



# THE ADVOCATE

## League of Women Voters of Ashland

SEPTEMBER 2008

P.O. Box 1296, Ashland, Oregon 97520  
[www.ashland.or.lwvnet.org](http://www.ashland.or.lwvnet.org) [info@ashland.or.lwvnet.org](mailto:info@ashland.or.lwvnet.org)

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.

### LWVA BOARD 2007-2008

**Officers:**

**President:** Judith Benjamin: 488-3827, [jeg@mind.net](mailto:jeg@mind.net)  
**Co-President:** Regina Ayars  
**Secretary:** Elizabeth Berry  
**Treasurer:** Judy Heatherington

**Directors:**

Regina Ayars, Voter Services  
 Eleanor Marzocco, Membership/Publicity  
 Elin Silveous, Health Care  
 Vanya Sloan, The *Advocate*

*Past President: Vanya Sloan*

**Nominating Committee:**

Chair: Iris Milan, Eleanor Marzocco, Pam Vavra

**Other Chairs:**

**Book Group:** Iris Milan  
**Webmaster:** Kate Culbertson

**Websites:**

LWV Ashland: [www.ashland.or.lwvnet.org](http://www.ashland.or.lwvnet.org)  
 LWV Rogue Valley: [www.lwvrv.org](http://www.lwvrv.org)  
 LWV Oregon: [www.lwvor.org](http://www.lwvor.org)  
 LWV United States: [www.lwvus.org](http://www.lwvus.org)

**“MEET THE LEAGUE GET-TOGETHER”**

SEPTEMBER 21, 2008  
 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

At the home of Judith Benjamin  
 740 Emigrant Creek Road  
 Ashland, Oregon

Please join us and bring a friend to learn about our League's activities for the coming year. We will have refreshments and enjoy music performed by soloists from the Rogue Valley Symphony. Everyone is Welcome!

Directions to Judith's house: From the intersection with Highway 66, go about 1/2 mile north on Dead Indian Memorial Rd., turn right on Emigrant Creek Rd. and proceed about 3/4 mile to #740. 488-3827, [jeg@mind.net](mailto:jeg@mind.net)

**SEPTEMBER CALENDAR**

- 4 LWVA Bd. Meeting, 2:00 p.m., Ashland Library
- 10 OR Health Fund board's Community Meeting to get input on its draft plan, Medford City Council Chambers, 411 W. 8th St., Rm. 312, 7:00 p.m.
- 10 Concord Coalition Seminar on the National Debt, 6:00 p.m. Medford Public Library
- 17 Constitution Day Table at the Plaza
- 19 LWVRV Candidate Forum, Rogue Valley Manor 7:00 - 8:30 p.m., featuring Board of Commissioner Candidates and Legislative Candidates for House District 6.
- 19 LWVOR fall workshop registration due.
- 21 Meet the League Get-Together (See above).
- 24 Big Look Task Force meeting, Medford (<http://oregonbiglook.org>)
- 27 LWVOR Fall Workshop, Eugene
- 30 LWVRV Candidate Forum, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. County Courthouse Auditorium (8th & Oakdale) Medford, Candidates for Legislative & County Offices; Oregon House of Representatives; Jackson County Commissioners; County Judge. (Televised on RVTV)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This will be a busy fall season for the League, not surprising, considering a major election coming up. To encourage more people to join, we're staging a "Meet the League" get-together at my house, on September 21<sup>st</sup>, and we're asking you to come and bring your friends.

Even before this send-off, we've already been busy. You may have seen our table this past Saturday at the Growers Market, where we've been registering voters. We're scheduled to be there again on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Regina Ayars, our Voter Services Chair, is organizing this activity, and I'm sure she'd be happy to have you stop by. Better yet, why not offer to help her. We also could use volunteers on the Plaza, September 17<sup>th</sup>, Constitution Day, when we will be selling authentic-looking copies and miniatures of the Constitution, as well as a "Patriot Package," containing copies of other principal documents from American history. Join us then.

This year, we're organizing a **Candidates' Fair to be held on October 11<sup>th</sup> in the Stevenson Union at SOU** and co-sponsored by SOU's student government. We will inform you about any other voter services activities we undertake.

As you look at the calendar on the front page, you'll see a number of important meetings listed --on government spending, health care, etc. We look forward to seeing you at some of them.

If we can accomplish all our plans for the next few months, it will be because of our energetic, ambitious new board (see list on page 1). We have had one change since May, however. Beryl Patner resigned as Treasurer because she is leaving Ashland this month for an extended trip. Thankfully, Judy Heatherington, who has been our Treasurer for many years, agreed to continue doing the job until we find a substitute. Judy's service to LWVA has been above and beyond...

If you missed the Annual Meeting, then you missed an excellent guest speaker, Margaret Crowley, Executive Director of the Community Health Center. We must have been prescient to have invited her, considering the National League's new focus on health care. She presented a clear description of the services her nonprofit organization offers in the face of unmet needs. Her agency will be a valuable resource, as we become involved in the National League program.

