

ARGUS



League of Women Voters Lane County

ARGUS February 2013

Presidents' Column – Sue Boyd & Susan Tavakolian, Co-Presidents

Ta Da!!

Cue the drum roll and fireworks - our new web page is about to make its entrance. Completely revamped, it uses the original address, lwvlc.org. Though the actual launch date could not be confirmed at the time of publication, it should be up and running within a few days, if it's not already.

Webmaster Becky Gladstone describes the new site as easier to use with a uniform theme. For example, clicking on the logo on the upper left of every page will return you to the home page. We can include much more about the League, our activities and publications

than before. And it is easier to update and add new information. However, if you look for something and cannot find it, Becky asks that you let her know. Someone else might be interested in the same information and she wants to be able to add the things that people want to see. The same is true for errors and outdated information - please let her know. If you really want to make her happy, offer photos, vintage or current, that help illustrate our League's story. You can reach her through the LWVLC email, league@lwvlc.org.

It took teamwork - lots of it - to get the new site ready. Becky and Janet Calvert led

the effort, devoting many hours to the project over the last year. They worked with League member Liz Cawood and her staff at Cawood Communications developing the design. As Becky noted in her announcement of the launch at Third Thursday, we owe **Fred Andrews**, our original webmaster, our gratitude for creating and maintaining our inaugural web page.

The debut of the new web page begins another chapter in our League's evolving story. Our 93rd birthday as an organization is this month. As you may know, in February of 1920 the victory

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February 14

Lane County
Fairgrounds

11:30 Buffet - \$15
(beverage included)
Beverage only - \$3
Tip is included.

12:15 Free program

Reservations very,
very important.
(541-343-7917) or
league@lwvlc.org

Third Thursday by Nancie Fadeley

The State Legislature has convened and is considering a number of issues related to higher education, like funding and governance. And many of us are wondering if our children and grandchildren will be able to afford college.

The State of Public Higher Education

Our speaker will be

Dr. Michael Gottfredson,

the new president of the University of Oregon.

He will discuss challenges facing higher education and its future.



UNITS CHOICE for FEBRUARY

South Willamette #1 will meet February 11 at 11 am. for a tour of the **Fern Ridge Public Library in Veneta** followed



by lunch at Our Daily Bread. Call coordinator Anne Best (541-343-5124) for more information.

Harlow Road #2 will be joined by **Coburg Road #3** for a visit to **Western Shelter Systems** February 11 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. This Eugene company, located



at 830 Wilson Street, "manufactures turn-key portable shelters that are used by a variety of businesses and government agencies around the world, including military, police and fire agencies, hospitals, the federal Centers for Disease Control and disaster-relief agencies, such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA," according to a *Register-Guard* article. The company has three basic lines of products: fully equipped tent shelters, clothing for firefighters and emergency responders, and customized trailers for emergency, commercial and military operations. The tour is limited to 20 people at a time, so members of the units and other Leaguers must sign up by calling Mary Keating, first come, first served, at 541-344-4889.

Southwest Eugene #4 will meet February 5 at 4 p.m. in the first floor Common Room at The Tate, 1375 Olive St., Eugene. **Nora Cronin from St. Vincent de Paul** will be the featured speaker. For more information, call Sally Weston at 541-484-4404.



Dan Bryant, Senior Minister at First Christian Church, will be the speaker for **East Eugene #5** - 10am on February 13 at Central Presbyterian Church 555 East 15th. He is highly involved with the homeless and will speak about such items as the Opportunity Village, Egan Warming Centers, and huts. If you'd like to attend, please let Stephanie Winsor (541-342-8243) know by Monday, February 11.



Cottage Grove/Creswell #8 will learn more about current issues in Oregon forestry and has invited **Cristina Hubbard of Forest Web** to discuss the O&C Trust Conservation and Jobs Act and the Governor's timber harvest panel's recommendations. The meeting will be February 13 at 2:30-4:00 pm at the Creswell Community Center, 99 South 1st (please note new location). The Creswell Community Center is right downtown, across Oregon Avenue from the Library, just down from the corner of Oregon Ave and 1st Street. Call Dian Missar, coordinator, at 541-942-7676 for more information.

