

ARGUS

THOUGHTS ON HIGHER EDUCATION

BY PAT HOCKEN, LWVLC PRESIDENT

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One of the realities of this recession is the difficulty that recent college graduates have had finding jobs at all, much less in the fields in which they earned solid degrees from good institutions. This situation causes one to pose the question: Is college worth the cost? The answer given by current college students is obviously "yes" as shown by the recent dramatic increases in enrollment at the University of Oregon and Lane Community College. In fact, the enrollment in the Oregon University System had grown by the

2009-10 academic year to nearly 92,000 students on seven campuses, an increase of almost 160% over the past 10 years.

A perhaps more objective assessment appeared in an article I read in the St. Louis Post Dispatch last fall. The writer, Jim Gallagher, stated that "Higher education definitely pays off. The median family income for people with bachelor's degrees or higher was \$99,707 last year, compared with \$48,637 for those with a high school diploma, according to the College Board." However, the message of his article was the

caveat to "Do the Math" for the student's particular situation. He felt it did not make sense for one whose career goal was to be a public school teacher or a social worker to attend an expensive private school and graduate with a lot of debt that needed to be repaid from the relatively small salaries of those professions. Conversely, it would make sense to incur the relatively large debt for an engineering or other technical degree from a prestigious private school like Massachusetts Institute for Technology.

(Continued on page 7)



Merle Weiner



Pat Vallerand

THIRD THURSDAY BY NANCIE FADELEY

Recent news stories report a shocking increase in domestic violence deaths: From 2003 to 2009, they averaged 24 a year in Oregon. But in 2009, there were 34 domestic violence deaths in our state. And, before the year 2010 was over—during the first 11 months—there were 55.

That's why the topic of our February Third Thursday is the need for legal services for victims of domestic violence.

Stop Violence Against Women Clinic Project February 17, 2011

Our speakers will be University of Oregon School of Law Associate Professor **Merle Weiner**, and Stop Violence Against Women Clinic Project Director **Pat Vallerand**. They will tell us about the work of the clinic that provides legal services for victims of domestic abuse and their children. Almost all of these victims are low income, and would otherwise have difficulty obtaining legal assistance.

Third Thursdays happen at Mallard Banquet Hall, 725 West 1st Avenue, Eugene. The free program begins at 12:15 pm

A buffet is spread at 11:45. The \$12 cost for lunch includes beverage, dessert and tip. Beverage only with refills - \$2.50.

For reservations, call the League office, 541-343-7917, or e-mail league@lwvlc.org for reservations. Reservations are a priceless help to the Mallard staff.

UNIT INFORMATION BY ANNE MEHL, CHAIR

NO BRIEFING OR UNITS THIS MONTH –LCC TOUR to take the place of February Units

We will be back with March 1st briefing and units the week of March 7th - 11th. Our coordinators are:

Unit 1 East Willamette, Emily Schue - 541-344-7597

Barbara Greenley will host Unit 1 at the Edgewood Community Center, 147 Westbrook Way. *This is a new location.*

Unit 2 Harlow Road Kay Huston - 607-8962

Unit 3 Coburg Road Punky Smith, 343-0232

Unit 4 SW Eugene Sally Weston, 484-4404

Unit 5 Central Presbyterian Diana Grandberry, 342-8402

Unit 6 Online, Charlcie Kaylor charlcie@efn.org Chris Donahue kimchee569@yahoo.com

Unit 8 Cottage Grove/Creswell, Dian Missar, 942-7676

Unit 9 Cascade Manor Loraine Abbott, 434-4107 Frank Carlton, 434-4140

JANUARY UNITS

BY PAT MCDANIELS, PROGRAM CHAIR

The January units were a showcase for the wide interests of League members.

Unit 1 began the week with a discussion of "The omnivore's dilemma." Or as their write-up said: "the unit digested this well-known book." The unit discussed farm subsidies, buying local, HFC (high fructose corn syrup), and the part the USDA plays in research and control of our food supply.

Unit 2 took a different tack. Their focus was on "all things plastic." Their concerns were such issues as the proliferation of plastic bags, the use of BHP in all kinds of food containers, and other forms of environmental degradation through the use of plastics. The unit members were very interested in exploring the problem further.

See **Unit 3's** story on page 6.

