

ARGUS

League of Women Voters Lane County

Presidents Column

A LOT TO TALK ABOUT

Co-Presidents Sue Boyd & Susan Tavakolian

Inside this issue:

Units	2
Committees	3
Action	4 & 5
Getting to know...	6
Books	7
Calendar & Mission	8

Third Thursday Information

- February 16, 2012
- Buffet 11:30
Program 12:15
- Hilton Garden Inn,
3528 Gateway, Springfield
- The \$13 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 important for planning the event.

There was a lot to talk about at board meeting this month.

We were very happy to hear that Mary Keating agreed to chair the LWVUS Privatization Study consensus units. We will be getting started at February units with some background information which is included with this mailing. The purpose of the study is to identify issues to be considered in evaluating proposals to transfer federal, state or local government services, assets and/or functions to the private sector, not to decide whether privatization is inherently good or bad. More discussion and the consensus questions will follow at units in March.

It is a broad and complex topic, and if you are interested in more information you might go to the LWVUS web page on privatization <http://www.lwv.org/member-resources/privatization>

If you have trouble finding it, go to lwv.org and find the column labeled Members at the bottom of the page. Click on the link Advoc., Proj., & Studies, which will take you to the privatization materials. You might also be thinking about examples of privatization in Lane County and Oregon. (See an example on page two.)

The Action Committee's proposal for a fresh look at our Lane County Government position received strong support at Decem-

ber units. The next step is to develop a proposal for consideration at Annual Meeting in April. Whether or not the item is adopted as a topic for next year's program, the board decided that it wouldn't hurt to do a refresher course (for some) or introduction (for others) focusing on the basics of Lane County government. The county has been in the news frequently of late, and there will be some charter amendments on the ballot in May. Lane is a home rule county, which means that it has more power to change its government organization than non-home rule counties.

That May primary will be
(Continued on page 7)

Third Thursday - Can Our Cities Meet the Challenge of Sustainability?

There is increasing interest in sustainable development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. We love this place called home. But will it continue to be loveable? That's why the subject of our next Third Thursday will be sustainability.

Our speaker will be **Robert Liberty**, former Executive Director of 1000 Friends of Oregon who is now Executive Director of the Sustainable Cities Initiative at the University of Oregon. He will discuss what is happening, and what can happen in cities here and in cities far away that are striving for sustainability.



Nancie Fadeley

UNITS - PRIVATIZATION, PART 1

Units Chair – Anne Mehl

Monday, February 13

10 am - S. Willamette #1
90 Westbrook Way (block
beyond 46th) go R to
Edgewood Clubhouse by
pool
H: Barbara Greenley
684-9127
C: Anne Best 343-5124

2 pm

Harlow Road #2
394 Cherry Drive
H: Barbara French
485-9090
C: Kay Huston 607-8962

Tuesday, February 14

9:30 am
Coburg Road #3
2135 Rocky Lane
H: Dorothy Cruickshank
342-2577
C: Punky Smith 844-9277

4 pm

S.W. Eugene #4
2365 W. 23rd Avenue
H: Pat McDaniels
343-4728
C: Sally Weston 484-4404

On-Line Unit # 6

Charlcie Kaylor -
charlcie@efn.org

Wednesday, February 15

10 am East Eugene #5
555 E. 15th
Central Presbyterian
H: Stephanie Winsor
342- 8243
C: Diana Grandberry
342-8402

Noon

Cottage Grove/Creswell #8
Cottage Grove LCC
H: Gayle Downing 942-1858
C: Dian Missar 942-7676

Friday, February 17

9:30 am - Cascade Manor/
Cascade View Room #9
65 W 30th Avenue
C: Lorraine Abbott 434- 4107
Frank Carlton 434-4140

Unit Briefing Wednesday

February 8
Atrium, 10th & Olive
Sloat room - 3 pm

PRIVATIZATION – A PERSONAL LOOK

I am especially eager to see the results of January and February's Unit discussions. I work at an employee owned business which provides "government services". Unimaginatively named The Building Department, we offer services to small jurisdictions in Oregon and Idaho.

We serve most of the small incorporated cities in Lane County with building code administration and have worked for some more than two decades.