Cascade Manor #9 will meet February 26 at 7 p.m. in the auditorium at Cascade Manor.

Terry McDonald, executive director of St. Vincent de Paul Society of Lane County will



discuss the history and programs of his organization. For more information, call Frank Carlton (541-434-4140).

Charlcie Kaylor - Acting Units Chair
686-0124

Unit Briefing
No briefing
this month.

VOTER SERVICE – Flo Alvergue & Miriam Aiken, Action Co-Chairs

The Voter Service committee has been hard at work researching and updating contact information on our elected officials for ***They Represent You***, known by members as TRY. Miriam Aiken has done the data entry in recent weeks, and TRY will be printed soon. Thanks to Sue Boyd, Susan Tavakolian, Merle Bottge, Miriam Aiken, and Flo Alvergue for doing research on officials and the various municipalities in Lane County. Miriam enlisted help from Stephanie Winsor, Barbara Carter, and Barbara Bryan who met to proof the data.

Our Lane County League was well represented with 17 members going to Salem January 17th for ***Legislative Process Day*** at the Capitol. Organizers were the LWVOR Action Committee, AAUW of Oregon, the Oregon Commission for Women, and Oregon NOW. We heard presentations by **House Speaker Tina Kotek, Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum, and Jada Rupley, System Director of the Oregon Early Learning Council.** Dorothy Cruickshank, Lois Taylor, Jennifer Haynes, Veronika and Gerry Walton, and Flo Alvergue enjoyed a tour of the Capitol after the day's events. (see photo - page 8)

The next ***Naturalization Ceremony*** at the Federal Courthouse in Eugene will be Friday, February 8th, at 10:30 AM. League members volunteer to encourage voter registration, hand out materials, and often serve refreshments, provided by the Court. It's a joyous occasion for new citizens and their families and friends. If you'd like to attend, please call the office.



Presidents' Column

(Continued from page 1)

convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association was held in Chicago following the passage of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote. The Suffrage Association dissolved on one day, and the League of Women Voters was formed on the next.

Over the years many procedural changes have been made in the way League program is defined, adopted and structured, but through all the changes the basic concept of study-member agreement-action has remained constant.

Oregon had a state League from the beginning, but it took until 1939 for Eugene to form a successful League. Oddly, units, which we always refer to as "the heart of the League," were not part of the picture. Rigorous study groups and general meetings were the norm. However, World War II gasoline rationing made smaller neighborhood group meetings more realistic and members liked them. Eugene officially adopted the unit system with a by-laws change in 1949, following action by the LWVUS Convention year earlier.

Today, through the LWVUS Membership/Leadership Development project, we are being encouraged to think of new groups and activities that could give members more ways to participate in the League. Now we have an example in our own League. Some innovative members of our South Willamette Unit 1 have decided to form an interest group to learn more about the redesign of Willamette Street and will attend a community meeting later in February before deciding what to do next. (See page 9 for more information.)

Sue Boyd

LWV of Lane County
Board & Off Board
Roster 2012-13

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SUE BOYD &
SUSAN TAVAKOLIAN

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MARY KEATING

Secretary
MERLE BOTTGE

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ANNE MEHL

Voters Service FLO
ALVERGUE &
MIRIAM AIKEN

ACTION – Kappy Eaton & Pat Hocken, Co-Chairs

STATE OF THE STATE

ACTION

COMMITTEE

February 5,

9:30 am

175 S. Garden Way

Electoral College: Twenty Minutes of Fame

Across the nation on December 17, 2012, the Electoral College delegates from all 50 states met in their state capitols to cast their ballots for the President of the United States. Each state has the same number of votes as the total of their Congressional delegations. In Oregon, the seven Democrat Electoral

College delegates gathered with the Secretary of State and the Director of Elections in the Senate chamber of the Capitol to cast their ballots and certify the election of Barack Obama. Each political party in Oregon that had a presidential candidate on the ballot was able to nominate seven potential delegates who only became eligible when their party's candidate won the election. The oath by the delegates to uphold

the U.S. Constitution was administered by the Oregon Chief Justice. The ceremony took only 20 minutes and involved the signing of a number of papers, including the ballot and the certification of election, but it symbolizes our history. With the upcoming discussion about National Popular Vote during the 2013 legislative session, how the Electoral College works will be highlighted.

