



The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

April, 2019

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April meeting ...

Farmers to Converge in Caspar

The League's Environmental Committee has organized "A Conversation with Local Farmers" to be held on April 9 at the Caspar Community Center from 6 until 8 PM. This followup to the January meeting on carbon sequestration in the soil will involve a panel discussion with local food producers, who will share their stories and discuss in depth how locally sourced food and healthy soils help fight Climate Disruption. Here on the Mendocino coast we have the opportunity to take effective, timely action in response to the global warming emergency, so the public is urged to learn how we all can benefit by nurturing our local food system, and achieving local food security.

In addition to the panel discussion, the event will feature written information about local farms,

gardens, and upcoming events. Bring your neighbors and help build sustainable living into the planet's future. Coffee and refreshments will begin at 6:00, with the panel discussion, including interaction with the audience, a half hour later. This event is also the League's monthly meeting.

Save the Date!

Please don't forget that Tuesday, May 14, is the date for your League's annual meeting. In addition to "business" (elections and program adoption) there will be lunch and a presentation on the 2020 Census. Members, look for a separate e-mail with your agenda packet in the next few days.



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 through education and advocacy.

President's message ...

New Voters Will Decide Their Future in 2020

By Cindy Plank

California's next Presidential Primary Election is March 3, 2020. We all need to be aware, and spread the word, that California's primary election will take place in early March next year. This change in date is important to keep at the forefront of our League actions, as it moves up the date for voters to be educated and ready to voice what matters to them. Our League calendar will change substantially as we ready ourselves to share information about ballot measures and host candidate forums. It is less than one year now until this important event, with February 17 as the last day to register or make changes to your registration. Make note, and pass it on.

Waking up the Youth: Millennials (mid 20s to upper 30s) are on the cusp of surpassing Baby Boomers as the nation's largest living adult generation, according to population projections from the U.S. Census Bureau and Pew Research Center. But that doesn't mean they are a voting powerhouse—they routinely show up to the polls in lower numbers than other age groups. Millennials say they feel unclear and disengaged about candidates' positions and local issues. For the 2018 mid-term elections, exit polls indicate that only 31% of them voted, lower than other age groups but unusually high for them, which is encouraging.

In a recent article, a university graduate described her first voting experience as overwhelming. She had considered herself fairly educated and worldly, but found herself unsure of the candidates and the ballot measures, unprepared to exercise her civic duty. This is an issue that affects all age groups, and resonates with voters throughout America, but it especially pertains to those new to the voting process.

The goal of our Youth Voter Registration Project (see the report on p. 3) is to make voting a rite of passage for all students, and to help these young voters feel confident. We are fortunate that, in California, students can pre-register to vote at the age of 16. That process alone should help to engage our youth at a younger age. League of Women Voters of Mendocino County's efforts to introduce high school students to the excitement of "becoming a voter" will hopefully keep them enthused and excited to become involved, and stay involved, in our nation's democracy.

Join us in this effort by spreading the word, donating your time, or donating funds to keep this project alive and vital for our future voters and leaders.

League Joins Students at Demonstration

by Cindy Plank and Linda Rosengarten

A crowd estimated at more than 200 participated in the national Youth Climate Strike in Fort Bragg on March 15. The local realization of the event included a demonstration at Town Hall, a march to Bainbridge Park, and speeches by several local leaders in climate activism. The Fort Bragg High School Liberal Club, led by Judah Millen, organized the event, and many Mendocino High School students, including League member Henry Thomas, joined in.

Our League was invited to participate, and member Linda Rosengarten joined Co-President Cindy Plank
(continued on p. 3)



(Youth Climate Strike, continued ...)

in promoting student voter registration. Here is what she wrote to Cindy about her experience:

"It was a great march. I had a good time and felt we were productive. I don't know how you did it, but having Judah mention the registration table primed the pump. I found that many kids are already registered, or pre-registered. This group of youth wants very much to be heard, to be a force for change, and to participate in (if not save) democracy.

