FEBRUARY MEETING

A Panel Discussion on

HOMELESS IN ASHLAND

Thursday, February 21, 2008
Noon, in the Gresham Room,
Ashland Public Library
(Brown bag lunch at 11:30 a.m.)

Panelists:

Arnie Green, former Executive Director,
Community Works

Terry Holderness, Ashland Police Chief

Graham Lewis, former President,
Ashland Chamber of Commerce and
Member of Ashland Housing Commission

Daniel H. Rueff, Homeless Activist

Sharon Shreiber, Executive Director,
Interfaith Care Community (ICC)

Moderator:

Barbara Jarvis, LWVA Member,
Judge Pro Tem, Ashland Municipal Court

Save the Date: Thursday, March 20, noon to 1:30 p.m. at the Ashland Public Library's Gresham Room. Paula Brown, former Ashland Public Works Director, and Bill Meyers, DEQ Water Coordinator, will speak on the topic of Water, Protecting Ashland's Resource. Brown bag lunch begins at 11:30 a.m. Everyone is welcome. Come and bring a friend!
PRESIDENTS’ MESSAGE

If you were not able to be with us on January 17th, you missed an extraordinary event. As one member said, e-mailing us afterwards, “That was a great luncheon program yesterday, one of the best I’ve attended since becoming a member of the Ashland LWV. Thanks!” The thanks should go to Wolf Hoppie, whose presentation on The State of the Constitution was concise, informative, spellbinding and depressing. As our appreciative member said, “Afterwards, I felt like buying a bunch of those ‘If you’re not outraged, you’re not paying attention’ bumper stickers for everyone I know.” Hoppie’s analysis of the Administration’s extension of Executive power made it clear how far our country has moved away from the dreams of liberty and the rights of the individual that the Framers had in mind in drafting the Constitution. As League members, we need to join with others who are working to see that our country changes course.

Our February meeting will focus on a local issue – Homelessness in Ashland. What should Ashland be doing about its homeless is the question we will put to five people, each of whom has a particular perspective on the subject: Arnie Green, who for many years directed the primary social agency in the Rogue Valley working with at-risk families and youth, including the homeless; Sharon Shreiber, who heads the interfaith community organization serving the homeless; Terry Holderness, Ashland’s Police Chief, experienced in community policing; Graham Lewis, who has ties to the business community, the Ashland Housing Commission, and the Methodist Church, which offers a weekly supper for the homeless; and finally, Daniel Hoeff, who has been a vocal advocate for those, like himself, who are homeless. We are sending special invitations to the City Council and to other people who have a stake in this issue and hope to see a good turnout for what should prove to be a stimulating discussion.

Please note that the meeting will take place at the Gresham Room, downstairs in the Ashland Public Library. In the future, we may hold most of our meetings there so that we do not need to commit ourselves to a specific number of luncheon reservations. Also, it allows us to advertise our meetings as being open to the general public. The business session will start at noon, but people are welcome to come earlier, bring their lunch and chat with members and guests.

See you on the 21st.

Judith & Vanya

SUMMARY OF THE BOARD MINUTES OF 1/3/08

Treasurer’s Report: We have $5,242.00 in our account. We have not heard from LWVUS about correcting our PMP, so we will pay the amount that our records indicate. Remaining balance will be $2,742.00. Grapefruit sales profit: $680.00.

Membership: We have 52 local and 8 national members. Barca will become a local member in March when her national membership expires. Members who have not renewed will be called, then sent e-mails informing them that Jan. 31 is our cut-off date, after which time they will be dropped.

Jan. Meeting: Press releases will be sent to our two local newspapers, JPR, the newcomers’ newsletter and the Community Action list publicizing our Jan. meeting on the State of the Constitution. A flyer will be distributed.

Feb. Meeting: Panel discussion on Homeless in Ashland at Ashland Public Library, with 5 panelists representing different viewpoints. Suggested panelists: former head of Community Works; former president, Ashland Chamber of Commerce; homeless candidate for City Council; Ashland Police Chief, and Director, Interfaith Care Community. Possible moderators: Barbara Jarvis, Pam Turner, Jeff Golden and Geoff Riley.

Health Care: Sundeen will secure a speaker from the Community Health Centers for the May General Meeting.

LWVUS Immigration Study: The immigration committee will meet January 31 to prepare the consensus report.

Water Study: Letters were sent to local organizations with questions about quantity/quality of water in Ashland/Bear Creek Watershed. Committee is conducting interviews. Letters will follow to state/federal agencies. Committee will request an extension of another year.

County Issues: On January 17, we’ll meet with the Committee for County Solutions to discuss possible follow-up to the Town Hall Meetings.

SOU’s Women’s Resource Center: Joint project for Women’s History Month considered. Benjamin/Milan will follow up. A workshop with WRC was also suggested, using LWV publication, Choosing the President 2008.

Program Planning: Possible National and State studies were suggested. A Program Planning report will be compiled.