KE

Ballot Access: Vote by Mail Shines

Long lines, restrictions in registering, fewer polling places, deliberate misinformation, even harassment were part of the elections

process in many states prior to and during the November 6 national election. In Florida, an investigation just released indicates that about 200,000 voters gave up and did not vote because the lines were so long.

In Oregon, with the vote by mail system, none of those deterrents to voting occur. Another good reason to live here!

KE



February 4: Ready, Set, Go for the 77th Oregon Assembly

Convening for just three days on January 14, as required by the Oregon Constitution (second Monday of the odd-numbered years), members of the Legislature were sworn in and 1200 legislative concepts (LCs) became bill drafts. Usually there will be about 4000 bills before the House and Senate during the 165 day session which will begin in earnest on February 4. Far fewer will have public hearings and pass into law. Following are some of the issues which will be considered. Details of those which will be followed by the

League will be noted in the Argus in monthly updates.

Elections: There will be several proposals from the Elections Division and the Secretary of State such as universal voter registration, review of the process for securing unused, spoiled, returned ballots, voter registration for 16 and 17 year olds, revision of overseas voting language, and electronic filing of all Voters Pamphlet statements.

Ethics, campaign finance and Initiative reform: Bills are expected in these areas after a hiatus in 2011. The Legislature will have bills calling for a Memorial to Congress requesting action to amend the U.S. Constitution in the Citi-

zens United decision which granted personhood to corporations and allows unlimited campaign funding. LWVUS has not taken a position regarding this issue, but opposes an amendment at this time so LWVOR will be only monitoring this measure.

National Popular Vote: The League has NPV passage as one of its top priorities for this session. Enactment of the Interstate Compact by enough states to elect the presidential candidate who receives the majority of votes in all 50 states will ensure that every vote counts. LWVOR would join with the

(Continued on page 6)

LOCAL ACTION

Local Government

Funding Issues

There are two local government funding issues that the LWVLC is following at this time.

Inadequate funding for **Lane County** services has been a perennial issue of concern due to the loss of federal revenues from timber harvests and related payments. There have been several attempts to raise additional revenue from local sources. The Board of Commissioners is currently considering submitting a local option property levy to the voters in

2013 to raise additional funds for some public safety services such as the jail and sheriff's deputies.

The **City of Eugene** is also experiencing a widening gap between revenues and expenses though the City's fiscal situation is not as dire as the County's. The City is projecting a \$6 million shortfall for the 2013-14 fiscal year which begins in July. Major causes of this increasing gap are the general economic decline since 2008 and its negative impact on property tax revenue now and in future years.

The City Manager has proposed four steps to address

the situation:

- 1) economic prosperity to grow the property tax base
- 2) cost control to lower costs and find efficiencies with minimal service impacts
- 3) a new city service fee.
- 4) using storm water fees for park maintenance has been placed on hold for additional consideration.

Item #3 is a proposal for a flat monthly fee of \$10 for residences and businesses; it would be referred to the voters for adoption.

The League expects to submit comments in the near future to city and county elected officials on their respective proposals.

WHAT AND WHO IS THE ACTION COMMITTEE? – Pat Hocken, Action Co-chair

A new member recently suggested to me that new members (and maybe not so new members) would benefit from learning more about the committee structure of the League of Women Voters of Lane County. What follows is a brief primer on the Action Committee.

The Action Committee is a permanent committee of the LWVLC. Its role is to track the activities of local governments in Lane County, identify any significant activities which fall under the purview of the League's statements of positions, consider whether League comment to government officials would promote a good decision or outcome, recommend potential testimony or other actions to the LWVLC board, and work to

implement the board's decision. Many state and local Leagues use such a committee in support of their advocacy mission.

The Action committee usually meets during the first week of each month to discuss current issues and the appropriate League response, if any. Outside experts are sometimes invited to meetings to provide background information on a topic. In recent months, for example, a Eugene planning department staff member briefed the committee on potential changes to the mix of single and multi-family housing and a staff person from the land use advocacy group 1000 Friends of Oregon spoke to us about water and regional planning issues.