"For those not pre-registered or yet to be 16, I spoke to getting ready for that moment at 16, encouraged pre-registration and made sure to offer the hand-out with all the basic information. For those 16 and over who had yet to pre-register or were soon to be able to register, I gave the card with online links. Most wanted one or the other (the numbers of items in pockets was an issue—these people streamline!). However, there were times I gave both the card and the hand-out, depending on how much information I 'felt' the person could use, or would be happy to give to another person not in attendance. Each individual appeared interested and happy to receive the

information. You were spot on about the buttons, which often were within seconds stuck to the pocket area of jeans. They loved those buttons!

"Although not I'm not certain, I think the fact that we had our little flyer on our backs gave us a certain legitimacy as people 'doing something, attending in support of the Youth Climate March, and as co-advocates.' Again, you were correct to send me into the crowd with hand-outs, cards, and pins. All-in-all, as I moved from group to group, I believe we were able to engage most of the teens at Bainbridge Park. And, although I could not easily hold to my grid because of the movement of small groups, I did keep track of where small groups tended to move. Then once I finished talking and handing out info to one little group, I moved on to another. I did this until it was clear I began to repeat. To a person, they were receptive, at the least willing to listen to my questions and the League's support for their registration to vote.

"I do believe the League made young friends on Friday! Thanks so much for including me—Linda"

See more march pictures on p. 8.

High School Voter Registration Project Update

by Cindy Plank

The Youth Voter Registration Project is in full swing, and it's getting exciting. It has taken longer to connect with instructors than we had hoped, but it's a project new to everyone and sure to be smoother in the future.

Here's where we are in the process. All materials have been created and printed, thanks to Mendocino County Office of Education. One thousand "gifts" of voter information (wrapped and tied with bows) have been assembled by many League, non-League, and student volunteers. Training for classroom presentations has taken place.

And this is where we are regarding visits to classrooms. Jane Person is visiting both Laytonville HS and Willits HS, taking Doris Hammer with her one day and Marylynn Henes the other. Linda Rosengarten and Paul Tichinin are working with Fort Bragg high schools. Jenny Otter, Loreto Rojas, and Paula Cohen will visit Mendocino high schools. Charlene McAlister and I travel to both Potter Valley HS and Leggett Valley HS. For one instructor who teaches five classes of seniors at Ukiah HS, Paula

Cohen and I met with two classes one day, and Jim Havlena and I visited three more the next day. There are 4 instructors at Ukiah HS teaching civics/social studies to seniors, so we're hoping to schedule visits with the remaining classes as well. Maureen "Mo" Mulheren and I visited Accelerated Achievement Academy. And there are about five more schools whose instructors we haven't yet been able to connect with, but we're hoping several of those come on board as well.

It's a complicated process, especially since most of our current volunteers live here on the coast, and our county covers more than 3,500 square miles. But we are hopeful that this project will attract more county wide attention to one of LWV's key issues – voter registration, voter education and voter rights.

Wouldn't it be wonderful to welcome enough new members across Mendocino County that LWV of Mendocino County can become more of the countywide League that its name implies, offering more programs and more candidate forums to our inland and more remote neighbors?

March Updates from National

Combatting Voter Suppression in Texas -- The LWV of Texas joined Move Texas Civic Fund, Jolt Initiative, and NAACP in a lawsuit against the Texas Secretary of State's office after false claims of widespread voter fraud were reported last month.

Texas Secretary of State David Whitley made unfounded accusations that tens of thousands of non-citizens were voting in recent Texas elections—but the data Whitley referenced was flawed and went back as far as two decades. And, this week, a federal judge found no widespread voter fraud and ordered the state not to remove any voter from the rolls. "It appears this is a solution looking for a problem," he wrote. More information can be found at <https://www.caller.com/story/news/texasregion/2019/02/27/federal-judge-texas-voter-rolls-case-no-widespread-voter-fraud/2906713002/>.

Restoring Fairness for North Carolina Voters -- On February 21, the North Carolina State Board of Elections unanimously voted to hold a new election for the 9th Congressional District. This decision comes after an investigation that centered around alleged suppression and tampering of absentee ballots in North Carolina's 9th District Congressional race, the last undecided contest from the 2018 midterm election.

