



The Voter

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF MENDOCINO COUNTY

November, 2019

Cindy Plank and Nancy Kleiber, Presidents

Jary Stavely and Lee Tepper, Editors

This month's meeting ...

Civics, Citizenship and the Census

by Charlene McAllister

What is Civics? Do you remember? (Hint: the study of the rights and duties of citizenship.)

Refresh your memory from that long ago civics class in high school by coming to the November League meeting at the Caspar Community Center on November 12 at 10 AM. Charlene McAllister and Dorine Real will lead a discussion of civics in the light of present-day conditions. This topic was suggested at last winter's program planning session.

Civic knowledge and public engagement is at an all-time low. A 2016 survey by the Annenberg Public Policy Center found that only 26 percent of Americans can name all three branches of government. We know that League members can name them, but what can we do to educate, involve and motivate others to become informed and engaged citizens? Learn what makes a good citizen besides voting. We will discuss the rights and obligations of citizenship at the local, state, national and global levels.

Paula Cohen will begin the meeting with an update on the 2020 Census and what is happening in Mendocino County to outreach, educate, and promote participation in the upcoming Census. Learn how you can help by encouraging people to stand up and be counted. Her recent Community Forum article about the census can be found on p.6 of this *Voter*.

As usual, the Caspar Community Center doors will be open for coffee and conversation at 9:30. Bring a friend to join in these important conversations.

Mental Health Forum Rescheduled

The League's October 29 mental health forum at the Caspar Community Center has been rescheduled for Monday, November 25 at 6 PM. Learn where we are going with Measure B and with Mental Health Services in our community. The forum will be co-moderated by coastal Supervisors Ted Williams and Dan Gjerde. Participants will include:

- Tammy Moss-Chandler, Director, Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency
- Jenine Miller, Director, Mendocino County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services
- Emily Strachan, Vice Chair, Mendocino County Behavioral Health Board
- Mark Mertle, Measure B Committee Member
- Camille Schrader, Chief Financial Officer of Redwood Quality Management
- John Wetzler, former Chair of Mental Health Board and caretaker for an SMI family member

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 ...

Your League Offers Opportunities to Serve Your Community

by Cindy Plank

LWV of Mendocino County needs you—do you have an hour or two to spare? We have several interesting and important projects in place this year. Here are a few things you could do that wouldn't take much time:

Census 2020: share this important info with groups you are connected with, or individual friends and family (see Paula Cohen's article on p.6).

Schools & Communities First: LWV of California is beginning a campaign of getting information out about this crucial topic, and we will need individuals to share the pre-written basics of this important campaign, and to get valid signatures on petitions to ensure a November 2020 ballot measure. It would mean sharing info with the same groups, and individual friends & family as the Census. Easy. Simple. Important.

Climate Emergency—local actions: LWV of Mendocino County is a member of the LWV of California Climate Change Task Force and within that, the Food, Soils, Ag (FSA) team. Join our small local climate team, and/or join in on a monthly call with other LWVs across the north state to share ideas for educating and advocating for more communities to incorporate carbon drawdown techniques and biodiverse gardening methods.

Youth Voter Registration: join another LWV member or two on a classroom visit. It's fun!

Social Media: help our League to get current with the various ways of getting LWV info out to various age groups.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI): there is a state-wide LWV group that meets through computer on this important topic.

Civility: another statewide LWV group that meets through computer.

Membership: be a contact for a new member, to share what LWV is about and to welcome them to our wonderful group.

Hospitality: help us set up, or clean up, or greet attendees at one of our programs.

Voter Service: assist at a candidate forum, greet attendees, hand out/collect questions, etc.

Meet & Greet: assist with a step or two of the planning for our annual March event.

The Mendocino County League needs you—consider sharing an hour or two of your time, and if you can, let me or another board member know. I'm at 357-4282, or theplanks@yahoo.com.



Dues Do Be Due

It's time to pay dues! The cancellation of our October meeting (twice!) means that we're behind in collecting dues this fall. It's time for all of us who renewed our memberships last fall to do so again. The requirements are the same as last year. Please see the message from Jary the Membership Chair on p. 10 of this *Voter*.

The League's Youth Voter Registration Project Continues

by *Cindy Plank*

“Not voting is not a statement. It’s rendering yourself invisible.

It is silencing your own voice. It is self-marginalization.

It’s allowing your future to be determined by other people and pretending that’s a victory.