Participants on our local Action committee include the co-presidents, the co-chairs of the Action committee, and several other interested League members. Any member is welcome to attend the meetings - that is why the date and time are published in each month's Argus newsletter. Any member is also welcome to contact the co-presidents or the action co-chairs to find out if the League is doing something about an issue. Attendees at Action committee will often volunteer to do internet research or contact other sources to learn more about a proposal. If you are interested in participating, please contact me.

State Action cont.

(Continued from page 4)

eight states and the District of Columbia that have already endorsed and passed NPV. LWVUS has adopted a position in support.

Fiscal Policy: The December revenue forecast for the 2013-15 biennium called for a possible \$236 million shortfall to maintaining current levels of state programs and services. The Governor's Proposed Budget seeks to provide additional funding for education and healthcare by cutting back on PERS cost of living raises and revising mandatory sentencing to reduce the prison population. All tax credits which sunset this year will be reviewed by a tax credits committee, and the joint ways

port is the earned income tax credit (EITC) for the working poor. How the Governor's proposal will fare is unknown. Early indications from lawmakers indicates opposition on several issues.

Women and Families: Priorities for the Women's Health and Wellness Alliance include (1) domestic violence assault and human trafficking; (2) Economic and employment issues; (3) Health care such as dense breast screening coverage and seeking prohibition of some co-payments for drugs during pregnancy; (4) Budget issues such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) by increasing coverage to 36 months; and (5) early prenatal care.

Natural Resources: Issues of concern include (1) increased funding for natural resource agencies included in the Governor's budget; (2) ten year energy plan for efficient, renewable energy, and infrastructure/transportation; (3) integrated water strategy, Columbia River water, water rights management fee; (4) septic tank inspections; (5) wetlands permits; (6) marine reserves; (7) rural economies (county problems and (8) regional land use review.

Social Policy: This area also has a full plate of issues that includes TANF (see Women's Health and Wellness), state mental health hospital, seniors and people with disabilities, developmental disabilities, growing case loads, and numerous public safety concerns including youth and prisons.

The LWVOR Action Committee will be following all of these areas and making decisions on which issues will have priority status calling for testimony and action alerts and those which will require monitoring only. We belong to several active coalitions meeting regularly in the capitol during the session and increase our knowledge and ability to act. *The committee will be meeting at 10:30 every Monday in the Lobby Center Conference Room in the capitol.*

KE



and means committee will indicate how much revenue needs to be recovered through revision or repeal of those credits. There will be strong efforts to keep many of those breaks. Criteria for evaluating include social value purpose, goals, and record of progress/accomplishment. Among those we will probably sup-

Higher Education: University governance will be discussed based on the measure forwarded by the special committee on university governance in November. At stake is the ability of the University of Oregon and Portland State University to have internal boards and other state universities to apply for them. The process for establishing such a board is provided, but the details regarding board membership and numbers are left for legislative decisions. There is expected to be vigorous opinions expressed.

GETTING TO KNOW... By Jeanne Armstrong

New member **Linda Ferdowsian** is a fourth-generation Oklahoman who was introduced to the west coast when her youngest daughter chose Santa Cruz, California as a destination for higher education. Linda taught high-school mathematics for twenty years in Oklahoma and quickly found a similar position in Fairfield, California, where she taught for an additional seven years. She earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Oklahoma, a master's degree in Secondary School Administration at Central State College (now the University of Central Oklahoma), and completed graduate studies in curriculum and supervision at Oklahoma State University. Her credentials allowed her to work as a substitute administrator as needed in California, but her greater interests were in classroom teaching and curriculum development.

Linda has continued her commitment to education through tutoring math and English as a Second Language at the Lane Community college downtown campus. She works with AARP as a tax aide.

Two of Linda's children live in Norman and represent the fifth generation of her family in Oklahoma. A third child lives in Virginia. In spite of distances, family visits are frequent.

Linda and her husband Fred are gardeners - she of rhododendrons, azaleas, and flowers in general, and he of vegetables - a pleasantly complementary plan. They enjoy walking along the river near their home with their Australian Shepherd-mix dog, one of two rescue dogs they have raised.

