



HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ General Meeting, *see p.1*
- ❖ Save the Date, *see p.1*
- ❖ Membership Alert,,
see p.3
- ❖ No Voters Voice April
Issue, *see p.4*
- ❖ LWVRV board minutes,
See p. 6

**MARCH GENERAL MEETING—
Panel Discussion on Open Government**

Media from newspaper, radio and television in the Rogue Valley will discuss their perspective on open government. Panelists will answer audience questions.

Information on Oregon’s Public Meetings and Public Records laws will be discussed and provided.

Featured panelists:

Gary Nelson, Medford Mail Tribune Editorial Editor

Keith Henty, JPR and Jefferson Exchange Host and Producer

Representative from local television (to be announced - check www.lwvrv.org for updates)

Thursday, March 12, 2009

11:30 – bring a brown bag lunch

12:00 – 1:15 – program

Medford Main Library, Large meeting room

Open to the public and free of charge

SAVE THE DATE

LWVRV Annual Meeting – April 8, 2009

The Annual Meeting will be a luncheon this year, held on April 8, 2009, 11:30 – 1:15 at the Red Lion in Medford. The Annual Meeting packet containing full details will be to all members mailed during the first week in March. Mark your calendar now.

LWVOR Convention – May 15-17, 2009

LWVRV is hosting the league’s statewide convention in Medford this year. Mark your calendar and watch for details in both the LWVRV bulletin and from LWVOR.

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

-Trish Bowcock

Celebrate Sunshine Week!

Illuminate the importance of public involvement in our government process

Sunshine Week is celebrated, nationwide, each year in mid-March. The event coincides with National Freedom of Information Week and James Madison's March 16th birthday. The purpose is to raise public awareness to the importance of open government. Originally Sunshine Week was the brain child of journalists in response to assaults on various open records laws in Florida. The base of the celebration has broadened and the League of Women Voters is just one of hundreds of organizations that form a coalition of partners in celebration of Sunshine Week.

Much of the work of LWVRV focuses upon the importance of open government. The league's positions on citizen participation and access to government include the following:

"The League of Women Voters believes democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings, and making public records accessible." LWVUS Principles

"We must promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive." LWVUS Representative Government position

Citizen participation and access are also important parts of LWVOR positions on Land Use and the Judicial System, and LWVUS positions on Campaign Finance, Citizens Right to Know/Citizen Participation, Environmental Protection and Pollution Control, Natural Resources Public Participation, United Nations, and International Relations Trade Policy. LWVOR website positions

LWVRV's March General meeting kicks off Sunshine week. Join us for what promises to be a great panel discussion as we explore what "open government" means to the media in the Rogue Valley. Oregon's Public Records and Public Meetings laws will also be discussed

LEAGUE LEADERS

OFFICERS

Trish Bowcock, President

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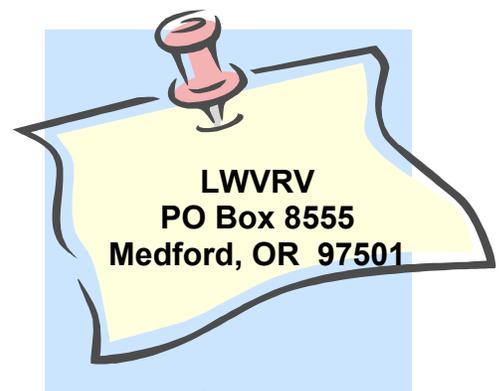
Cynthia Lora, Nominating Committee

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League of Women's Voters of Oregon

Salem, OR 97302

lwvor@open.org ~ www.lwvor.org



LWVRV Voice Mail:
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COUNTY BUDGET STUDY GROUP

The County Budget Study Group began meeting Dec. 12 and has met four times. We have had one knowledgeable guest and are inviting several more. Study Group representatives met with Dave Gilmour, current chair of the Board of Commissioners, who provided us with valuable information. We have learned that:

the County Budget is a massive document, complicated and confusing, with some jargon and a great deal of detailed information.

Oregon state law requires that the budget be presented in a certain way.

the Adopted Budget is available in its entirety on the county webpage: www.co.jackson.or.us

the County Budget Committee (CBC) of 6 is composed of the 3 County Commissioners (BOC) and 3 laypeople appointed by the BOC for 3 year staggered terms). All County Budget Committee meetings are public.

the CBC met December 8, but the minutes are not yet available.

the CBC will meet in March for "Budget Review" with each Department Director.

the CBC will hold public hearings on the budget in April, with time scheduled for public input.

at the end of the public hearings the CBC will deliberate and develop a recommended budget.

in June the BOC will formally adopt the budget.

We have recommended that this study continue into next year, so that we may fully understand the budget and the process involved, and so we may develop recommendations on what might be the most useful next step to share what we have learned with the public.