Voters must have assurance that their votes are counted and their elections are fair. We celebrate this decision, and the League of North Carolina will be working with impacted voters and election officials to ensure that future elections are protected from this kind of tampering. More information can be found at <https://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/politics-government/article226561504.html>.

League Submits Amicus Brief in Juliana v. U.S. -- LWVUS and the Oregon League submitted an amicus brief to the 9th Circuit in the case of *Juliana v. U.S.* The brief was submitted in favor of the young plaintiffs, arguing that it is the job of the federal government to protect them from the damaging effects of climate change. The brief also argues that it is the job of the courts to address claims that are asserted by the politically powerless and the courts should act to fulfill that vital function by allowing the merits of this case to proceed to the trial process.

Gerrymandering Cases Go to Supreme Court -- On March 26 our case, *Rucho v. League of Women Voters of North Carolina* began to be heard with its companion cases in the U.S. Supreme Court, and the League rallied on the front steps in support of fair maps for all. It's been a long road to get to this day, and now there is a real chance for the Court to set a standard for fair districts across the country. With the inclusion of the *Benisek v. Lamone* case out of Maryland, which the Maryland League joined as amicus, the Court will hear about instances of partisan gerrymandering by both Democrats and Republicans. This presents a huge opportunity for the Court to assert that, once and for all, politicians cannot choose their voters—voters must be free to choose who they want to represent them. Read about the background and legal theories behind each case in our latest blog post. Banning partisan gerrymandering would make huge strides in restoring voters' faith in the electoral process. Voters must know their votes make a real difference and that they are not just used as pawns in a political game. https://www.lwv.org/blog/breaking-down-partisan-gerrymandering-cases-us-supreme-court?utm_source=RuchoCultivation&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=032519

State League Webinar Explains Cap and Trade

The California League Climate Change Committee is advertising a webinar about the current status of Cap and Trade in our state. Their message follows:

Cap and trade is growing fast. And it's working. Learn the facts about cap and trade and why it is an effective way to put a price on carbon. Join us for a webinar by Nat Keohane, Environmental Defense Fund, Senior Vice President, Climate.

"Cap and Trade is Alive and Well: Carbon Markets Around the World": Thursday, April 25, 11 AM to 12 noon (PDT)

To register, click on the link below.

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/89912961066926861>

U.S. League's Statement Supporting HR1

HR1: For the People Act, the first democracy reform agenda bill introduced in the House of Representatives in the 116th Congress, passed the House on March 8. As part of the Declaration for American Democracy Coalition, the LWV is encouraging our members to attend town halls and events set up to promote HR1 around the country. While we do support the legislation, we recognize that it is not a perfect bill. There are pieces of it that the League will not promote or work to advance. State and local Leagues who are interested in supporting HR1 publicly should focus on the following messages:

Why we need a comprehensive package of democracy reforms:

It should be easier, not harder, to vote. The For the People Act improves access to voting with reforms like Same Day Registration and Automatic Voter Registration.

More needs to be done to protect voters' voices. The For the People Act requires independent redistricting commissions, ends voter roll purges based on failure to vote, and restores the Voting Rights Act.

Our government should respond to the will of the people, not the interests of powerful corporations and wealthy donors. The For the People Act includes strong provisions for improving transparency in

campaign finance and strengthening government ethics enforcement.

Why the League of Women Voters supports the For the People Act:

As an organization with a mission of empowering voters and defending democracy, the League of Women Voters is proud to support legislation that does the same.

The For the People Act will improve American elections by making our election system more free, fair, and accessible to all eligible Americans.

The League worked behind the scenes to influence the language of HR1, including a push to include Same Day Registration. Our organization has a rich history of working with Congress to improve legislation on behalf of all voters.

We are encouraged by the extraordinary and comprehensive reforms in HR1 that are good for all Americans and deserve bipartisan support.

What citizens can do to support the For the People Act:

The For the People Act makes elections fairer and puts power back in the hands of the American people. It deserves support from all members of Congress.