Register. Vote. Make a statement.”

—John Pavlovitz

Did you know that California has pre-registered more than 400,000 youth ages 16 and 17 in the last 3 years, and that 500,000 pre-registrations are anticipated by the time of the 2020 general election?!

Our Mendocino County League is working on doing our part. With suggestions from some instructors last spring, we began getting in touch with schools in August and September, and have begun to visit classrooms during October. We will continue into November and the winter months, as classroom schedules permit. In addition to high school visits, we are adding Adult School, Citizenship Classes and Mendocino College classes to our project this year.



Thus far, we have visited two GED/Diploma completion classes, one Citizenship class, one Mendocino College class, one high school student club, and one high school government class. There is another high school student club meeting scheduled, and four other high school classes are determining dates for visits. In addition, LWVMC staffed voter registration tables at the Latino Coalition Fiesta Familiar, the Ukiah campus of Mendocino “College Hour,” and Ukiah Farmers Market (with County Registrar Katrina Bartolomie). We also participated in National Voter Registration Day with tables outside Fort Bragg and Mendocino Post Offices. Many thanks to Jane Person, Meg Courtney, Paula Cohen, Marylynn Henes, Jim Mastin, Charlene McAllister, Nancy Kleiber, and several community volunteers.

During our visits, we are also sharing the importance of the 2020 Census. We remind everyone about the March 3 California primary election, the Valentine’s Day 100th birthday for LWV, and the 100th anniversary in August, 2020 of the ratification of the 19th Amendment. We encourage high school classes to consider participating in 2020 Mock Elections, share any civics ideas that we learn about from teachers around the county, and invite interested students to consider participating in Peer Training. Along with Mendocino County Registrar Katrina Bartolomie, we plan to train these students on registration/pre-registration guidelines. Those interested & trained students may then feel confident in inspiring their fellow students to think of voting as a rite of passage, and to value their right to vote in every election.

Here are some of the things we talk to students about:

- Voting is your power. Never give up that power by not voting or by voting the way someone else tells you.
- Use your own eyes, ears, and excellent brains to determine facts from opinion or propaganda.
- As the largest and most diverse generation in American history, you have the strength to defend your voices and your votes.
- Don’t let old people do all of the voting!

We’re excited to continue our involvement with the youth of our county. Please let us know if you have a young friend or relative who would like to receive one of our new voter packets.



Hospital Affiliation Forum

by Jary Stavely

The Mendocino Coast District Hospital held a series of meetings throughout its voting area in October to describe the financial condition of the hospital, and the prospects for affiliation with Adventist Health. Approximately 50 residents attended the one which took place at Fort Bragg's Town Hall on the 21st. Interim Hospital CEO Wayne Allen opened the "Affiliation Forum & Update" that night by introducing the two speakers, Board Treasurer John Redding and Chief of Medical Staff Dr. William Miller, and by announcing that the board intends to hold a separate community meeting in November to discuss the future of Labor & Delivery services at the hospital. He urged those who came to discuss that particular issue to wait for the future meeting to share their thoughts and concerns, as this meeting was solely dedicated to the subject of affiliation.

Mr. Redding, who also chairs the board's Finance Committee, told the audience that, immediately after the 2018 election when he took his seat, he had had no intention of affiliating with an outside entity, but that the financial condition of the Hospital District, especially the cost of seismic improvements mandated by 2030, has moved him to change his mind. He is proud of the balanced budget which was recently developed and approved, but said that all the deferred maintenance which the hospital needs has continuously eaten into the its surplus cash, which has almost disappeared since 2015, even with the addition of Measure C funds. Over the same time, the mix of payments which are made by its patients has shifted dramatically from private insurance to Medicare and MediCal, which pay less per procedure. He said the hospital could continue to limp along for several years without affiliation, but he sees no way by which the hospital district could finance a seismic retrofit on the existing facility, estimated to cost \$24M, let alone a new 24-bed "acute care" facility, estimated to cost \$90M.