Linda is an avid reader, favoring non-fiction that focuses on history and the political background of various historical material.

She is "getting her feet wet" in the League and has enjoyed a number of Third Thursday events and Tuesday-morning unit meetings.

It is great to have you among us, Linda.

New member **Laurie Granger**, a New York native, was first acquainted with the League of Women Voters in Albany, New York in the 1970s and is pleased to become re-acquainted here in Lane County. Laurie and her husband Bob, a retired Methodist minister, moved to Eugene almost three years ago to be near their children and grandchildren.

Laurie grew up in Kingston, New York and completed her early school years there. She received her undergraduate and graduate degrees in Guidance and Counseling at the State University of New York at Albany and completed post-

graduate studies in Marriage and Family Therapy at the Family Institute of Westchester in White Plains, NY.

As a requirement of her master's program at SUNY Albany, Laurie did research on the need for mental health services in her hometown of Kingston and wrote a proposal on how to provide therapy to families without health insurance or who could not afford needed services. Her proposal was funded by United Way as well as the New York State Division for Youth, and Laurie subsequently directed that program and other family based programs for twenty-two years. Laurie also worked as a private practitioner and as a volunteer teacher of a counseling course for men incarcerated in a medium security prison in Woodbourne, New York.

Laurie served as President of the New York State American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AMFT) and represented the state at national meetings.

Laurie's "passion" is creating rock gardens and quilts. She enjoys being a member of the Chapel Belles at First United Methodist Church in Eugene. She literally "stands for peace" weekly as a member of Eugene's Women in Black group.

Laurie's life experiences bring a breadth of perspectives to our local League.

Linda and Laurie - welcome to the League.



Linda Ferdowsian



Laurie Granger

Some of the
LWVOR Action
Committee at
Legislative
Process Day
1/17/13



Left to right Karen Nibler (Social Policy), Peggy Lynch (Natural Resources), Kappy Eaton (Governance), Alice Bartelt (Action Committee Chair).



January 25 marked the birthday of our first national president, Maud Wood Park (standing 3rd from the right) and thus the first League leader to rise to that challenge. She had steered the women's suffrage amendment through Congress in the last two years before ratification and liked nothing better than legislative work.

Our next Third Thursday (Second Thursday this time) will celebrate State of Oregon's 154th birthday and LWVUS's 93st.

What say we wear vintage costumes at the luncheon to honor past Leaguers!!!

A REMINDER ABOUT BOOKS...

We hope you will remember to donate your used books to the League when you are finished reading them. We accept either hard bound or paperback books as long as they are not damaged. You can leave them in the blue

box at the office, or you can give us a call to have them picked up at your home.

Thank you to all who have remembered over the holidays and left books at the office. We made \$49 selling

the books you have donated during the last month. That brings our total for the year since July 1 to \$697.90.

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



WILLAMETTE STREET INTEREST GROUP – Lois Taylor

Several members of Unit One are particularly interested in the redesign of south Willamette Street. We see the complexity of improving the street for pedestrians, bikes, cars, and parking, and we care that it be done well. Our first plan is to attend the next community meeting about the Willamette Street project on February 27, at 6 pm, at South Eugene High School. After that meeting, we'll discuss what we learned and what we might want to do next.

We welcome interested participants.



SOUTH WILLAMETTE Street Improvement Plan

Thanks to our
2012-13 Directory
Advertisers

Lane Forest Products

Baker Bay Bead Co.

Eugene Hotel Retirement

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 \$65
- Household (Two people at the same address) \$97.50
- Student \$20
- Individual after February 1st \$32

Name

Address

Phone

Email (for League use only)



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CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

- 5, 9:30 am, Action Committee – page 4
- 4 – 27, Units Choice – page 2
- 8, 10:30 am, Naturalization Ceremony – page 3
- 14, Third (Second, this month) Thursday – page 1
- 20, Board meeting, 1:30 to 3:30
- 22, Argus deadline – midnight
- 27, Willamette Street Interest Group – page 9

The League office is open
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
11 am to 1:30 pm

*Closed February 18 for
President’s Day*

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.