Contact your Senators, and tell them how important this package of reforms is to the future of our democracy. Urge them to support it in their chamber.

Presidential Popular Vote Agreement Gains Ground

On March 15, Colorado joined the states which have agreed to the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact (a process endorsed by the League), which would allot the state's electoral college votes to the winner of the nation's popular vote. This now brings the District of Columbia and 12 states (including California), with a total of 181 electoral college votes, into the agreement. If and when the

subscribers to the compact hold a total of 270 electors, the winner of the nation's popular vote would automatically receive a majority in the electoral college. The New Mexico legislature has also passed a measure to add its 5 electoral college votes to the compact. When its governor signs the bill, its five electoral votes will also be included.

Monthly Opportunities to Practice Civil Discourse

The monthly meetings for developing Civil Discourse are continuing on 4th Sundays at the Caspar Community Center. They begin at 11 AM,

immediately following the Caspar Community Breakfast. The March gathering was well-attended once again. *Voter* readers are encouraged to join in.

The National League and the Green New Deal

LWVUS provides these talking points to Leagues about our engagement with a possible "Green New Deal" and climate change policy more generally. These points are meant to inform Leagues of the activities of LWVUS and can be used by individual Leagues in their messaging on this subject.

LWVUS joined a January 10 letter with more than 600 organizations urging Congress to hold hearings and openly debate legislation about climate change in response to the momentum across the country to address this important issue. This letter is a request to hold hearings that will help educate the public on the subject, a process that is critical to democracy and aligns with the League's longstanding support for a transparent process.

As with any omnibus legislation, we will work to elevate and protect the components that align with our positions. On the parts that do not align, we will work to negotiate separately and in a way that supports the League's work.



It is important for LWVUS to be at the table as this process begins to make sure the important work we have done for many decades is included in any comprehensive climate change package that is developed. Being part of this initial conversation around the subject positions us to influence the outcome of the potential legislation on this issue. Being at the table is the only way we can advance the work our organization has done on climate change. We can't stand by silently and wait for the legislation to be crafted.

Currently there is no bill, but LWVUS stands ready to negotiate when the time comes. As with all legislation, we will examine final language before supporting or opposing a bill publicly.

LWVUS staff continues to consult the LWVUS Climate Change Taskforce, a group of dedicated and trusted League leaders, regarding legislation around climate change issues. We will continue to look to our long-standing positions to guide our engagement on this topic.



LWVMC 2019 Meet and Greet

LWVMC's annual Meet and Greet Your Public Officials event was held on March 15 at the Caspar Community Center. A lively crowd turned out to question and chat with officials from various agencies who were on hand. More pictures taken at the event by Becky Bowen and Linda Jupiter may be viewed on our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/LWVMendo1/>

The Meet & Greet Committee would like to thank especially Peggy Martin, from the Fort Bragg Garden Club, and League member Peggy Smith for keeping track of the food table all evening. Members of the Fort Bragg High School Liberal Club assisted with the food table. Thanks are also due to Carol Czadek plus Babs & Sam Levine for keeping track of name tags, to Nancy Kleiber for providing wine, and to Grant Miller and Barb Rice for pouring it. Carol, Meg Courtney, Bob Bushansky, and Jane Person provided yeoman service by staying and cleaning up the facility afterwards. The food was well appreciated, so all who provided eats should pat themselves on the back!



Clockwise from top: 5th District Supervisor Ted Williams talks to State Park leaders; Fort Bragg City Councilman Lindy Peters and Ted Williams chat with a constituent; Assemblyman Jim Wood listens intently; MCDH Board member John Redding wore his League tag (members Lee Tepper and Charlene McAllister stand nearby); Sheriff Tom Allman made his usual appearance; Ukiah Mayor Maureen "Mo" Mulheren came especially to meet League members; Fort Bragg Mayor Will Lee was on hand this year. Pictures by Becky Bowen.



Youth Climate Strike 3/15/19 – see story, p. 2. Pictures by Cindy Plank.