Our founder, Emile Mortier, was approached by a handful of cities to perform this service after he left as the City of Eugene's Building Official in 1973. Those cities

wished to achieve control and coordination with their other city departments - planning, engineering, public works, etc.

You may be familiar with LCOG which serves cities in much the same way by providing planning, legal, financial, and other administrative services.

Both fill a niche in the market with qualified people the jurisdiction would not be able to afford to offer as full time positions. For instance, to become an electrical inspector one must work for five years as a journeyman electrician, then four years as a "signing" supervisor before one can take the rigorous test to become an inspector. Such highly qualified

people can command a considerable wage working in the trade. The trades people rightfully demand the inspectors checking their work have a high level of expertise. So you can see it would well nigh impossible to find such a person to do the work for a wage a small city could afford. Thus the market for such a business as ours.

Leaguers, I'm sure, will take into account all the facets and ramifications in the look at privatization. I look forward to learning a great deal as we consider this topic of such personal interest to me.

Charlcie Kaylor

VOTER SERVICE

Flo Alvergue & Barbara French, Co-chairs

The wheels are turning on the voter service front as we head into the primary and general election seasons of 2012. The Wayne Morse Ranch Board has asked the League to co-sponsor a Speakers' Forum in late summer at the Morse Park as we did in 2008. We asked candidates in local and state races to

participate and had several to show up. The League's policy of no "empty-chair" debates is still in effect. We want to extend equal time to candidates in a contested race, but all must attend the event.

There are also possibilities of our co-sponsoring

candidate debates with Eugene City Club and the Springfield Chamber of Commerce, as we have done in the past.

If voter service is your interest, please stay tuned for more opportunities to volunteer in this important League mission.

Flo Alvergue



Wayne Morse Historical Park

THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE IS LOOKING FOR SUGGESTIONS

Veronika Walton, Chair

Please help us by suggesting LWVLC members who would be candidates for the position of vice president, program chair, membership chair, chair of the nominating committee and two off-board members for that committee for next year. And of course you can nominate yourself.

We on the nominating committee welcome all your suggestions. Please send them to any of us, either by e-mail, by phone or in person.

Merle Bottge 541-687-1777
mbottge@hotmail.com
 Barbara Carter 554-2944
babskc@comcast.net

Kay Huston 607-8962
nabbya@gmail.com

Phyllis Loobey 687-9223

Veronika Walton 344-1565
guvwalton@msn.com

Thank you very much.

Veronika Walton

LWV of Lane County Board & Off Board Roster 2011-12

Co-Presidents

SUE BOYD & SUSAN TAVAKOLIAN

Secretary

MERLE BOTTGE

Treasurer

PHYLLIS LOOBEY

Action

KAPPY EATON & PAT HOCKEN

Argus Editor

CHARLCIE KAYLOR

Finance

JANET CALVERT

Historian

GAYLE DOWNING

Membership

SUE WIELESEK

Public Relations

FRAN BOEHNER

Units

ANNE MEHL

Voters Service

FLO ALVERGUE & BARBARA FRENCH

THANK YOU

The budget committee for this year will be **Mary Keating**, chair; and continuing members **Barbara Greenley**, **Pat Hocken**, and **Phyllis Loobey**. We owe a special thank you to **Sharon Kimble** who has chaired the committee for several years but needed to take a break. We appreciate her work and are grateful for the time she contributed to this important task.

Sue Boyd

ACTION – Kappy Eaton & Pat Hocken, Co-chairs

State of the State

Fiscal Policy:

The revenue forecast will be presented to the House and Senate Revenue committees February 6 at which time we will stop speculating and have a better idea of what resources are or are not available for the rest of the 2011-12 biennium. The December 2011 forecast added \$51 million to the already projected \$100 million shortfall in September. The Joint Ways and Means committee is working on how to rebalance the budget with those shortfalls which must be accomplished in the 2012 Annual session. How much in reserves should be used and what further cuts must be made. The human services needs are way more than money available. The mood is doom and gloom, with heavy cuts forecast for social services along with protecting K-12 education. The even split in the House does not bode well for getting revenue from tax expenditure revisions or favorite programs.

