letters opposing offshore oil and gas drilling and undersea mining to federal regulators and the state attorney general. The move extends the city's decades-long opposition to ocean extraction, dating to the 1988 Lease 91 fight and the 1996 Measure C ordinance. Her article is online. She also covered a demonstration on September 26: "Roughly two hundred people gathered at Big River Beach on Saturday to express opposition to offshore oil drilling and support for a clean-energy future, with many recalling the battle against the Reagan administration's effort to open up California's outer continental shelf to resource extraction in the 1980s. The event in Mendocino County was part of a nation-wide event organized by the Sierra Club, with at least ten other protests occurring in California." *Photo below by Bob Dominy*

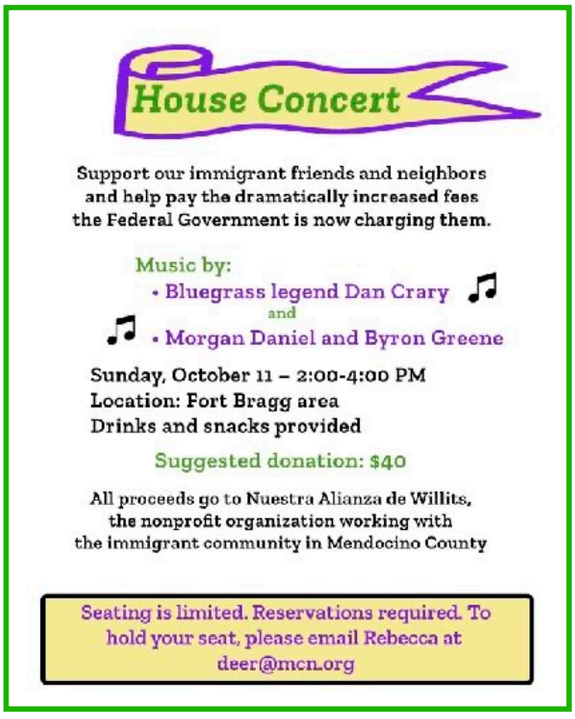
Community Events

Trail Stewards to Discuss Next Steps

The Mendocino Trails Stewards are holding a meeting on Saturday, October 10, from 1–4:30 pm at the Caspar Community Center to discuss the future of Jackson Demonstration State Forest. An online announcement states. "First, Melodie Meyer, EPIC conservation attorney, will provide updates on AB 2494 and answer your questions. Afterward, Rick Coates, executive director of Forest Unlimited, will lead a timber harvest plan (THP) comment workshop. Rick does an excellent job decoding and demystifying the whole process. Learning how to comment effectively on timber harvest plans is empowering and critical for forest protection!"

Concert for Legal Fees

Coastal immigrant advocates have organized a house concert with music by noted bluegrass artist Dan Crary and some local friends, to be held on Sunday, Oct, 11, from 2–4 pm. They hope to raise money to help pay the legal expenses of several local families. Details and registration information are in the accompanying graphic. Nuestra Alianza de Willits is hosting a legal clinic for immigrant families and individuals later in the month.



Vote Early Demonstration

Indivisible has announced the latest in the No Kings series of public demonstrations. "Vote Early: Spell It Out" events will take place in both Fort Bragg and Ukiah on October 17. According to their online announcement, the

Fort Bragg participants will gather in the Noyo Bridge area between 11 am and 1 pm: "For more than a year, millions of people have come together to reject the idea that power belongs to kings, billionaires, or politicians who believe they are above the people and the law. Now it's time to turn people power into voter power. In Fort Bragg, we're gathering on Highway One to drive the message home. Volunteers will hold large letters spelling out VOTE EARLY and VOTE THIS WEEK. Other participants will be given yard signs to hold during the event, and deploy throughout the community afterward, also spelling out the VOTE EARLY message. Finally, all attendees are asked to bring an American flag if possible." Ukiah participants will be marching in the Pumpkinfest Parade during the morning, and having a barbecue with voting info, followed by a march to deliver ballots to the Civic Center drop box in the afternoon.