John Fregonese Lecture: Fregonese, a well-known former Ashland City Planner, offered to give a free talk in Ashland on sustainability (offer communicated via Hal Cloer). General meetings are scheduled for the year; however, we will follow up on this possibility.
An intimate gathering for a terrible situation” is how Wolf Hoppe opened his remarks before League members and guests at the Elks Lodge on January 17th, describing The State of the Constitution. The “terrible situation” he was referring to was the concentration of power in the Executive branch of the federal government, contrary to the intentions of our country’s founders who had considered having a committee rather than a president to avoid having a single supreme ruler. Hoppe noted that although the term “separation of powers” is not in our Constitution, the first three articles of the Constitution define the powers of the three separate branches of our government and make it clear by the space and authority devoted to it that the first, the legislative body, is the most important. Through the instigation of Vice President Cheney, however, power has been transferred from the Congress to the President, mainly by means of the President using his role as Commander in Chief to put himself above the law.

Hoppe described in detail the President’s actions that have increased his power at the expense of civil liberties – engaging in illegal wiretapping by not securing a court order as required under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA); issuing signing statements to ignore portions of laws passed by Congress that he signed; and rushing the Patriot Act through a Congress fearful of not being seen as committed to the War on Terror. This same motivation prompted Congress to pass the Military Commissions Act, depriving Guantanamo detainees of their right to habeas corpus, which, according to the Constitution, can only be suspended in the case of rebellion or secession.

Another factor Hoppe discussed is the President’s power to appoint judges. While the political leanings of Chief Justice Roberts are about the same as former Chief Justice Rehnquist, President Bush’s appointment of Justice Samuel Alito to replace Sandra Day O’Connor, who was considered “the swing vote,” has shifted the balance on the Supreme Court, which is now, in Hoppe’s words, “chipping away at the Bill of Rights.” He cited several recent Supreme Court cases illustrating this development, particularly with respect to the separation of church and state. Hoppe left us with the hope that in 2008 we elect 60 senators who respect the Constitution, can override a presidential veto and assert their authority over the President.

WOLFP HOPPE'S PRESENTATION ON THE CONSTITUTION, by Judith Benjamin

LWV ALERTS VOTERS ON SIGNING PETITIONS
"THINK BEFORE YOU INK"

Spread the word. The League of Women Voters of Oregon is encouraging its members and the public to be cautious during this period of circulation of initiative petitions.

Voters will be asked to sign a variety of initiative petitions "just to get it on the ballot so people can vote on it." The League is telling voters, “Your signature is valuable, more valuable than your vote, considering that far fewer signatures are required to qualify a petition for the ballot than votes to pass it on the ballot. Only sign an initiative petition that you believe belongs on the ballot.”

LWVOR lists six questions voters can ask themselves to help them determine whether or not to sign an initiative petition:

- **Is it complex?** Some issues can be decided by a simple yes or no vote. Complex issues may need to be thoroughly examined and debated in a legislative arena.

- **Is it confusing?** Some initiatives are not well written or contain conflicts that may require court resolution or interpretation.

- **Does it belong in the Constitution?** If an initiative amends the Constitution, consider whether it really belongs there. Is it a fundamental law that should be protected from change? Correcting a constitutional amendment later would also require amending the Constitution, is cumbersome and costly, and requires another vote of the people.

- **How will it be funded?** Is it an "unfunded mandate" that would require the Legislature to take funds from other essential programs? Consider the effect on the overall flexibility of a government budget with already limited revenue. An initiative should generally create its own revenue source, and not earmark, restrict, or obligate a specific percentage of the General Fund revenues.

- **Who is behind it?** You can find out who are the real sponsors and opponents of a petition. Contribution and expenditure reports are available through the Election Division at 503-986-1518 and are also online in ORESTAR at http://www.sos.state.or.us/elections/.

- **Before you sign, ask to see identification of the signature gatherer.** Paid signature gatherers are now required to carry and display a picture ID issued by the Secretary of State. Numerous instances of fraud have occurred that could have been avoided by insisting on seeing identification. And if a case of fraud is found, you will have information that could assist authorities.
IMMIGRATION CONSENSUS REPORT
By Iris Milan

LWVA has sent in the consensus results from our two Immigration discussion meetings in November. Almost one-third of our members participated, and the few who could not attend the meetings mailed us their responses. Prior to these consensus sessions, John Almaguer, an attorney with Catholic Social Services in Medford, gave an outstanding presentation on the obstacles to the immigration process.

The questions prepared by the LWVUS Immigration Committee were thought provoking and soul searching. They gave us a chance to reflect on what values we believe should support America’s policy on immigration, and to consider what policies should be in place to deal with the millions of undocumented people living in our borders.

As the League speaks with one voice and this study encompassed all Leagues in the U.S., it will only be complete when the results of all Leagues are looked at as a whole. After the results have been compiled and reviewed, LWVUS will create a position enabling us to lobby our representatives to help improve the lives of immigrants in this country.

THANK YOU, KATHY BECKETT
AND CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR RETIREMENT!