Issues before the Revenue Committee include

- Amendments to the 2011 senior property tax deferral program (change two year reporting to three years, require financial institution to notify borrower of penalty for getting a reverse mortgage, etc); the program is in the red and had to borrow money from the Common School Fund;
- change central assessment tax statutes, exclude tribal lands;
- one percent tax on providers of residential care and services to cover costs (DHS) for medical assistance for providers of residential care and services, and one

percent tax on transient lodging providers with specifics re tourism expenditures;

- remove "jobs creation report" from tax credits allocations; and
- business energy tax credit auction.

Details to come in March after the session sine die (either Feb. 29 or March 6). Look for the LWVOR Action Team Legislative Reports (first and last) and Action Alerts during session.

Election Issues:

- The US Postal Service proposal to cut out regional area facilities in Bend, Eugene and Pendleton (most Oregon mail only to Portland) will interfere tremendously with the Oregon vote by mail system. Ballots would have to be both mailed out and returned with more than two days added; use of additional drop boxes in rural areas with no post offices (security, pick up, etc), change of addresses, and more.
- Adding another party beside a candidate's name creates ballot size issues - requires statute amendment
- Ballot destruction unused, spoiled, etc. requires statute amendment
- Online information (ORESTAR) for Voters Pamphlet photos, etc causing implementation problems
- Amendments needed in the special election recount bill passed in 2011
- HAVA (Help America Vote Act) Task Force to study and review statewide compliance with HAVA requirements requires legislation

Women's Issues:

- Toxics Disclosure for

Healthy Kids Act 2012 will be introduced LC244

- Sex Trafficking in US: Interdisciplinary Conference - Corvallis OSU February 16-17 conferences@oregonstate.edu
- Sexual Assault Protection Order Legislation will be introduced LC95
- Phillip Morris has agreed to pay Oregon \$56 million in punitive damages and interest - 14 years battle over the death of a Portland smoker. The money is legally to go to a crime victim's compensation fund, but that would flood the fund and the Legislature will decide what to do with the excess. Watch out for that debate!

Higher Education:

Oregon Education Investment Board (see the November and December *Argus*) Major legislation proposed by the Governor will affect Oregon public education at all levels for decades to come. While the League has no specific positions on most of the recommendations, as individuals we should weigh in, particularly on the issues of higher education governance. The Legislature will be debating these recommendations during February so please follow.

Mental Health:

- HB 3650 (2011) set forth the health system transformation work to develop Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs). At the same time, the Addictions and Mental Health Division is setting up a separate system change to affect the county government's role in providing services for addicted and mentally ill persons not covered by the Oregon Health Plan, a total restructure of the system. I

Next Action committee meeting on Wednesday, February 1st 9:30 a.m. at Kappy Eaton's, 175 S Garden Way All members are welcome.

Action - continued

will detail this in March, but you can review it at www.oregon.gov/OHA/mentalhealth/system-change/index.shtml.

Natural Resources:

• Caldera Springs (HB 3347) was hotly discussed last year and did not pass. However, it appears to be on the agenda for February. The measure would allow the development of 600+ acres in Deschutes

County as a destination resort. However, the developer would be exempt from any of the environmental restrictions or regulations normally imposed on such developments. The League will be opposing this legislation. • LC 32 (legislative counsel draft) addresses a federal grant for wetlands which would be very useful, but is not being favorably considered.

• Adequate funding for LUBA (Land Use Board of Appeals) in LC230 is also threatened.

Legislators have full plates for this abbreviated Annual session. How they will handle/balance the critical decisions regarding the budget, ballot issues before the Primary, human services/less resources for a growing number of needy, a split

House with increasingly different opinions - is yet to be determined. The LWVOR Action Team will be in Salem, sending out a first and last week Legislative Report, with Action Alerts in between.

I hope many of you will attend the Legislative Day February 7 to hear the Governor, ask questions, and see the committees at work.

Local Action Update

Notice two of the items below have been reported upon numerous times. We are still in the information gathering and studying mode because the timelines for these governmental decisions have been pushed farther into 2012.