I hope to see many of you on the 21<sup>st</sup> and will enjoy being your host. Until then....

-- Judith Benjamin

## LWVOR COUNCIL 2008

Local Leagues were well represented at this year's LWVOR Council, which took place on May 17-18, in Corvallis. Thirteen of the 16 state groups were present, including our county sister League, Rogue Valley. Judith Benjamin and Regina Ayars were our delegates.

At the Council, we met people from across the state with a shared commitment to supporting the League's mission. Seeing how the organization works at the state level showed how important our local efforts are to the broader League's

success. What we do in Ashland does impact the state and national Leagues.

Highlighting the two-day event was a presentation by John Kaufmann, Senior Policy Analyst for the Oregon Department of Energy, who, in keeping with the Council theme of *Waves of the Future*, spoke about our depleted oil supply and the urgent need for change to meet the worldwide energy crisis. In keeping with this issue, on Saturday morning delegates had an opportunity to view the wave tank at Oregon State University.

A major session and follow-up workshop were devoted to an evaluation of LWVOR's *Voters' Guide*. From the discussion, delegates concluded that the League should focus its attention on electronic versions and on its easy-to-read, Spanish and Braille publications, which are distinctive from the state government's election guide.

Throughout the sessions, representatives from each of the local Leagues were asked to speak briefly about their League activities, and in her remarks, Judith stressed the town hall meetings held as a consequence of the library closings. Also noteworthy for LWVA was the honor Kate Culbertson received for her service as state board secretary and the award presented to Judith for our League's increasing membership by 20 percent over the last two years, more than any other League in the state.

Next year is the LWVOR convention, a time when delegates will vote on state League policy. It will be held in Medford and hosted by the Rogue Valley League. This will be a really good opportunity for many of you to attend as observers. You'll find the experience educational, motivating and fun!

## LWVUS CONVENTION, by Judith Benjamin

Going to the League Convention brought me back to my youth. I last attended a national convention when I was a college student, representing my school at the National Students Association Convention in Ames, Iowa, over a half century ago. (This tells you how old I am!) The two conventions, however, were nothing like each other. My memories of the first are of late-night parties, politicking and socializing -- not the impressions that immediately came to mind in thinking about the LWV Convention. This was a formal, serious affair lightened by just a few touches of humor. While they both suffered from long hours, LWV's late-night and early-morning sessions focused on substantive issues, not one-upmanship.

With so many delegates wanting to speak and so many rules to follow, sessions could drag on, but they could be interesting too, particularly when the principal speakers and guests addressed the delegation. In keeping with the proposed program on health care and climate change and the location in Oregon, former Governor Kitzhaber was the first to speak before the general assembly. He discussed the ramifications of health care and indicated that the issue is far more complex than advocates of the single payer system would suggest. He was followed the next night by another former Oregon Governor, Barbara Roberts, who delighted the audience with her memoir of moving up in politics and becoming the first woman governor of the state. At another session, a panel of experts described what we know about climate change, its impact on the developing world, and prospects for the future.

I found the workshops particularly informative. Some provided useful tips on managing a local League, which we've already profited from in planning our September event. One, entitled *Massachusetts Healthcare Reform: Miracle or Mirage*, provided a concrete illustration of Governor Kitzhaber's remarks in presenting facts about implementing the state's program that suggested "mirage" more than "miracle." Another would apply to our City Council and any other group trying to reach agreement on a particular issue. It presented a project by the Rand Corporation, with LWV's participation, which laid out a system by which people with opposing viewpoints could find common ground through analyzing their basic assumptions. At an early Sunday morning workshop, I was one of the panelists; the subject was homeless youth, and Linda Clary, who chaired our state study, was the organizer. The night before I left, my roommate and chauffeur, Barbara Wardenburg, led a discussion of sexism, illustrated with video tapes of the media's treatment of Hillary Clinton.

Among the many proposals presented at the plenary sessions was one from Oregon, co-sponsored by the Fairfax County Virginia League, for concurrence on a policy statement regarding reapportionment and redistricting. The subject was widely discussed at a workshop and subsequent meetings particularly with the California delegation to reach agreement on the wording, but when the statement was presented at the plenary session, it was voted down because the majority felt it could not be applied to all states.

The results of the Conference were everything the National Board proposed (unfortunately including an increase in PMP [per-member payment]), plus a few additions that came from state and local Leagues. These were the primary program items adopted:

To amend the League Principles to include the following: *The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that all powers of the U.S. government should be exercised within the constitutional framework of a balance among the three branches of government: legislative, executive, and judicial.*

To conduct an educational program on health care  
To conduct an educational and advocacy campaign to promote solutions to global warming  
To study and reach consensus on "the advisability of using the National Popular Vote Compact among the states as a method for electing the President," proposed by the Saratoga County, NY League.