Democracy Building

Former League Leader Jess Green writes that the GRI Pro Democracy workgroup is hosting an event called Building Democracy Through Inclusion, to be held at the Company Store in Fort Bragg on the morning of October 24. The accompanying flyer has details, plus Jess' contact information.

Coastal News Items

Hate Symbols Appear

An article by Frank Hartzell describes a vandalism incident which occurred in Fort Bragg in mid-September. Mendo Local summarized the article this way: "Vandals painted Nazi swastikas across the construction site for Cafe One's new restaurant at Oak Street and Highway 1 in Fort Bragg early on Sept. 16, also damaging equipment on the property. The owners are asking nearby residents and businesses to check security footage from around 3:30 a.m. to help identify who was responsible."

Stud Mill Site Questions

A Sept. 3 article by Roger Coryell examines inconsistencies in the County Planning Department's recommendation for approval of development at the former Louisiana-Pacific stud mill site. His reporting indicates that the county's

Negative Declaration about contamination on the property was in error. The article provides in-depth background about the site, the neighbors' concerns, and the Planning Commission meeting at which the issue came up.

MCHCD to Consider Hospital Retrofit

by Kathy Wylie

The state-mandated Coast hospital seismic retrofit project is estimated to cost $20 million, with completion projected for 2030. Through careful Board stewardship and investment earnings, the District's cash balance was approximately $18.6 million as of July 31, 2026. Preserving liquidity is important so the District can continue meeting operating obligations and respond to unexpected needs as the project moves forward.

The MCHCD Board will receive a presentation from Wulff-Hansen on October 8, 2026 regarding their representation in seeking a credit line for seismic construction costs. Financing construction through a credit line will help preserve District cash for ongoing needs while spreading project costs over time. Any borrowing would need to be considered in light of its terms and the District's ability to repay.

The seismic building permit application has been submitted to the City of Fort Bragg and is under review. The permit is expected before year-end, and will allow construction to begin. Under the current lease agreement between MCHCD and Adventist Health, Adventist Health Mendocino Coast Hospital will manage the construction, while the District will pay for the state-mandated seismic retrofit. There is little expected impact to normal hospital operations through this retrofit project. More information about the Healthcare District may be found on its website.

Inland/Regional Reports

Veto of AB 2494

On Sept. 18, Gov. Newsom vetoed Assembly Bill 2494, which would have revised how California manages its demonstration state forests and created a path for tribal co-management, saying it would interfere with forestry research. Frank Hartzell's article about the veto provides local perspective, while one by Lila Seidman of the LA Times gives a statewide tribal perspective. Elise Cox reported on what Chris Rogers said about the veto in an article about his Town Hall in Fort Bragg Sept. 27: "Rogers criticized Newsom's veto and what he called a 'nonsensical veto message.' He said the bill was a great example of partnership, with support from the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors and extensive input from CAL FIRE and the timber industry. While Newsom said the bill would limit the purpose of the forest, including for scientific forestry, Rogers argued that existing law directs the forests only toward maximum production of high-quality wood products and does not recognize research as a use. 'CAL FIRE has been doing it, and CAL FIRE had been doing things like inclusion of our local tribes that is not in statute.'"

Gray Wolf Back in Mendocino County

Elise Cox filed a story Sept. 2 about the reappearance of a species once native to our area. It begins, "A lone gray wolf has been sighted in the Mendocino National Forest and confirmed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, county officials said at the Sept. 1 Board of Supervisors meeting — the latest sign that a predator hunted out of the state a century ago is finding its way back on its own." The news came up during the previous day's Board of Supervisors meeting. The article reports what 1st District Supervisor Madeline Cline and Agricultural

Commissioner Angela Godwin said about the news, and gives background about the wolves' history.