Envision Eugene This process of planning for Eugene's growth during the next 20 years continues with several City Council work sessions held in January and scheduled for February. The City Manager is expected to make a complete recommendation in March, which will be followed by community forums in March and April, and ultimately by the City Council adoption of a plan. So the League's time for input will be here soon (at least that's what is anticipated.)

The City Manager's recommendation will deal with issues such as the sufficiency of land within the urban growth boundary for industrial, commercial, and residential uses; geographic areas suitable for any necessary expansion of the boundary; redesignation of land now zoned for low density

residential; and incentives for commercial and multi-family development.

West Eugene EmX

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) expects to release the Environmental Assessment in early February. This release will begin a 45-day comment period for the public to review and comment. Lane Transit District (LTD) plans to hold open houses during this period to allow opportunities for citizens to ask questions and provide input. After the comment period, LTD will draft a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) to submit to FTA. Finally, if the FONSI is approved, the Eugene City Council and LTD Board will be asked to reaffirm the project and determine if it will be built. This final step is not expected until May or June. The League intends to comment and testify before the Council and the Board.

In order to better understand the issues, the Action committee has submitted some specific questions to LTD staff that pertain to ridership, property acquisition, underground utilities, traffic impacts, improvements for bicycles and pedestrians, construction spending, and other

issues. Look for some of the staff responses in next month's ARGUS.

Affordable Housing

Because of my interest in housing, I attended the Monday afternoon unit to hear Terry McDonald, executive director of St. Vincent de Paul (St. Vinnie's), describe the work of his agency.

Terry described the philosophy that has guided the development of affordable housing in this community including a commitment to quality new construction that is geographically dispersed and not different in appearance from unsubsidized housing. He recounted successes including building 23 housing projects through the use of federal low income tax credits; they are located throughout the community and contain 850 dwelling units.

He described the challenges in meeting the overall need for low and moderate cost housing and the need for housing for specialized populations such as returning military veterans, people with mental illness, those with drug and/or alcohol addictions, or a combina-

tion of any of these traits. St. Vinnie's waiting list for its housing units is closed when it reaches 600 families. Also the waiting list for programs of the Housing and Community Services Agency of Lane County often has 1000 applicants.

He told us about some other initiatives. St. Vinnie's has bought two mobile home parks to provide housing for single parent women and their children. The agency has retrofitted 400 units with solar hot water heaters. They are working to bring support services to Oakridge, including a DMV office. They are working on projects with Food for Lane County to increase protein in food boxes. His agency now recycles block Styrofoam and packing peanuts in addition to deconstructing discarded mattresses, thus providing jobs and reducing landfill waste.

All in all it is inspiring what has been accomplished but sobering to think of the continuing enormous need. Be on the alert for opportunities for the League to work on housing issues.

Pat Hocken

GETTING TO KNOW...

Janell Sorensen is a native Oregonian, born in



Portland and residing in Salem through her high school years. She began her college career at Oregon State University and continued at the University of Oregon, completing her bachelor's degree in elementary education and becoming certified to teach in special education. In the middle of all of this, Janell lived for two years in Heidelberg, Germany, where she attended the University of Heidelberg and began her introductory courses in education. She was introduced to the Montessori system at that time and developed an interest in early childhood education.

After teaching 4th grade in Sherwood for a time, Janell later did substitute work in elementary schools. Most of her career was as a preschool teacher at the Big Little School in Eugene, where she worked for 16 years. In the 90s she worked as a teacher in the Head Start program.

Currently, Janell works with her husband Bill Sullivan in operating Navillus Press. Their company

publishes a variety of genres, but books and articles on hiking and outdoor activities are best known. When Janell is not involved with the business, traveling, or spending time at their coastal cabin, she enjoys landscape painting with watercolor and acrylics.

Janell and Bill have two children. Their daughter teaches linguistics in Queensland, Australia, and their son is working on a post-doctoral degree in astrophysics at the University of Washington.

Janell was introduced to the League by her mother, Beverly Sorensen, who was a member of the Salem League. She particularly appreciates the in-depth analyses of political issues provided by the League and trusts them to be unbiased.

