



THE ADVOCATE

League of Women Voters of Ashland

P.O. Box 1296, Ashland, Oregon 97520

www.ashland.or.lwvnet.org info@ashland.or.lwvnet.org

DECEMBER 2007

JANUARY 2008

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS, A NONPARTISAN POLITICAL ORGANIZATION, ENCOURAGES INFORMED AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT, WORKS TO INCREASE UNDERSTANDING OF MAJOR PUBLIC POLICY ISSUES, AND INFLUENCES PUBLIC POLICY THROUGH EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY.

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Websites:

LWV Ashland: www.ashland.or.lwvnet.org

LWV Rogue Valley: www.lwvrv.org

LWVOR: www.lwvor.org

LWVUS: www.lwv.org

DECEMBER MEETING

PROGRAM PLANNING – LWVUS & LOCAL

Wednesday, December 12th, 12 Noon

(That's 12/12 at 12!!!)

Brown Bag Lunch at the

Ashland Public Library, Guanajuato Room

Plan on attending this important meeting for members to help chart the future of our League and let your individual ideas and concerns be heard. At this meeting, new studies may be suggested and policy positions dropped, retained, reviewed or updated. If you want to propose a new study, come prepared to describe the topic, its scope and *Outlook for Work*. LWVUS's positions are sent to you by separate email; Local positions are in your handbook. No handbook? Pick yours up at the meeting.

Happy Holidays!

JANUARY MEETING

STATE OF THE CONSTITUTION

Thursday, November 17, 2008

Ashland Elks Lodge, 255 E. Main St

Noon – 1:30 p.m.

Optional Lunch (\$10) at 11:30 a.m.

(call 482-7326 for reservations)

Wolfe Hoppe will talk about the current state of the U.S. Constitution as compared to the design of the founders – changes that have occurred in the role of the Executive, the separation of powers, “checks and balances,” and the Bill of Rights

This meeting is open to everyone.
Please come and bring a friend!

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

This past month has been an active one for the League. On the 15th at our regular meeting at the Elks Club, attorney John Almaguer spoke to us about his experience on behalf of Jackson County residents in dealing with the federal government's family unification policy with respect to immigration.

Following up on the subject, this last week in November we held two consensus sessions at the library with members discussing the statements and questions presented by the LWVUS. In January we may hold still another session if additional members would like to meet, or we may have an e-mail survey. We will keep you informed.

Another highlight of the month was Lynn Howe's presentation before the Board of Commissioners on November 21st. Lynn coordinated the Town Hall Meetings, sponsored by the two local Leagues, AAUW and Citizens for County Solutions. The meeting was well attended, and the next day the *Mail Tribune* carried a front-page story on the event, with a banner headline. Particularly important are the next steps she outlined, including fostering "ongoing public discussion," holding additional town meetings or debates, and urging the Board of Commissioners to "increase its outreach" and take steps "to ensure open and transparent decision making." We are considering what might be the appropriate follow-up to these informative meetings. Some possibilities include encouraging people to volunteer for county advisory committees and attend public hearings. In this connection and in line with the recommendation of LWVUS, we hope to jumpstart an Observer Corps for LWVA. We'll let you know more about it as plans develop.

As another outcome of the Town Hall Meetings, the Board is thinking of doing a survey with the Rogue Valley League of county funding and services. This idea is likely to be considered at our Program Planning meeting. We hope you will join us then for what is sure to be an interesting and informative discussion.

And be with us again on January 17th at the Elks Club when Wolfe Hoppe brings his exceptional skill, knowledge and experience to inform us about *The State of the Constitution*. Those of us who have been privileged to hear Wolfe lecture at SOU on the Supreme Court know how thought-provoking and enlightening his presentation will be.

Until then, enjoy your holidays!

Judith & Vanya

IMMIGRATION MEETING SUMMARY (and Consensus Meetings Update)

John Almaguer, the senior supervising attorney at Catholic Charities of Southern Oregon, spoke to League members and guests on Thursday, November 15, on the topic of family-based immigration. John assists people in the naturalization process and in obtaining certain types of non-immigrant visas. John had read the background materials the LWVUS provided on its website and, together with his own knowledge and experience, was well prepared to walk us through the immigration process, its priorities and restrictions. His legal team had served nearly 2,000 prospective immigrants this past year, 80 percent from Mexico. His own parents were legal immigrants from Mexico, who had gone through the naturalization process when John was in college.

In his talk, John noted that the most common path to immigration to the United States, comprising two-thirds of all cases, is through the family. Family structure, however, can be complicated, and immigration law reflects that complexity. In fact, some of the required steps fall into the "catch 22" category for residents trying to bring their family members into this country. Adding to the difficulties for legal residents who want to become citizens, the fees charged have risen sharply -- \$675 as of July 30 2007 -- producing a flood of applications prior to that date. In addition, applicants to be tested for citizenship must have a background check and travel to Portland at least twice during the application process.

From John's report and what we have read, we recognize that immigration laws need to be reformed. The LWVUS study has given us the opportunity to suggest changes. We have held two unit meetings to consider the consensus questions that emerged from the study. Another unit meeting may meet in January, and in addition we may have an e-mail survey for members unable to participate in these sessions. The February issue of *The Advocate* will report on the results for LWVA and the League as a whole. Thanks to our committee headed by Iris Milan, and including Ruth Walsh, Eleanor Perkins, Anita Nevison and Susan Shaffer.

A NEW LOOK FOR PROGRAM PLANNING

This year the national League has decided to take a different approach to Program Planning. Instead of asking each local League to adopt the existing program by reviewing each policy statement and indicating a response, the organization is only requesting the League to report back the issues discussed and whether any has been suggested for study, review or concurrence.

