Thursday September 14, 2017

“Looking for the Adult in the Room”

This is Rogue Valley League’s approach to good governance, issue transparency, civil discourse, and responsible problem-solving.

We will map out the strategies to achieve League advocacy goals for the coming year with the Action Committee, the Observer Corps, the Local Government Study Update Committee, and Voters Service recommendations. As our new Action Committee Chair, Dr. Barbara Klein will introduce the plans and people involved. There is also a four-minute film from LWVUS on “A Transformational Journey”.

11:30am OEA Bldg
2495 South Pacific Highway
Medford

Soup, salad, bread, and tea/coffee provided.

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Presidents Message......

Our new LWVRV year begins with our September meeting. The Board will supply soup, salad, bread, coffee, and tea. Members are invited to bring a bit of dessert. Also on the menu are a variety of appetizers - metaphorically speaking - giving everyone an overview of the League (including our updated non-partisan policy), the activities we plan for this coming year, and ways for membership to engage if desired. One of the possible events on the horizon that will require lots of membership involvement, is hosting the 2019 LWV Oregon Convention in Southern Oregon. We are in the process of gathering information and should know very soon. If we do host, we will be looking for help from members that enjoy putting on a party; we want every attendee to have a great experience at the Convention and in Southern Oregon. We will include more information at the September meeting. See you then.

President Jackie Clary
September 2017

Update on 501(c)3 Status

LWVRV Treasurer Rick Bennett has been completing the paperwork required to transition to a 501(c)3 non-profit organization from our current 501(c)4 status. It appears that we will need to file a regular Form 1023 instead of the E-Z form. This will also involve a significantly higher fee, perhaps as much as $3000. Board members are meeting regularly to monitor the process. Being able to offer tax credits for donations under the 501(c)3 will positively affect our fundraising capabilities.

October General Meeting Plans

The October meeting is tentatively scheduled for a program on local housing. [See Medford City Council report from Observer Corps p. 3]. While the Oregon League supports the Senate Bill 100 Land Use Law, we are cognizant of the shortages of affordable housing for different demographics.
Observer Corps Reports

Medford City Council

Rogue Valley League member Rick Bennett attends the Medford City Council meetings. His full reports are available on our website lwvroguevalley.org. Below are synopses of summer sessions.

July 6, 2017—Medford City Council meetings will continue on first and third Thursdays, but the noon session will be dropped in September. Evening sessions will begin at 5pm.

July 20, 2017—Medford has an arrangement with Rogue Retreat for a transitional pilot housing project “Hope Village.” This is a temporary arrangement with both private and city-owned lots and involves “tiny houses” as a pilot project.

The council has been discussing the issue of location of permanent facilities on land designated for temporary use.

August 3, 2017—The issues of the Hope Village Operational Agreement with Rogue Retreat was reconsidered. The second hearing involved the same discussion, with the permanence of the facilities in question.

Agenda item 80— a discussion regarding livestock limits, specifically chickens. Unlike several other cities in southern Oregon, Medford does not have any code limits or restrictions regarding chickens. Code enforcement officers have no options for responding to residents’ complaints regarding chickens (smells, noise, etc.). Issue may be considered for future study session.

For details, please see the City of Medford website: http://www.ci.medford.or.us/Agendas.asp?SectionID=542.

August 17, 2017

Under Ordinances and Resolutions, agenda items 60.1 and 60.2, related to wages and salaries, hours, fringe benefits and other working conditions for executive staff and non-represented staff, were approved. Also, agenda item 60.3, a resolution to expand the composition of the Joint Transportation Subcommittee, was approved (Note: Rick Bennett is currently chairperson of the Subcommittee).

Under Staff Reports, agenda item 80.4 provided an update on procedure for an ordinance related to food trucks operating on public right-of-way. After much discussion the Council approved a motion (7-1) directing staff to develop ordinance language for consideration.

For future meeting and study session agendas as well as details regarding agenda items, see the City Council’s website: http://www.ci.medford.or.us/Agendas.asp?SectionID=542.

Note: This is the last daytime City Council meeting. Starting in September, the Medford City Council will meet on the first and third Thursday of the month at 6 pm. Also, city council meetings can be viewed via live-streaming and public access cable TV. Go to http://rvtv.sou.edu/schedules/ for details.

Jackson County Board of Commissioners

The Tuesday, August 29 staff meeting was chaired by Commissioner Colleen Roberts, with Rick Dyer and Don Schlosser in attendance. Most of the meeting was a routine application for an RFP in prison transition program funds for $1.2 million. The chair asked many procedural questions from Administrator Danny Jordan. The chair recommended participation in the Federal Forest Working Group as introduced by the Oregon Solutions program.