Patricia Lesh lives and enjoys her League membership in Cottage Grove, where she currently is scheduled to lead her unit's discussion on government privatization programs.



Born in Minnesota Patricia came at a young age to

Oregon, where she completed all of her schooling. She graduated from high school in Eugene and later earned a bachelor's degree in history from Portland State College and a master's degree in psychology at the University of Oregon.

She put all of this education to use teaching history, English, and reading at the high school level and counseling at a junior high school. She has worked with her husband, Terry, a Ph.D. in counseling psychology, as a vocational and rehabilitation counselor. Their son John is a research scientist at Oregon Research Institute, focusing his work on depression and education.

Patricia particularly appreciates the League's "scientific" approach of studying and speaking to issues related to government. She believes that the League provides materials and insights that help people learn and think about government.

Patricia and her husband have a blended family of six children and six grandchildren. She especially enjoys kayaking, hiking, walking on the beach, and generally being out of doors.

Welcome to the League, Janell and Patricia.

Jeanne Armstrong

BRISK BOOK SALES

We have had some nice donations this month, and the fact that you are remembering the fundraiser for the League is very much appreciated.

Also, the "mini-book sale" that has been occurring at the 3rd Thursday lunch-

eon each month seems to be catching on. The one in January brought in \$16.00.

The total for sales this month amounted to \$235.75. This brings the total since July 1, 2011 to \$1,362.10.

Remember that books can be left in the blue box in the office, or we can pick them up at your house. Just give us a call.

Thank you,
Elleen and Louie Levy
541-343-7592



Presidents' Column - cont.

here before we know it. It looks like we will have several contested races for city and county positions, and we are already receiving inquiries about Candidates' forums and other kinds of Voter Service events. LWVOR will be putting information on its Education Fund site, VoteOregon www.VoteOregon.org, part of its new web site redesign. Take a look at it - it includes information on a variety of events and offers voter guides and a link to the Secretary of State's online voter registration page.

Flo Alvergue and Barbara French are our Voter Service co-chairs. If

you would be interested in working on a VS project or event, please let them know.

Both the state and national Leagues have recently redesigned their web pages, and we are considering doing the same. Janet Calvert, Charlcie Kaylor, Susan Tavakolian, Phyllis Loobey and Becky Gladstone met recently to discuss the audience, message, cost and game plan for developing an improved LWVLC website. The board is hoping to reach a decision by late spring.

In the meantime, we are very grateful to Becky Gladstone, the LWVOR

secretary and a member of the state LWV technology committee, for continuing to serve as our interim web master. She has added some new features to our existing page, including links to LWVOR and LWVUS Action Alerts and hopes have local ones as well.

One final item - the fruit sale was a huge success, netting \$3,072, according to Janet Calvert, who chaired it. Based on her report, the board voted to repeat the project next year.

Sue Boyd

Thanks to our
2011-12 Directory
Advertisers

Lane Forest Products

Baker Bay Bead Co.

Eugene Hotel

Mortier Engineering

Osher Lifelong Learning
Institute of U of O

Aayres Appliance Repair

Long's Meat Market

Studio d Hair salon

Unique Properties

Please give this
to a friend



As a member of the League, you will receive the monthly newsletter from LWVLC (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:
LWVLC
338 West 11th Ave, Suite
101 Eugene, OR 97401

League of Women Voters Lane County

Membership Form

- Individual \$63
- Household (Two people at the same address) \$94.50
- Student \$20
- Individual after February 1st \$32

Name

Address

Phone

Email (for League use only)



League of Women Voters Lane County

336 West 11th Ave., Suite 1
Eugene, OR 97401

Phone: 541-343-7917
league@lwwlc.org

NON-PROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
EUGENE, OR
PERMIT NO. 223

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

- 1, Action Committee – 9:30 am (page 4)
- 7, Day at the Legislature
- 8, Unit Briefing, **Day change** (page 2)
- 13-17, Units (page 2)
- 16, Third Thursday (page 1)
- 22, Board meeting, 1:30 to 3:30 pm

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.

The League office is open

Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 11 am to 1:30 pm.

In February the office will be closed February 20 for Presidents' Day.