In line with this new approach, we're conducting program planning as an informal discussion session. We'll be meeting on Wednesday, December 12th, at 12 noon – **12-12-12** – at the Ashland Public Library's Guanajuato Room. It will be a brown bag lunch, so bring your favorite easy-to-eat food. An extra snack or cookies to share are welcome.

Attached as a separate PDF document is a summary of LWVUS positions. We will also be considering our local positions, and these you will find in your *LWVA Member Handbook*. Bring it with you on 12-12-12, along with your own copies of the LWVUS positions, so you'll have the material for reference purposes. Review these policy statements carefully and, if possible, well in advance of the meeting.

If you are considering an issue that you feel deserves further League attention, then you may be interested in looking at *Impact on Issues*, which gives the full policy positions. You can see it on the LWVUS website, www.lwv.org, by logging in as a member. If you don't have a member password or have forgotten it, you can indicate this fact on the website, and you'll be e-mailed a password. Your e-mail address is your ID. As *Impact on Issues* is over 80 pages, you probably will not be interested in downloading the entire report, but you can download separate sections. You also can order the report online for \$7.00 plus \$9.50 for shipping. You may be interested, too, in joining the LWVUS Program Planning discussion list, which you can do via the website.

As examples of issues you may want to discuss, these are some that Board members have mentioned: on the national level, privatization of public services, the impact of domestic policy on global trade, the development of the Pentagon budget; on the local level, county funding for county services, the city's response to the homeless. As LWVUS points out in its guide to the Program Planning process, we need to be aware of limited resources before we move from discussion to a recommendation for further study or review and suggests these three questions as the test:

- “Is there widespread member interest?”
- Is this a timely issue?
- Is government action the most effective way to address the problem?”

Keep these questions in mind as you come prepared on the 12th to discuss public policy issues and the League's program.

SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING OF NOVEMBER 1, 2007

Treasurer's Report: We have money in the bank to pay PMP to LWVUS, but have not received a corrected bill. 33 members have paid dues; 30 members have not paid. A letter will be sent to unpaid members encouraging payment. Members who do not reply will receive a phone call. We have \$360.00 in our Education Fund to be used for either PMP or *Voters' Guides*.

U.N. Celebration: The United Nations celebration which we co-sponsored at SOU, was successful, well attended and fun.

Measure 49: Our "At Length" letter supporting Measure 49 was published by the Tidings.

League Basics: Board Members were given a copy of the publication *League Basics*.

Member Handbook: Member Handbook delivery was discussed. Some “interest inventories” have been received. One member expressed interest in working on Voter Services.

November Meeting: The November meeting will be on Immigration. A press release will be sent to *the Ashland Daily Tidings* and the *Medford Mail Tribune*.

December Meeting: Program Planning will be December 12, at 12:00 noon, at the Ashland Public Library (see page 1).

January Meeting: Wolfe Hoppe will speak on the State of the Constitution (see page 1).

Member Recruitment/Involvement: There's a tentative plan for High Tea on April 17, 2008. Possible ongoing committees were suggested to encourage member involvement. There will be further discussion when members have returned their interest inventories.

Fundraising Letter: Last year's fundraising letter was successful. A new letter was proposed for next March to help pay for the *Voters' Guides*.

LWVUS Convention: Convention will be June 13-16, 2008, in Portland. We have \$500 for delegates fees. Convention Volunteers are needed and are invited to stay at Portland LWV members' homes.

The next board meeting will be December 6th at Marzocco's home at 820 Mt. Meadows Drive.

GRAPEFRUIT THANK YOUS!

*A big thank you to all who helped with the grapefruit fundraiser. Thank you to the Rogue Valley League, and in particular **LORRAINE WERBLOW** for her huge efforts and for finding a great place for delivery.*

*Special thanks to **the MEDFORD GRANGE CO-OP** for generously providing a place for delivery.*

*An extra special thanks to our own **SUSAN RUST**, who adeptly handled the whole process for our League.*

And thank you to all of you for buying the grapefruit. You all helped make this a successful fundraiser.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER**Cathleen Katz**

Cathleen has long admired the work of the League and depends on its expertise for voting wisely. She has three professional hats: one, a therapist using body centered Hakomi and sand tray therapy; another, a gentle yoga teacher at her studio and at the YMCA; and, finally, a teacher for a seven-week class on "Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction." She enjoys gardening, hiking, painting with watercolors, reading books, and being with her three grown children and new grandson. She and her husband David love to travel and have lived in Ashland for many years.

CALENDAR**DECEMBER**

- 6 Board Meeting
(Ellie Marzocco's home, 820 Mtn. Meadows Dr., 482-0642)
- 12 Program Planning, Ashland Public Library at noon (see page 1)

JANUARY

- 3 Board Meeting
- 17 General Meeting:
State of the Constitution

FEBRUARY

- 7 Board Meeting
- 14 LEAGUE'S BIRTHDAY!!!
- 21 General Meeting:
Ashland's Homeless

MARCH

- 6 Board Meeting
- 19 Water Study Consensus Meeting

APRIL

- 3 Board Meeting
- 17 High Tea

MAY

- 2 Board Meeting
- 15 Annual Meeting
- 17-18 LWVOR Council, Corvallis, Oregon

JUNE

- 5 Board Meeting
- 13-17 LWVUS 48th Biennial Convention,
Portland, Oregon

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ASHLAND
P.O. BOX 1296
ASHLAND, OR 97520**

JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS/RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

**Annual Membership Dues:
Individual Membership: \$60 ____ Household Membership: \$90 ____
Student Membership: \$30 ____**

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE: _____

NEW MEMBER: _____ RENEWAL _____ ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION: _____

My Special Interest/s: _____

**Please make checks payable to League of Women Voters of Ashland (LWVA)
Mail to LWVA, P.O. Box 1296, Ashland, OR 97520**