Unit 4 met with Neil Bjorklund, Planning Manager of Parks and Open Spaces at the parks department offices. He answered questions about Eugene parks pointing out Eugene passed a bond measure for the acquisition and development of park lands, but the needs of maintenance and operation could not be a part of a bond measure. In today's economy this is a problem the League will be watching and doing whatever we can.

Unit 5 looked at White Bird Dental Clinic. After a short introduction and tour they were able to ask questions about the services. They came away impressed with what White Bird does for the community.

Unit 7, Cottage Grove, had already toured the Aprovecho Research Center in December. For January they assisted the Center with a visit from a delegation of the UN. They have recommended that the Center be a topic for a Third Thursday.

Unit 9 sponsored a public talk on the Gulf Oil spill on Sunday, January 23. Professor Michelle Wood will be the speaker. Professor Wood is working with NOAA in Miami, Florida

The "do your own thing" units in January were a first time experiment for the Lane League. From everything I have heard, this concept was a great success. Many members have expressed the desire to do it again next year.

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New TRY Coming in February

The Voter Service Committee has collected and verified the first draft of governmental officers' names, titles, addresses, phone numbers, and web sites for the new "They Represent You" for 2011-2012. We have proofed the information and forwarded it to Cawood for design setup and publication.

Many thanks to Florence Alvergue, Barbara Bryan, Lilla McDonald, and Veronika Walton for all their assistance in helping us gather the updated information and proofing the first round of the document.

Please be thinking about groups and organizations that will benefit from copies of the document so that we can distribute them in a timely fashion. We also plan to add



the entire new TRY to the LWVLC website so that it will be available to our website users.

Susan Tavakolian

MEMBERSHIP - SUE MILLER-WIELESEK, CHAIR

The fall and winter has been difficult for the League. We are saddened by the death of six members since mid-August; **Ruth Bascom, Maxine Hansen, Ginny Buck, Dora Harris, Pat Helmers, and Sumy Anhorn.** Each of these women contributed her considerable talents not only to the League but in adding to the sturdy warp and weft of this community. None of them will easily be replaced.

At the same time, we are pleased to welcome new members, who

will each find his or her unique way to contribute to the depth and diversity of our membership. You already know some new and returning members. **Casey Janz**, Phil and Rosie Janz' daughter, makes her home in Alaska but is often here in Eugene, and has been present at many League events.

Charles Hirsch has attended many League functions prior to joining. Other "new" members have in fact been members at some previous time.

One of our new members is **Joyce Bennett**, Eugene businesswoman, who helped her late husband, Bob Bennett, manage his commercial real estate business in the lovely old house at 11th and High Street. She is busy transitioning management of the business to her son.

She enjoys having her granddaughter living with her, and enjoys reading and gardening. Through the League, she hopes to become a better informed voter, and has enjoyed Third Thursdays and the unit she attends. Please make her feel welcome!

LANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE FIELD TRIP SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2011 BY BETTY HOSOKAWA

We are delighted so many are going to join us for this visit to LCC!

For a campus map go to <http://www.lanec.edu/mpr/locations/mc.htm>

For bus riders: For route information go to <http://www.ltd.org/> or call 687-5555.

To find the building - with the parking lot behind and facing campus,

turn right, pass the Student Services building with its distinctive wavy roof to **the Center for Meeting and Learning** where you will be directed to the upstairs meeting room.

For drivers: LCC is east of Eugene off I-5 (exit 189) on 30th Ave. Take the western exit off 30th to the campus (not the stoplight intersec-

tion entrance just off of I-5). Follow Gonyea Rd. around campus past the parking lots on the left. Turn right into parking areas D, E & F. The building is across on the south-west corner of the campus. We meet upstairs.

The last day for reservations is Monday, 1/31 at noon.

See you there at 10 am!

ACTION BY KAPPY EATON

State of the State: Having been formally sworn in on January 10 (as required by the Oregon Constitution for the second Monday in January in the odd numbered years), members of Oregon's 76th Assembly pretty much left the Capitol until February 1. Due in large part to the three sets of Interim Committee sessions held in May, September and December, 2010, almost 2000 bills have been pre-session filed and are ready for hearings. The Senate, with a two vote majority of D's, and the 30-30 dead heat in the House, have organized their committees, selected the chair or co-chairs, and agendas are being formalized as we speak. Hearings are expected to begin immediately, with policy issues getting attention first to clear the way for budget matters and the major task of redrawing the boundaries for the 90 legislative districts and the five congressional districts.