—K. Donham Observer Corps Coordinator
Getting started on the Jackson & Josephine County Governance Study
Update

Rogue Valley League voted to do an Update of the Local Jackson County Governance Study from 1999. Were you part of that original study? Do you have any notes or documents from your experience? We’re going to go through the records and other documentation and discuss a timeline for work. Coming to this meeting does not commit you to the process, but you might have some good recommendations for the study. So this is just a “getting our stuff together” meeting.

Tuesday, September 26, 5-7pm
Phoenix Public Library Meeting Room
Call Kathleen at 541-772-5044 for questions

[Did you know?—The League was responsible for initiating the first Jackson County Charter for Home Rule]

From the Archives by Nancy Swan

50 YEARS AGO

On Sept.15, 1967, the LWV luncheon held at Red Cross Building highlighted the League’s national membership drive and the group’s non-partisan role in their study of government. Members received updates on League’s current studies on water and air pollution, state taxes, human resources, and foreign policy (especially in regard to China).

The local League’s newest publication “How Much Do You Know About Medford?” was presented after a three year study of the structure and functions of the city government. In a Sept. 12 MMT article, local League President Mrs. Clifton E. Nelson (Ginny) displayed graphic posters showing the development of women’s suffrage. She explained that the purpose of the League is “to promote political responsibility through active and informed participation of citizens…” She noted that growing out of the suffrage movement, the League as a national organization had over 145,000 members in 1,137 local leagues in 1967.

A Sept. 18 MMT article reported that the League had gained 17 new members and that the year’s program would continue the four year study of taxes as well as the more recent study of air and water pollution. Study Chr. Mrs. David (Agnes) Chirgwin called for a public meeting with sanitation authorities on a “long overdue area-wide sewage system.”
Civil Discourse

by Marge Easley, LWVOR Civil Discourse Portfolio

The dangerously divisive political rhetoric we’ve been hearing lately underscores the importance of the state League’s decision to focus on civil discourse in the coming year. Here’s the first in a series of articles on the topic.

Congressional Town Halls

Town hall meetings provide one of the few opportunities to directly pose questions to elected officials. Yet they are becoming increasingly rare, because many are fearful of the media optics of being confronted by angry constituents. Did you know that 167 members of Congress have not held a single in-person town hall this year? Some are turning to virtual or online town halls, while others are forgoing them completely. This does not bode well for civil discourse in our country. Please make sure you’re on the mailing lists of your elected officials, turn up to town halls, ask probing questions, and take a leadership role in encouraging thoughtful and respectful dialogue.

Getting a Balanced Perspective on the News

Our political biases often give us a one-sided look at issues, since we tend to choose media sources that reinforce our worldview. This can fuel anxieties and increase the “us vs. them” mentality. One of the ways to get a more well-rounded perspective is to step outside our media bubbles on a regular basis. To do this I highly recommend the website www.allsides.com, which provides stories on important issues from the left, right, and center. Give it a try!

What ‘Action’ MIGHT mean to you.

You may have noticed that during this year we formalized our Action Committee process. Well, that’s ho-hum, right? Not exactly. The interesting part is that while one person will chair the overall committee, individual members can become committee members or action ‘coordinators’ for issues they are interested in. If we have a position, you might like to ‘do something with it.’ If we don’t have a position, we can consider a study or even just some ‘pre-study’ research. We’ll talk more about this at the Sept 14th members meeting.

Barbara Klein, Action Committee Chair

Health Care for ALL Oregon will be showing videos and leading discussion in Grants Pass at the UUGP Center, 129 NW "E" Street, 6:30 pm.

Sept. 14: Fix-It-
Sept. 28: The Healthcare Movie

Admission is free.

THINK BEFORE YOU INK!

Our State League has provided us with pamphlets explaining what we should think about before we sign a petition. The League mission is to education ourselves and then education the public. This flyer is an excellent aid to achieve that goal. I will have pamphlets to hand out at our League meetings. You are welcome to take extra for friends and family. We will also getting additional copies printed in Spanish.