Dr. Miller recounted the board's request for proposals of 5 northern California hospital companies to operate MCDH, and shared the "core values" which were developed by the hospital community as the basis for evaluating any proposals which were submitted. These were:

- Maintain an "acute care" facility with
 - minimum of 25 beds
 - full emergency room services
 - in-patient/hospitalist services
 - surgical services
- Expand primary care services (the coast population currently needs 5–7 more doctors)
- Increase local specialist services
- Maintain existing home health services
- Maintain hospital-based ambulance services (by some accounts much better than inland)
- Prepare for new facility or upgrade by 2030
- Improve quality and safety of patient care while reducing costs through economies of scale

According to Dr. Miller, who has worked for Sutter and others, MCDH is facing the same problems which rural hospitals are facing all over the country. Of the 1200 current "acute care" hospitals in the US, only 500 are expected to remain in ten years. He said there are only two ways for rural hospitals to survive—develop "niche care" such as orthopedics at Lake Tahoe and Dr. Bowen's practice in Willits, or affiliate with larger concerns which can better absorb costs and provide economies of scale. Many hospitals which have tried to develop niche services have failed, not having the population of patients needed for the chosen niche.

Adventist Health was one of two entities who responded to the affiliation overture, and gave the only "viable" proposal, when measured against the goals listed above. The next steps are to hear from the community, and for the board to make careful considerations. The proposal would be for a 30-year lease agreement under which

Adventist Health would operate the hospital while the District maintains its ownership as a kind of landlord. The affiliation agreement would need to be ratified by a 50%+1 margin of district voters. If the wording can be agreed on and submitted by the end of November, the vote would take place in the March Primary Election. Implementation of the agreement is expected within 30 to 60 days of the election, with full transition after a year.

The MCDH board would continue to represent the public, overseeing the hospital and perhaps engaging in other medical pursuits than the hospital operation *per se*. A new board appointed by Adventist Health would be in direct control of the hospital, consisting of, it was suggested, 7 community members and 3 Adventist employees.

Adventist Health operates 200 hospitals worldwide, 80 of them in the US and 20 in California, and has had experience helping to build new facilities, notably Howard Hospital in Willits and others in Marysville, Lodi, and Tehachapi. Some of its hospitals have unions and some don't. In order to conform to labor law that an operator must be completely unionized or completely non-union, it has a shell company, Stone Point Health, which operates all its union facilities.

Dr. Miller said he wanted to correct some misconceptions about Adventist Health and its relationship to the Adventist Church. He stated that, as a gay doctor, he had asked administrators and employees about working conditions for LGBTQ personnel, and was satisfied that they experience no discrimination or impingement on their personal and professional lives. Although the organization does not allow abortions in its facilities, there are no restrictions against family planning, birth control, or abortion counseling. Retired Obstetrician Dr. Keevan Abramson suggested from the audience that during his career there was a California Supreme Court ruling which mandated that abortions can be provided in public hospitals despite federal regulations which restrict them, and he wondered if that might preclude the Adventist prohibition. Obstetrics are not on the list of services which Adventist Health has so far promised to provide.

If affiliation is approved, Adventist Health has promised to help the Coast Hospital fund \$9M in delayed capital improvements, and to waive the cost of implementing electronic medical records—in all contributing \$20M during the first several years of the agreement. Other advantages cited include being able to recruit new doctors to the coast, since long term security would be better assured; access to UC Davis' family medical program, which is already sending graduates to AH's Ukiah Valley facility for residency; and access to more specialists who would periodically visit the coast as part of the Adventist system. Dr. Miller is impressed with the setup and appearance of their inland facilities, and believes that altruism is a key part of Adventist Health's mode of operation. The three spokesmen are convinced that Adventist Health would not enter into the 30-year lease agreement unless it was willing to back the hefty hospital upgrade required in just 10 years.

The hospital presenters said that they expect the board to approve affiliation, and that a Term Sheet with details will be forthcoming. The day(s) and time(s) of the upcoming forum regarding Labor & Delivery have not yet been set.

There will be a special meeting of the MCDH Board on Friday, November 8 at 10 AM in the Redwoods Room of the Coast Hospital regarding affiliation. The team of presenters (Mr. Allen, Mr. Redding, and Dr. Miller) will report on the nine public forums which were held in October. "Due Diligence Notes, Lease Term Sheet, and Future Action Steps" are also on the agenda.

The link for downloading the board's affiliation fact sheet is <http://www.mcdh.org/affiliation-fact-sheet/>.

Census Preparations

by Paula Cohen

Editor's note: this piece was originally published in the Community Forum section of the Advocate-News.