The LWWOR Action Team has met twice in January, agreed on the time to meet weekly during session, discussed hearings schedules for the position coordinators, learned how to work with the on-line bill tracking software, set guidelines for the legislative coordinator, listed the priorities for each coordinator's area, and agreed on a schedule for the Legislative Report (weekly). While each of the

areas – Social Policy Natural Resources, Governance and Access - will have myriad issues, the state's economy and budget actions will be in the forefront. For many years, it has been league policy not to advocate for funding any particular service or program to the detriment of another equally important one. This is a difficult line to maintain these days, but we try to be equitable regarding education at all levels, human services and public safety. We will continue to work in partnership with our coalitions such as the Oregon Conservation Network, the Revenue Coalition, Oregonians for Working Families, the Women's Health and Wellness Alliance, Oregon Social Services, and more informal work groups as they develop during the session. When we join any group, we make clear that we might not always agree with a specific coalition position and reserve the right to not be part of that activity.

Sign up to receive the Legislative Report on-line by contacting lwwor@lwwor.org. When action needs to be taken by members, Action Alerts will be sent to all local leagues. Material/information regarding the specific issue will be included to enable your participation in this very important part of League. You can write, call or

email your individual representative or senator. The list of legislators will be found in the first Legislative Report or you can go on-line to Oregon Legislature and locate the person's contact info. You can watch and/or listen to all legislative hearings through the Oregon audio video system. You will need to know the committee hearing the bill, the hearing room number, time, day and the bill number. Copies of bills are available in PDF form by searching Oregon Legislature on line and clicking on bills and laws.

Here is just a sampling of some of the bills we expect to follow - more next time:

SB 536 – a ban on all plastic bags at checkout stands – grocery or retail. Paper bags can be offered for free or at a charge of no more than five cents. Persons on food stamps would not be charged.

SB 267 – requires chief petitioner of initiative or referendum petition to disclose system of bonuses, incentives or payments or minimum expectations of signatures to be obtained.

SB 258 – requires Water Resources Department to report biennially to Legislature regarding measurement of significant diversions of surface water from high prior-

(Continued on page 5)

LEGISLATIVE PROCESS DAY IN SALEM

PHOTOS BY FLO ALVERGUE



Peggy Lynch and Kappy Eaton answer questions.



Pat Russell, Susan Tavakolian, and Barbara French confer.

(Continued from page 4)

ity watersheds

SB 269 – requires investment officers and assistant investment officers in the Investment Division of the State Treasurer to file statements of economic interest with the Oregon Government Ethics Commission

HB 2634 – creates a Citizens Initiative Review Commission within the executive branch of state government to ensure that citizen panels are convened to review initiated measures in a fair and impartial manner. A Citizens Initiative Review Fund is established in the State Treasury. Statements of CIR panels shall be published in the Voters Pamphlet

HB 2854 – relates to consolidation of motor pools for government efficiency and savings

HB 2483 – revises public records exemptions; changes

to public records laws to ensure consistent criteria and processes

SJR 6 – constitutional amendment to divert the kickers into a reserve fund

SB 298 – divert General Fund interest earnings to reserve fund

SB 299 – convert the kicker to a tax credit rather than a check payment

SB 303 – limit the number of years that kicker refunds can be made

Local Issues: The LWVLC agreed to give priority to the following issues for 2011, reserving the right to additions or subtractions as appropriate with our positions:

- EMX - support for the preferred option with Board agreement and testimony as needed in a timely manner; information to members
- Redistricting discussions

regarding criteria and appropriate actions with the Eugene City Council on wards and Lane County Board of Commissioners on Commissioner districts

- Possible tax for funding schools
- Downtown redevelopment as appropriate to our positions
- Public records and Open meetings laws – Attorney General's report and local issues

Members of the committee and other interested leaguers are interviewing Lane County Legislators with questions prepared by the LWVOR Action Team. Our reports and those from leagues across the state are not public, but are helpful to the Action Team in their work at the Capitol.

Next meeting:
February 2
in the office
at 9:30 am.

UNIT TWO VISITS DELTA PONDS BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

BY JEANNE ARMSTRONG

As you drive north or south on Delta Highway, you cannot miss noticing the red suspension cables on the new Delta Ponds Bike and Pedestrian Bridge, especially in the evening when the whole structure is bathed in red light. The bridge is the second bike/pedestrian bridge in this area designed by engineer Jiri Strasky.