Normary Barrett Voter Service Chair
Natural Resources Action News
Shirley Weathers, Natural Resources/Climate Action Coordinator

How (Not If) We Should Act Legislatively to Limit Emissions

The segment of both policy-makers and the population that urge to reduce greenhouse gas emissions continues to grow, deniers in high places seeking to ramp up fossil fuel activity and eliminate pollution controls notwithstanding. For at least a decade, two main legislative strategies have been scrutinized—Carbon Tax versus Cap and Trade. Here’s a link to just one article presenting both sides and the basics of how each would work (note the publication date of eight years ago): [http://e360.yale.edu/features/putting_a_price_on_carbon_an_emissions_cap_or_a_tax](http://e360.yale.edu/features/putting_a_price_on_carbon_an_emissions_cap_or_a_tax). Despite the fact that either approach would help the urgent matter at hand, the debate goes on.

Might we be gearing up to see some action, though? Addressing climate change has worked its way up priority lists in many quarters, including the LWV. The LWVOR is part of a statewide coalition working for a cap and trade approach. The vehicle, HB 2135 The Clean Energy Jobs Bill, didn’t pass this Session, but Governor Kate Brown has announced her support for passage next year and a bill to that end, SB 1070, has over 30 co-sponsors to date. Local and state advocates for climate change solutions are gearing up as well. A recent New Yorker article about Al Gore’s “An Inconvenient Sequel” cites Oregon’s efforts and plans to get things done [http://www.newyorker.com/science/elements/whats-missing-from-an-inconvenient-sequel-al-gores-new-climate-change-documentary](http://www.newyorker.com/science/elements/whats-missing-from-an-inconvenient-sequel-al-gores-new-climate-change-documentary). In the Rogue Valley, work to pass SB 1070 is starting with a strategy meeting on September 7 (6-8 at the Medford Library).

The carbon tax is getting renewed attention, too. On August 28, the LWVUS sponsored a webinar “Managing Risk by Pricing Carbon” that was viewed by four members of the LWVOR Climate Change action committee. We recommend it to anyone interested in learning more about the carbon tax approach that may well be gaining traction in Congress. We’re told the webinar will be available for viewing soon at [https://priceoncarbon.org/general/time-hands-deck/](https://priceoncarbon.org/general/time-hands-deck/).

The National League Responds to Charlottesville

"Yesterday the world watched in horror as white supremacists gathered in Charlottesville, Virginia. There is no place for hatred and violence in our democracy and all leaders must condemn these acts of domestic terrorism. We must send a strong message that while the freedom of speech and the freedom of assembly are some of our most cherished rights and must be protected, those rights do not extend to what we witnessed yesterday. The League of Women Voters stands in solidarity with the victims of violence in Charlottesville and against white supremacism." —Chris Carson, LWVUS
Please welcome new members Donna Breedlove [Medford], Shirley Klock [Ashland], Rebecca Cross [Ashland] and Jean Mount [Grants Pass] to the League.

Dues Anniversary Changing
Many thanks to those of you who paid their dues at the Annual Meeting in May. We will be moving to a new system for yearly dues collection that now will be staggered across the calendar. Those who paid in May this year will have that month as their anniversary date. Others will get individual notices right before their anniversary month. If you have a blue star by your name on the newsletter, it means your dues are now payable. Questions about dues should be directed to membership at 541-772-5044.

Directory
The new Directory will be published in October and available at the October General Meeting. Please check the spreadsheet at the check-in table in September to make sure your data is correct before we publish.

Membership Update

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Newsletter
The newsletter is issued monthly both by email as an attachment and as a mailed copy. Several members have chosen to get their newsletter electronically. Please let membership know if you would prefer the electronic newsletter.

Congratulations Sarah!
Member Sarah McConnell-Perkins recently had a baby boy Gavin. We wish her all the best.

We need a secretary—Please
The Rogue Valley League currently needs a secretary to take notes at the monthly board meetings. Notes usually involve the general topics discussed, the bank balance as reported by the treasurer, a record of motions passed, a listing of attendees, and a list of who offered to perform a task. Electronic recorders are permitted, and agendas are provided. Any help would be appreciated, even part-year commitments.

Membership Application

Name_________________________________________
Address_______________________________________
City___________________________________________
Zip______________Phone________________________
Email__________________________________________
Single membership — $65.00   Spouse/student—$32.50
May we publish your information in the LWV Directory?  Y  N

Send check/application to P.O. Box 8555 Medford OR 97501

Areas of Interest:
◊ Land Use Issues ◊ Local Government
◊ Education ◊ Children at Risk
◊ Election Issues ◊ Climate Change
◊ Transportation ◊ National Issues
◊ Observer Corps ◊ Voters Service
◊ Healthcare Issues ◊ Environment

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