"How may I help?" This is the friendly question one heard when calling Kathy Beckett’s office. My questions covered everything having to do with elections and candidates. What is the filing deadline for candidates? When will the ballots be mailed? With the library closed, can we still use the drop box? Which position on the Board of Commissioners will be up for election next? In time, some of these questions came to be answered on the Jackson County web site, but for me a friendly voice on the phone is always preferable.

Kathy’s 25 years as both the elections clerk and as the recorder for Jackson County brought her into contact with many who sprang quickly to her support when the Mail Tribune several years ago castigated her for what seemed to be a slow vote count. The Letters to the Editor were very much in support of her, and subsequently the elections department moved to its new location with more room to count and store ballots. When I taught a class at SOLIR on the LWVUS book, Choosing the President 2004, I invited Kathy to come to the class to answer questions. We all learned a great deal, including how important it is for a community to have civic leaders who enjoy their jobs and love helping people.

Thanks, Kathy. -- Ruth Walsh

Thanks from all of us at LWV Ashland.
We wish you the very best in your retirement.

UNITE FOR PEACE CONFERENCE

Another opportunity to register voters will be on February 29 and March 1 when Peace House and the SOU Psychology Club will hold a Unite For Peace Conference. The event will take place at SOU’s Stevenson Union. Dr. Jean Houston will be the keynote speaker on Friday at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., will be a full day of workshops and talks on themes of peace, social justice and environmental sustainability. Registration for the conference is $25.00 (includes lunch and refreshments); student registration is $5.00 w/valid identification. Admission on Friday is $10.00.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY PARADE AND CELEBRATION, MARCH 8, 2008

In 1975, the United Nations officially endorsed March 8th as International Women’s Day. This year, the Rogue Valley community is joining hands with Southern Oregon University and Rogue Community College to generate an annual event to honor and celebrate women who have worked for equality, freedom and social justice.

The day will begin with a parade at 11:30 a.m. from Triangle Park to SOU. An international food fair and celebration will follow in the Rogue River Room at Stevenson Union, mixing dance, music and words. LWVA will join in the parade and have a table in the Rogue River Room where people can register to vote and learn about the League. We hope to see many of you there.

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY
5 Who Killed the Constitution? SOU
7 LWVA Board Meeting
14 LEAGUE’S 88th BIRTHDAY!!
21 General Meeting: Ashland’s Homeless
29 Unite For Peace Conference - SOU

MARCH
1 Unite For Peace Conference - SOU
6 LWVA Board Meeting
8 International Women’s Day
20 General Meeting: Water: “Protecting Ashland’s Resource”

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
REACHING NEW HEIGHTS TOGETHER
Please Volunteer to Work at the LWVUS National Convention, June 13-17
Hilton Hotel, 921 SW 6th Avenue, Portland OR

Volunteers are needed:

Every day (June 13 - 17) Registration, Credentials, Information, Tours, Personnel

Friday through Sunday (June 13 - 15) Hospitality and Dine Around

Saturday - Tuesday (June 14 - 17) Door Keepers, Ushers, Timekeepers, Teller/Elections, Microphone Monitors

Questions? Contact: Carol Cushman, 503-702-9490 (cell) or cherail@aol.com
Debbie Kaye, 503-223-4660 or djek53@aol.com
Portland LWV office, 503-228-1675 or lwvpdx@aracnet.com

Return before the end of March 2008 to:
Debbie Kaye, 2235 NW Aspen Avenue, Portland, OR 97210-1218

or download from www.lwvpdx.org or www.lwvor.org and email to djek53@aol.com

Volunteers will be notified of their assignments in early May.

Please print:

Name ____________________ Phone __________ E-mail ____________________

Address ____________________ League ____________________

Do you prefer e-mail? ______ US mail? ______

Area(s) of Interest: (mark in order of preference 1, 2, 3, etc)

| Convention floor during Plenary sessions: | Other: |
| --- | --- | --- |
| __ Door Keeper | ___ Registration | ___ Dine Around |
| ___ Usher | ___ Information | ___ Tours |
| ___ Timekeeper | ___ Personnel | ___ Dine Around Host |
| ___ Teller/Election | ___ Credentials | ___ Wherever needed |
| ___ Microphone Monitor | ___ Hospitality | |

Dates: Please choose time(s) and day(s) you are available to work and indicate AM, PM or all day. The number of hours you will be asked to work will depend on the number of volunteers and areas of interest.

Friday, June 13 (PM and/or Eve) ______  Saturday, June 14 ______  Sunday, June 15 ______

Monday, June 16 ______  Tuesday, June 17 (AM only) ______

Note: Volunteers should note that the AM shift for most volunteers begins at 7:30.

I am interested in B&B accommodations in members’ homes for 1 or 2 nights (limited number available): ______

Will you be a delegate to the Convention? ___ Yes  or  ____ No

Note: Delegates will have to pay the registration fee. You may volunteer to work at the Convention and will be assigned a job that does not interfere with your duties as a delegate. Most delegates who volunteer will be assigned Friday or Saturday AM for Information or Hospitality, or Sunday as a Dine Around dinner host.
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ASHLAND
P.O. BOX 1296
ASHLAND, OR 97520

JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS/RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP
2008-2009

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