If you glance up as you approach the bridge from the west, you will see

Lee Imonen's (LCC instructor) gorgeous sculpture named "Bountiful." A billowing net, held aloft by angular 30-foot red poles, looks to be holding a bulging catch of northwest salmon and represents Native American net and weir fishing. This



came in under projected cost. No signage is attached to the bridge, further enhancing its aesthetic impact.

Unit 2 members gathered in January with Neil Bjorklund of Eugene Parks and Open Spaces, to walk over the bridge and to learn about its origins and development and about the history of the ponds below. A culvert was constructed that allows flow between the Willamette River and the ponds, providing a way for juvenile fish to move into the ponds during the winter. Trees were planted that eventually will attract more wild life. A blue heron was in residence during our visit.

The main purpose of the 1000-foot-long bridge is to provide a way for commuters to move safely from one side of Delta Highway to the other. Recreation is a perk. The bridge connects Goodpasture

Island Road with Robin Hood Avenue in the Cal Young neighborhood, ending on a neatly placed curved concrete slab in the front yard of a home there. Negotiations between the city

and the homeowner resulted in satisfaction by both parties.

Bicyclers now enjoy a continuous bikeway from River road, through Willagillespie, Cal



Young and Coburg Road neighborhoods, across I-5 and into the Gateway Area in Springfield. It connects the Ruth Bascom Riverbank Trail to bike paths on the north and east sides of the Willamette River.

Funding of the \$5.6 million project included federal stimulus money (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act), federal transportation funds, and (for the fish passage project) Army Corps of Engineers funds.

On a nice day, you can stand at the cream-colored handrail and watch wild life in the ponds below or look in the distance for views of both Skinner and Spencer Buttes. This is a bridge that really is to Somewhere.

Unit members met at Janet Calvert's home after the tour for further discussion with Bjorklund about other parks projects in our area.

Beth Naylor photos



piece of public art was funded by some of the federal funds received to build the bridge when bids for construction



Jeanne Armstrong photo



Senator Beyer interviewed by Merle Bottge and Carol Hildebrand

Leaguers are interviewing legislators with questions prepared by the LWVOR Action Team. The reports from leagues across the state are not public, but are helpful to the Action Team in their work at the Capitol.

(Continued from page 1)

In Oregon and elsewhere, due to shrinking state funding, tuition and outstanding loans at graduation have risen dramatically at public post-secondary institutions. For the 2010-11 academic year, the University of Oregon (UO) estimated that the cost for just tuition and fees and books for a full-time resident undergraduate student would be over \$9,000. The average debt at graduation was about \$19,000. The UO did make the list of the 100 Top Values in Public Colleges in a recent issue of Kiplinger's Personal Finance magazine for its undergraduate programs. Despite the increased costs, it's still a good price for a high quality education.

Our local League focus in

February will be Lane Community College (LCC), another public institution that has seen funding cuts due to property tax limitations and state budget shortfalls and which has had to raise tuition to meet growing costs. The LCC website estimates that the average annual cost for tuition, fees, and books is about \$4,600, about half the UO cost. For some career and technical programs, there are extra charges to cover the higher costs.

If you are remembering tuition amounts you paid for yourself or your children, as I am, you will easily grasp how expensive higher education has become, even for schools providing a good return on the student's investment. One of the many niches filled by LCC is to provide lower cost op-

tions for students wishing to obtain a bachelor's degree such as a two-year associates degree from LCC (either an Associate of Arts degree or an Associate of Science degree in business) and then transferring to a University in the Oregon state system to complete the four-year requirements. Another option is to participate in a dual enrollment program with the UO and LCC which allows some classes to be taken at LCC with a lower cost per credit hour.

Lane Community College provides numerous other educational and community-building services. Please sign up soon to join the League on February 5 to learn more about these services and to tour the new Health Sciences Center and the Long House. See all the details on page 3 of this newsletter.

PAT HELMERS - ONE OF A KIND

BY JANET CALVERT



My first memory of Pat was at a League “city/county corrections system” committee meeting sometime in 1971. It was a large committee, but Pat stood out in her signature overalls, twinkly eyes and, I later discovered, ability to remember details about everyone she met. I later was amazed that she not only remembered my children’s names and birthdates but that she remembered that type of detail about almost everyone she met.