The Oregon League scored a special victory in bringing about the election of one of its own to the National Board. LWVOR's First Vice President and Action Chair Norman Turill has become a member of the national League's governing body, the first man to do so. Congratulations, Norman. Congratulations, also, and thank you to the Portland League and its many members who volunteered their time to host this successful convention.

## SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING OF JULY 28, 2008, by Elizabeth Berry

**Membership:** 64 local members and 8 national members. An open house will be held at Benjamin's house on September 21 to offer the community information about the League and to recruit members. Our recruitment goal is 15 new members.  
**Voter Service:** The League will look into publishing a local voter's guide to be inserted in the newspaper. A candidates' fair for local elections will be planned for October. Mock elections will be held at Ashland High School, possibly the middle school, and Talent middle school.  
**Fundraising:** A fundraising letter will be sent to both members and non-members and will include an invitation to our September Open House.  
**Publicity:** Perkins volunteered for this portfolio, with the understanding that each person responsible for an event would include publicity in the assignment.

### Program:

**September Open House:** LWVA kick-off meeting. **October Candidate Fair:** Candidates for local election will be invited to attend our candidates fair. **November meeting:** county funding and services. This will be a joint meeting with the Rogue Valley League. **December meeting:** Consensus on the Election Methods Report. **January meeting:** program planning.

Next Board Meeting: September 4th, 2:00 p.m.

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## GOT QUESTIONS ABOUT VOTING? GO TO [VOTE411.org](http://VOTE411.org)

Launched by the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) in October of 2006, VOTE411.org is a "one-stop-shop" for election related information. It provides nonpartisan information to the public with both general and state-specific information on the following aspects of the election process:

- \* Absentee ballot information
- \* Ballot measure information (where applicable)
- \* Early voting options (where applicable)
- \* Election dates
- \* Factual data on candidates in various federal, state and local races
- \* General information on such topics as how to watch debates with a critical eye
- \* ID requirements
- \* Registration deadlines
- \* Voter qualifications
- \* Voter registration forms

## BOOK CLUB NEWS, by Iris Milan

With so many of our members involved in the upcoming elections, we are not having a book group meeting this month or next. In the meantime, however, I thought League members might be interested in reading a few books that have caught my attention as relevant to the Presidential election this fall. Reading the first two has raised these questions in my mind: Will either or both of the presidential candidates change the direction of our foreign policy by asking us to change our habits of consumption? Will they continue the Imperial Presidency that has been in effect since Reagan took office? The third book on my list concerns global warming, which is in line with the national League's program and also ties in with our Water Study. These are the books:

*The Limits of Power*, by Andrew Bacevich (interviewed by Bill Moyers on Aug. 15). This is a fascinating book, which looks at the Imperial Presidency and the policy of the National Security State that began with President Reagan. To rule the world, the U.S. advertises military capabilities, which in reality it doesn't possess. This policy won't change until "we the people" recognize that we are operating like a consumer nation that must take over other countries, even by force if need be, to fulfill our needs.

*The Way of the World: A Story of Truth and Hope in an Age of Extremism*. by Ron Suskind. In 2003, as Suskind reports, the White House ordered the CIA to disseminate false intelligence documents linking Al-Qaeda and Iraq. While much of the discussion is focused on the fake information, Suskind also reveals that the Bush administration and the British government knew prior to the war that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction.

*Earth Under Fire*, by Gary Braasch, In the words of the author, this is the premise of the book: "Let me state the goal clearly: No policy should be promulgated, no program initiated, no alliance sealed, no purchase made, no machine designed or built, no land use permitted, no product introduced, no law passed, no politician elected unless the action is a step forward to reduction and reversal of the effect of greenhouse gases."

Mark Hertsgaard, author of *Earth Odyssey*, cites *Earth Under Fire* as "The best book on global warming I've read this year. Braasch is an intrepid and accomplished photographer who has spent years traveling to all parts of the world to document, in stunning images and well-researched accompanying text, how global warming is changing our planet NOW. Even global warming experts can learn from this book, but it's perfect for newcomers to the topic too."

## IMPORTANT MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Here is a list of renewed members. If you don't see your name, please mail in your dues for 2008-2009. We don't want to lose you! We know it's confusing, but dues are due in May of each year. Thank you for your support.

Regina Ayars  
Brenda Barca  
Judith Benjamin  
Robert Benjamin  
Elizabeth Berry  
Olena Black  
Anne Decker  
Virginia Farr  
Charles & Margaret Howe  
Sharon Levin  
Ann Magill  
Eleanor Marzocco  
Mardi Mastain  
Anita Nevison  
Eleanore Perkins  
Edward & Betty Shelley  
Vanya & Earle Sloan  
Judy Heatherington  
Valentine Jones  
Elsbeth Walker  
Carol Voison

## 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** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-MAIL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**NEW MEMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **RENEWAL** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My Special Interest/s:**

\_\_\_\_\_

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