It is time for an update on the 2020 Census and related activities in Mendocino County. As we all know, back in June of 2019, the Supreme Court eliminated the citizenship question from the 2020 Census. Many are still concerned that fear of the question will have a negative impact on the response rate. The Mendocino County Complete Count Committee (MCCCC) is working to alleviate fear through education and encourage participation of all Mendocino County residents. Our coalition has created six smaller regional groups across the county with volunteers conducting education and outreach in their own communities.

The latest information about the timelines is that on or about March 13 a post card invitation will be mailed to households who receive their mail at their residences with a URL and an identifier number to access the census online. The number is based on the physical address of your residence. For those who use only post office boxes for mail delivery you will NOT receive this post card mailing. The MCCCC Coalition has received a grant from the United Way of the Wine Country and, working with United Way of California, is creating an alternate method to reach those of us who receive our mail at local post offices. MCCCC will be mailing a post card that will contain information on how to go online and retrieve your identifier number to access the 2020 Census. We are well aware that there is a significant portion of our rural population who would not receive any notice if we did not receive an alternative one.

The first day to respond will be March 23, with the formal roll out date of April 1. There will be other methods to access the census questionnaire: telephone access using an '800' number in many languages will be available. Once completed, the encrypted information will be forwarded to the secure census server. There will also be access to computers at various areas in your community. Libraries and schools will have computers for people to access the website. Other locations are being selected at this time. A complete list of these locations will be available closer to March, 2020.

2020 Census data will be collected through April 2020. Followup to those who have not responded will take place in May, 2020. The followup may be by a US Census worker from your area. By the end of 2020, a final count will be delivered to the President. By March 31, 2021 a redistricting summary will be delivered to all states for use in determining representation for their state. This is important as it determines how many people we will have in the House of Representatives and the number of Electoral College votes allocated to California.

Currently in October and November, US Census employees are conducting in-field address canvassing. The purpose is to verify addresses in census tracts to ensure all residential addresses receive a census invitation. People who are completing this work must have identification on them and will tell you the purpose of their visit. This is not a formal census count. You are still required to complete a 2020 census report.

Lastly, the national League of Women Voters has reached out to all of their state organizations to inform them that a form has been received by people entitled "2019 Congressional District Census" in which donations are being solicited for the upcoming presidential re-election campaign. California is one of the states that has been targeted. This is NOT an official census count. The basic information you should know is that the ONLY official form comes directly from the U.S. Census Bureau. Any mailer or outreach not from the U. S. Census Bureau is NOT an official 2020 Census operation. Any survey by an outside group mentioning the census is not part of the official U.S. Census. Anyone who has participated in these surveys should still plan to participate in the U. S. Census starting in March, 2020. We all need to be on the alert to these types of scams.

If you need additional information or know a group who would like to hear a presentation, please contact either Paula Cohen at pcohen@mcn.org or Julie Beardsley at beardsleyj@mendocinocounty.org. Our website is live! Check out www.mendocinocounts.org for up-to-date information. Remember, WE ALL COUNT!

Schools & Communities First to Be Revised

The State League is gearing up for the Schools & Communities First referendum on the November 2020 ballot. State President Carol Moon Goldberg and interim Executive Director Helen Hutchinson are asking local units to assist in gathering signatures in an effort to qualify an updated version of this long-needed reform to Prop. 13. Their message about the coming year's effort follows:

I. Overview of Schools & Communities First

Schools & Communities First (SCF) is a ballot measure that will provide \$11 billion in new commercial property tax revenue annually. This money will provide increased funding for schools and local governments, providing more affordable housing, healthcare, parks, libraries, first responders, and public safety.

The goals of the measure are to:

- **Reclaim \$11 billion every year for our schools and local communities**
- **Make corporations pay their fair share**
- **Make history: Start a new legacy of investing in our future instead of starving schools and communities of needed resources.**

What's the problem? Forty years ago, Californians passed Prop. 13 in reaction to rapidly rising property taxes. It helped homeowners, but the biggest winners have been large commercial property owners. Under Prop. 13, property is only reassessed when it changes hands. For residential property, that occurs on average every ten years. Commercial property—especially those owned by big companies—mostly avoids this reassessment. This can be because it just isn't sold or transferred, but also happens because deals and/or the corporations that own property are specifically structured to avoid the reassessment.

Because large corporations are not paying their fair share, we lose \$11 billion per year for schools and local services such as libraries, infrastructure repair, healthcare, and more. Who's been benefiting from this? Big companies like Chevron, Shell, Exxon, Walmart, McDonalds, and Blackstone. Who is not benefiting from this? Schools and local services funded by property taxes do not receive money when commercial property changes hands. Over the past 40 years, California has dropped from 7th in the nation in per-pupil funding to 41st.

