

## CA\_KONOCTI\_SK\_PD\_V3.pdf submitted by Alan Fletcher / C4H

### Rebuttal of Save Kelseyville Opinion Piece in the Press Democrat

Alan Fletcher 12/7/2024 V1.1

Both Citizens For Healing (C4H) and Save The Name of Kelsyville (STNK) were invited by the Press Democrat to submit an "opinion piece" on Measure U.

C4H's is by Arnaud Hubert

at <https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/opinion/kelseyville-konocti-referendum-lake-yes/>

STNK's is by Rachel White at <https://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/opinion/lake-kelseyville-konocti-measure-no/>

with a Line-by-line rebuttal below

Kelseyville has a proud heritage independent of its disgraced namesake

That's progress from their web page "The Name Kelsey" where they claim that the town is named after some other benign Kelsey.

Changing town's name won't change history.

We do not aim to change history. We aim to acknowledge history.  
We aim to remove the OFFENSE that Natives endure every day of their lives.

Citizens for Healing is an outlier group of Lake County residents proposing to change the name of Kelseyville to Konocti.

At least eight of our active supporters are Kelseyville residents.

This application was submitted without any input from the residents of Kelseyville.

You know that's a lie. We held meetings in Kelseyville and round the lake, and many of our opponents, some KBA members, attended.

Now, Measure U seeks the opinion of the voters regarding the proposed name change of Kelseyville.

This measure aims to guide the Lake County Board of Supervisors in its recommendation to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names in Reston, Virginia, which will ultimately decide on the proposed name change. We are asking the board to support Kelseyville residents' desire to keep their name.

The desire to keep an offensive name? By an electorate that is primarily white?

The proposed name change is based on the unjust actions toward Native Americans by Andrew Kelsey and his business partner, Charles Stone, who lived here from 1847 to 1849, when they were killed by local Native Americans.

"Unjust actions!" Child-rape, child-murder, mother-torture, starvation, enslavement. Yes, "unjust".

"Killed?" History suggests "executed". They "deserved what they got" said Bidwell.

The history of the Native Americans, the first stewards of this area 10,000 years ago, is appreciated and respected. Their story is essential to the history and culture of this region. This period is a significant part of the history of Kelseyville, and it is acknowledged.

Acknowledged? Like the KVUSD "Land Acknowledgement" proposal? Where Natives, speaking up, were hissed and booed by opponents, some displaying "KKK (Keep Kelseyville Kelseyville) pins, in orange T-shirts? Summoned to attend, because it might "hurt your cause"?

In 1854, new settlers, moving westward, came into this valley. They were mainly farmers, but there were merchants, blacksmiths, teachers and pastors.

Ah... Manifest Destiny lives on. "Evolution?"

Natives had professions too, finely tuned to their environment. Professional hunters, fishermen, basket weavers, obsidian toolmakers, medicine men and ... yes ... "Poison Men" (just like your apothecaries). They were "emergent farmers" and "proto-capitalists". They minted money, held market days and traded in hitch-futures. The roads that allowed your wagons into the county followed their two-lane trails.

These families came from as far away as Massachusetts, New York, Tennessee, Kentucky and Missouri.

Including other un-related. Kelseys, who "came in flocks".

They blended to make up the tapestry of this evolving town.

What land did they settle on?

From 1854 to 1861 they laid claim to tracts on Salvador Vallejos Lupi-Yoma Ranchera, and had to register them in Napa. In 1866 Vallejo's grant was denied, but the pioneers' lots were "surveyed and entered up in the

regular way." And the entire lake was opened up to homesteaders.

What happened to the Natives?

According to Barrett, they moved their villages from place to place, until they were finally squeezed out. and confined to a few rancheros, or forced to work on Settler's ranches. They had lost over 99% of their land. And soon after, 99% of their people.

They were the new faces of this community and created an honorable town.

Under the *Act for the Government and Protection of Indians* the "honorable townspeople" were able to force Natives to work for them. Living elders' uncles related how they had to carry papers in Kelseyville to prove they were "owned".

And then in 1875, when their services were no longer required, an Indian Agent reports: "The people of Lake County, including many of the most prominent men, petitioned to have the Indians there removed to this reservation, and I was officially authorized to remove them; but before I could possibly carry the order into effect it was revoked, greatly to the regret of the people of Lake County." Prominent Kelseyville men included, no doubt.

Kelseyville became the official designation by the U.S. Postal Service in 1882, more than 30 years following the death of Andrew Kelsey.

The name "Kelseyville" was first used in 1865, after lobbying by Andy Kelsey's cousin, William Kelsay. The "Town of Kelseyville" was established as an assessors district by a Lake County judge, on May 6, 1871: "Public Notice is hereby given that the Plat and Field notes of the Town of KELSEYVILLE, was this day filed in the office of the County Recorder of Lake County, State of California ..." The name Kelseyville was used in the 1880 census. The Post Office finally caught up with local usage in 1882.

No conclusive evidence demonstrates that Kelseyville was named to honor any specific individual,

Even Rachel White admits that Kelsey Creek was named for Andy Kelsey. Kelsey Creek first appears in government records in 1863. From an 1866 report: "I arrived at the banks of Kelsey creek ... and being near a town of the same name-- I entered it... The little town of Kelsey is situated on the Napa road, and contains ten or twelve houses." The 1870 census describes the "Kelsey Creek" division.