Health Insurance Cuts Start to Hit

A Sept. 16 Mendo Local report takes another look at the coming effects of the 2025 'Big Beautiful Bill' on Mendocino County: "Federal budget changes under HR 1, taking effect in 2027, are already reshaping health care in Mendocino County, where an estimated 3,614 residents will lose managed-care benefits and up to 3,000 adults could lose coverage under new work-documentation rules. Adventist Health North Coast Network CFO Richard Riter called the shift 'scary,' citing more uninsured patients turning up in emergency rooms." An article by Christine Mai-Duc in KFF Health News looks at the problem from the perspective of the Governor's race.

Annual Indigenous Walk

Voter readers may have interest in two articles about the Nome Cult Walk, which took place Sept. 13–19. The ceremonial 100 mile journey retraces the 1963 forced march of the Maidu Concow people from their Central Valley homeland to the Round Valley Reservation in Mendocino County. That reservation was the on-foot destination for groups from ten or more indigenous nations with distinct languages and cultures, including Mendocino coast Pomos, who had already been corralled at Fort Bragg. Roger Coryell's article in the Mendocino Voice was written just before the walk began, while Jerry Crow's Glenn County Transcript article was written just after the participants set out.

Ukiah Drops Annexation Effort

Elise Cox's Sept. 1 Mendo Local story begins, "The City of Ukiah has ended its two-year push to annex a swath of the unincorporated Ukiah Valley — and the morning after that announcement, three speakers, including the county's own treasurer-tax collector, urged the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors to go further and rescind the county's master tax sharing agreement."

Expanding Lake Mendocino Storage Capacity

A Sept, 18 article by Justine Frederiksen of the Ukiah Daily Journal relates information from a press release in which Congressman Huffman stressed the importance of raising the Coyote Valley Dam. Legislation for which he voted could provide funds for a feasibility study to do so. County officials feel that the extra storage is crucial for making the 2-Basin Solution work after the Potter Valley Project is decommissioned, and the dams on the Eel River are removed.

Supervisors Approve Hold on Data Centers

Elise Cox has summarized her article on the vote, which the League supported in a prior letter [*see September Voter*]: "The board of supervisors voted unanimously on Sept. 2 to impose a 45-day moratorium on new data centers in unincorporated areas. A public hearing set for Oct. 6 will weigh extending the freeze up to two years while permanent regulations are drafted." A related article, by Katherine Ortiz and Khari Johnson of CalMatters, looks at statewide spending by tech and utility companies against the regulation of data centers.

Supervisors Show Interest in Housing Amnesty Program

Coastal housing activists spoke at the Sept. 15 Board of Supervisors meeting at the Fort Bragg Veteran's Hall in favor of the county creating its own amnesty program for housing code violations. Such programs are authorized by state law under AB 2533. Discussion of the issue will continue at the Supes meeting on October 20. Roger Coryell's Mendocino Voice article describes the testimony, the vote, and a related discussion of waterless composting toilets.

Issues We're Following

Readers Share Their Sources

The editors have received three recommendations from other Leaguers for interesting viewing and reading:

- An analysis of a current poll of Californians about the November 2026 ballot, attitudes toward government, and various policy issues, conducted by the non-partisan Public Policy Institute. Also on youtube.
- Major A.I. Concerns. Sept. 4, 2026 Washington Week on PBS—a discussion between Jeffrey Goldberg and Josh Tyrangiel (Atlantic tech reporter) (Also on youtube)
- An "expert brief " from the Brennan Center for Justice about preventing voter intimidation at the polls.

Land Acknowledgement

The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County wishes to honor the land we are on and its native peoples. We want to offer recognition and respect; to counter the "doctrine of discovery" with the true story of the people who were already here; to support larger truth-telling and reconciliation efforts; and to remind ourselves that colonization is still happening. We acknowledge that the land where we live and work is un-ceded territory of indigenous peoples since time began. We are surrounded by the traditional, ancestral territory and current homeland of many indigenous nations.

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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