Our solution: Under Schools & Communities First, all commercial and industrial property will be reassessed every three years. By reassessing commercial property on a regular basis, with no exceptions, we will generate \$11 billion every year to invest in our communities. We continue the Prop. 13 protection for all residential property and add relief for small businesses.

II. LWVC role in SCF

The League of Women Voters of California is a member of the coalition working for the passage of Schools & Communities First. We are one of the three proponents (signers) of the measure – along with California Calls and PICO California.

Passing Schools & Communities First at the November 2020 election is a primary priority for the LWVC for 2019 and 2020.

III. SCF refiling

The original SCF measure qualified for the November 2020 ballot very early – just after the 2018 election. We have received important feedback during the last year. Because of this, the coalition decided to refile and requalify our measure with these small changes:

- Increase the number of small businesses that will be exempt from reassessment
- Ensure that every school in every district in California receives increased funding

- Include more specifics about how the phase-in period will be managed, both statewide and in county assessors' offices.

The changes and refiling are a strategic decision to ensure that we have the strongest possible measure and the best possible chance of winning. We continue to have strong support from within the coalition, from our funders, and from the community members working on the campaign. The coalition continues to grow, with more organizations joining in. We will begin signature gathering on the new measure in late October or early November of this year. The official kick off will be November 2, with a number of events all over the state. Our deadline for collecting signatures is March 20, 2020. This will ensure us a top spot on the November 2020 ballot.

IV. How local Leagues can engage

Local Leagues are encouraged to:

Help gather signatures for the refiled measure.

Provide opportunities for members of your League and of the community to learn about it.

Join your regional coalition to network with other organizations supporting the measure.

Get endorsements of the measure from your local elected officials.

News from LWVUS

We know you are under an avalanche of national news, with endless coverage of next year's elections. But it's worth following LWVUS' "People Powered Fair Maps" campaign (<https://www.lwv.org/redistricting/people-powered-fair-mapstm>), a state-by-state strategy to end **gerrymandering**. Early results: LWV of Oklahoma, as part of the People Not Politicians coalition, has filed an initiative petition to end gerrymandering in OK. In North Carolina, the state court blocked the state from holding another congressional election on the current map because of illegal partisan gerrymandering. And here in California, the Governor has signed the FAIR Maps Act, which mandates standards for redistricting of counties and cities.

Voting rights: When Ohio released a list of people it planned to strike from its voting rolls, around 40,000 people shouldn't have been on it, including the Ohio League's executive director, Jen Miller. In September, a federal district court judge granted the LWV of Tennessee a preliminary injunction against a Tennessee law that leveled civil fines and criminal penalties on organizations that register voters. This allowed voter registration work up to the Tennessee registration deadline on October 7. In mid-October, a federal judge ruled that Florida cannot prevent felons from voting, even if they have unpaid fines.

Election security: In October the League joined a letter to U.S. House members urging support for HR 4617, the SHIELD Act, which later passed the House. The legislation will strengthen laws to protect U.S. elections against foreign intervention. LWVUS also endorsed the SAFE Act, S. 2053, sponsored by Senator Amy Klobuchar in the U.S. Senate. This legislation provides funding to support state and local election officials in strengthening election infrastructure and cybersecurity against foreign interference, and raises the bar for election integrity through requiring paper ballots, modern statistical audits, and stronger cybersecurity and accessibility requirements for voting equipment.