As stated above, the "Town of Kelseyville" was established by a Lake County judge in 1871.

And in 1873 we have: 'Mr S[tarkey] informed us that he visited this valley in the spring of 1848 and states 'Mr Kelsey, after whom the creek and town are named, was then the only American settled in Clear Lake valley, and resided in an adobe house about a mile or less from where the town of Kelseyville stands.

All named after Andy Kelsey.

There were only two other Kelsey/Kelsay families in the Big Valley area at that time. William Kelsay, who lobbied for the name of Andy Kelsey, and "The Widow" Parsena Kesley, who was an unlikely candidate.

just as the community does not honor any particular individual today.

It may not honor Andy Kelsey, but it commemorates him.

Instead, the name Kelseyville represents the community's collective identity and diverse heritage.

It embodies residents' shared history, reflecting their connection to the town and its development. Kelsey is a common name, and it's essential to recognize that it carries no derogatory connotations.

The name Kelsey is not derogatory. The commemoration of the name of the evil Andy Kelsey is offensive.

Many places nationwide, including communities, roads and creeks, bear the name Kelsey.

But only Kelseyville, CA is named after such an evil person.

Opposing the name change doesn't mean we ignore the events that transpired on this land before our time. Instead, it reflects a belief that changing the name isn't the right approach and will only deepen the division this initiative has caused.

There was already division between two groups: those Natives who knew from childhood, or learned later, the dark history of the name -- and those who think it's just another old-timer's name.

Is it "divisive" to call out divisiveness?

Names often evolve from complex histories, and while some may find specific names offensive due to their associations, erasing names doesn't erase history.

"Some may find specific names offensive". The specific name is Andy Kelsey and his toponym Kelseyville. "Some" includes the (estimated) 2% Natives who voted "yes", and the 28% who supported the change,

Engaging in meaningful dialogue about the past and its implications can lead to better understanding and healing. Rather than focusing on renaming, we should prioritize education, community engagement and finding ways to honor all perspectives constructively.

As Supervisor Simon said: *Would the name change help start with the healing? ... [If] This name change happens. ... It will start the healing, whether you believe it or not, for the indigenous people in this community. It's a pure, pure yes to that question ... So yes, this name change would start the process and it's going to be a*

*long one, but it's a ..it would absolutely start that healing that needs to happen for the Indigenous 7 nations in this county.*

Kelseyville is a diverse, rural town of different ethnicities. Throughout the past century, it has thrived because of residents who have worked diligently to make it a respected and inclusive town. The leaders have worked tirelessly to build the brand of Kelseyville. The community is open to anyone who wishes to have a seat at the table. It works hard to make Lake County a better place for everyone.

There is great pride in the town. The Kelseyville Business Association presents five significant festivals each year. Additionally, we host lively street dances on Main Street throughout the summer. Kelseyville draws tens of thousands of visitors all year.

Kelseyville, 95451, is home to more than 10,000 residents. If the name is changed, there will be no winners.

SK seems unable to distinguish between the TOWN - which we all agree is wonderful - from the NAME of the Town, which is offensive.

Measure U is divisive, creating irreparable harm and financial hardship for businesses, the school district, fire department, townspeople and Lake County government. Additionally, there is no clear plan for who would bear the financial responsibility, further highlighting the inadequacy of the proposal.

In the anticipated event that the USPS changes, or adds, the name "Konocti CA 95451" no individual has to file a change of address. That includes banks, the IRS and the passport office. The mail will get through.

Very few businesses - such as those with an alcohol licence - will have to file more than a simple 1-page form.

No business or organization is required to change its name.

The glaring Orange-and-black signs all over the district certainly contributed to the division - particularly when they were ostentatiously positioned facing Natives' homes in the area. So did Measure-U, which effectively terminated all hopes of holding discussions on the proposed change.

Kelseyville is situated at the base of Mount Konocti, a powerful and beautiful mountain. The Native Americans of this valley value it as sacred land that belongs to the whole county. Changing Kelseyville's name to Konocti would create confusion and a burden on the historic school district in the community of Lower Lake, which is called Konocti Unified School District.

The system seems to manage a "Clear Lake High School".

You have had the opportunity to propose a different name to the BGN, but have chosen not to do so.

Kelseyville's rich history spanning over a century is a testament to the power of a diverse population working together. Join us in asking the Board of Supervisors to uphold the clear policies set forth by the Board of

Geographic Names. These policies are designed to respect community consensus and preserve existing names with established local usage.

As explained in my detailed rebuttal of SK's "Arguments against Measure U" .. SK completely misunderstands, and mis-represents BGN's policies. The BGN's over-riding policy is to reject offensive names. And "existing offensive names" are not preserved on the MAP or in local use:, they are preserved in the BGN's files.

Let's continue to honor our shared history and identity by keeping our town's name intact.

The name "Kelseyville" honors nobody. The proper place to Commemorate Andy Kelsey is at his (and Stone's) obsidian crypt.

As Brenna Sullivan Kennedy suggested for a new plaque at the crypt ([LakeCoNews](#)):

Here lie Andrew Kelsey and Charles Stone, who were killed in 1849 for their heinous crimes against the Pomo and Wappo people of this area. In 2024, the community formerly known as Kelseyville denounced these atrocities, and in collaboration with Lake County's seven tribes, unified under the name Konocti.

Rachel White, a nurse practitioner, was born and raised in Kelseyville.