Pat and I and other committee members spent hours together researching and collecting basic data about who was in jail, why they were there and for how long. This took place on the second floor of the old jail (a remodeled city maintenance garage). Finally in 1976, County voters approved bonds to build a new jail. In 1979 Pat and I, along with some other community members were “booked” into the new jail and stayed the night as a training exercise for the jail staff. We enjoyed weaving “the sleep over in the jail story” in conversations with

new League and community members to illustrate how League members did basic research.

As chair of the corrections committee in 1974, Pat’s comments in the [LWV of Central Lane County Annual Report](#) reveal her sense of fairness. “Some committee members

watched a jury being selected in a murder trial. I personally wish that more members had been able to do so as I feel it is very difficult to understand who is in jail without some background in the judicial system.” Pat had a keen sense of what was just and honest and didn’t hesitate to express her opinions but in a way that was not hurtful.

She became frustrated when people/voters didn’t inform themselves about voting. As a resident in Olive Plaza, she arranged for a League presentation about the ballot measures. She made sure that the room was set up just right and rounded up as many residents as possible to attend.

Pat was also a great cook and soup was her specialty. A 1983 [Eugene Register Guard](#) Entrée section featured Pat, “ladler of outstanding soups” and some of her soup recipes. So as a tribute to Pat, make a big pot of Mulligatawny soup, hearty, a little spicy, with subtle blend of flavors. That was Pat.

Pat Helmers’ Mulligatawny Soup

Register Guard, 4/23/83

- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 cup diced carrot
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1/3 cup butter or rendered chicken fat
- 2 Tablespoons flour
- 2 Tablespoons curry powder
- 8 cups chicken stock
- 1 large tart green apple peeled cored and diced
- 3/4 cup cooked white rice
- 3/4 cup diced cooked chicken
- 1/4 teaspoon ground thyme
- 1 13 ounce can evaporated milk

Garnish: Lemon wedges, toasted unsweetened coconut or toasted slivered almonds

In soup kettle, sauté onions, carrots and celery in butter until limp. Stir in flour and curry powder, stir and cook for 3 minutes. Add chicken stock and simmer for 30-45 minutes. Add apple, rice, chicken and thyme. Simmer for 15 minutes. Add evaporated milk and adjust seasonings. (Do not boil). Serves 6-8

BOOK DONATIONS GOING STRONG

Thank you to all who have donated books recently for our used book fund raiser. We have several bags full of books to take to Smith Family Book Store, and some of the more hard to find books and magazines have been selling well on eBay. Our total sales since July 1, 2010 are \$731.55. We appreciate your remembering the League.

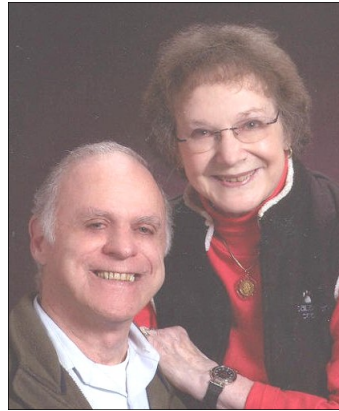
We don't turn down any of your donations, but please remember that the books and magazines cannot be damaged in any way. If there are pages missing or they have gotten damp at some time, we cannot sell them. We will always be sure to remove your name from them in a way that does not dam-

age the book or magazine. When the name has been cut out or marked with a magic marker, all we can do is drop that item in the recycle box at the library.

We can also sell your used DVDs, so those are welcome in the blue box at the office.

States where your books have gone since January 1 when sold on eBay are: Georgia, Virginia, California, New York, Nebraska, and Tennessee, so your books and magazines are finding good homes.

Give us a call if you'd like us to pick up books from your home. We will be happy to do so. Thank you.



Elleen and Louie Levy
541-343-7592

PLEASE GIVE THIS TO A FRIEND

As a member of the League, you will receive the monthly newsletter from LW LC (Argus), which has information about our monthly and unit meetings, and the quarterly newsletter from the Oregon League (Voter).

Mail the form and check payable to LWVLC to:

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Eugene, OR 97401

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$60 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Household (Two people at the same address) | \$90 |
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**CALENDAR
FEBRUARY**

NO BRIEFING OR UNITS

2 Action 9:30 am

5 Lane Community College Tour, 10 am

16 LWVLC Board, 1:30 pm

17 Third Thursday, 11:45 am

The LWVLC office will be closed
February 21, Monday, for Presidents' Day
The week of March 21-25 for Spring Break

Our Mission

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.