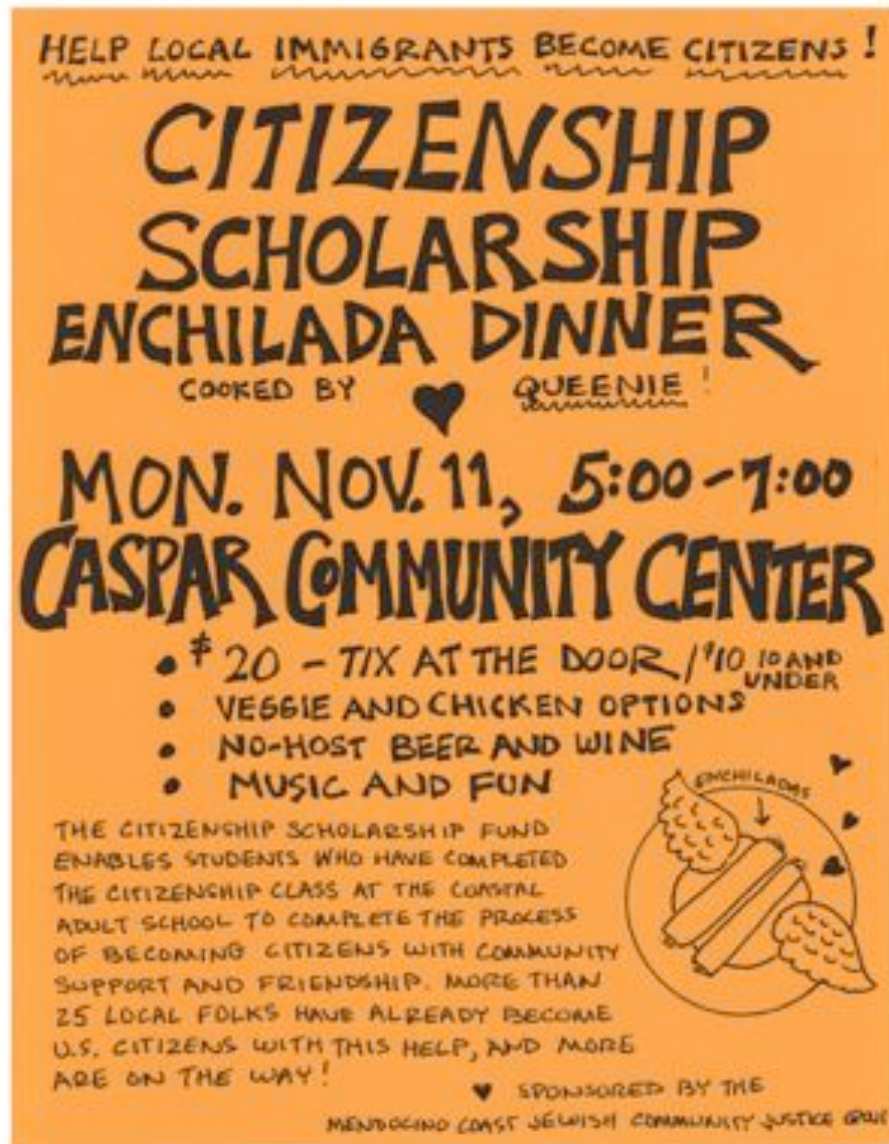
Immigration: LWVUS joined a trio of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) cases before the Supreme Court, part of our consistent support of immigration reform and immigrant rights.

But wait, there's more: The League's web page for taking action on its issues is <https://www.lwv.org/take-action>. Find more background on current activity in the blog (<https://www.lwv.org/blog>) or on the "Issues" pages.

Support Coast Groups that Support Immigrants

Our sister organizations active in helping immigrants are continuing to raise money for scholarships. The Latino Coalition helps local high school students attend college with theirs. For more information on how to assist in their fundraising, contact Linda Jupiter or Irene Malone.

The Justice Group of the Mendocino Coast Jewish Community assists immigrants with the cost of applying for US citizenship. They are having a dinner party on November 11 to raise new funds. Check out the flyer below for the details.



Fired Up on Climate Change in California Schools

Voter readers, who understand the urgency of climate change and the importance of education, may be interested in a podcast co-moderated by Zaidee Stavely, who grew up on the Mendocino coast and now works in the field of education journalism. It can be found here:

<https://edsources.org/podcast/fired-up-on-climate-change-in-california-schools?fbclid=IwAR0cNhPFYLie-SE7L5xhnBpAjPXgQ4W675Qp8IS5RZJnw0aPkq13KnovK34>

November, 2019

Dear Members,

Every year at this time we begin a new program year, and we also solicit your annual dues. Please take a minute to mail your dues, or mark your calendar to bring them along to our meeting on November 12th. The more dues we collect at this time, the less we will spend on postage for having to ask later on.

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

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

Another individual who chose to make a difference was Frederick Douglass, who spoke at the Seneca Falls women’s rights convention urging women not to compromise on their demand for the vote. Donations to our League’s Frederick Douglass Diversity Fund allow scholarship and “try us” memberships.

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

Jary Stavelly
Membership Chair

LWVMC Membership Renewal, 2019-2020

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____ Address _____

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

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