Anne Billeter

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

" MEMBERSHIP ALERT: Your LWVRV Membership Committee is encouraging early dues payment for upcoming 2009 - 2010 and will be accepting checks for said membership at the Annual Meeting on April 8, 2009. Note on your check that the payment is for " LWVRV Dues: 2009 - 2010" . Fee is \$56.00 per member with half off that price added for spouse membership, That is, a membership fee of \$84.00 per couple for 2009-2010,

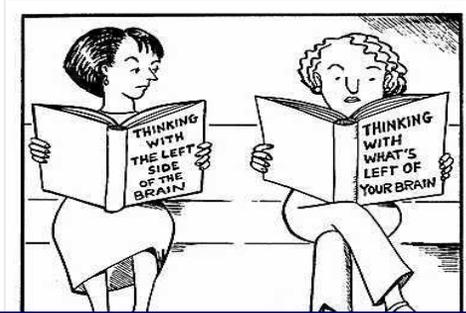
The early dues payment suggested by current Membership Committee and OK'd by LWV Board.. particularly in order that a current 'all member' edition of our Leagues' Membership Directory' can be assembled, printed and to all membership in a timely manner, Thank you. "

Cynthia Lora

VOTER'S CHOICE TEA

We are continuing to sell gourmet Voter's Choice Tea. It is a fundraiser and also gives an opening to talk to new people about the League. There are four flavors: Eleanor's Breakfast, Citizen Grey, Grassroots Green and Vanilla Rooibos (caffeine-free herbal). It costs \$4.50 a box and has been produced especially for the League by the Strand Tea Company to support the League. It is available at our general meetings and is now being sold on consignment for us by Karen's Massage 1641 Veranda Park Dr. in Medford. Her phone number is 541-301-8096. If you have a business that would like to help us sell our tea please contact Margaret Keene at 541-826-6911 or email her at margaret2@clearwire.net

Margaret



LWVRV's BOOK CLUB

"The things I want to know are in books. My best friend is the man who'll get me a book I [haven't] read."

- Abraham Lincoln

If you enjoy stimulating conversation and the reading a variety of interesting books, please join us at our book club meetings. We meet on selected Fridays from 10:00am –12noon. Please contact the hostess for details and address location. Below is a calendar and book selections for the next several meetings. All LWVRV members are welcome.

April 17, 2009

10:00am - noon

***The Story of Edgar Sawtelle* by David Wroblewski**

Hosted by Agnes Chirgwin

773-3234

May 29, 2009

10:00am - noon

***The Widows of Eastwick*, by John Updike**

Hosted by Mary Sinclair

772-2372

APRIL VOTERS VOICE

You will soon receive your Annual Meeting packet in the mail. Therefore, there will not be an April issue of the Voters Voice. The May issue will include information on the LWVOR state-wide convention to be held here in Medford May 15-17. If you would like to volunteer to help with this exciting event, please contact Trish at 899-9557. All "helping hands" are welcome and appre-

LAND USE ISSUES

LWVRV President Trish Bowcock has tried to clarify some issues of the RPS process from the Policy Committee and the DLDC. RVLWV has opposed the currently proposed Participants Agreement (PA) because the proposed PA bound the participants to sign off on a draft regional plan prior to the formal land use hearing on the plan. Our concern is that prior agreement to the plan would jeopardize the effect of public comment during the legally mandated public hearing. We have never been opposed to any less binding PA prior to the public hearing. We do support the concept of regional planning. However, the DLCD Director Whitman has indicated that PA doesn't have to be signed by all participants prior to the public hearings while John Renz, the local DLCD representative, disagrees. Also, Jacksonville has refused to sign it now. Ashland hasn't deliberated on it or signed the PA yet, but they will consider signing the accord at its March 3rd meeting.

Previously, I mentioned the Regional Economic Analysis the local pear industry had sent to the governor and the state legislature which was of some interest to them. I recently reviewed the report and therefore, I want to respond to it. The analysis in the report claims the pear industry in Jackson County is a high value food business which must be able to raise sufficient capital for investing in additional acreage to increase efficiency and expand the industry to remain competitive. The report maintains that the industry capital reserves are frozen in land and other assets and that increased access to capital must come from more flexible land use policy such as the ability to subdivide and develop housing on their orchard lands. Supposedly they would have the ability to borrow more capital because of the increase value of their orchard lands. However, the increase price of farm land encourages development of these lands. Presently, most available orchard lands in EFU zoning are up for sale at nearly \$70,000 per acre which is too high for farming such vineyards. The report supports the notion that "grapes are not necessarily planted on the same types of soils as pears and may require different micro-climates than pears." Presently, much of the local acreage of Bear Creek Valley vineyards are planted on old pear orchard lands, and I estimate that about 2/3rds of the present orchard lands could be planted to vineyards.

Historically, three of the largest pear operators, Naumes, Associated Fruit, and Harry and David, expanded and developed new and improved orchards in the 1980s and 1990s under the present zoning laws. They also relied on more current practices by consulting professional horticulturist in the upgrades. Also, Naumes sold considerable acreage of rouged out orchards at development prices and did not replace the acreage or restore older acreage. Harry and David, kept most of their rouged out orchard lands. Other individually owned orchards that were rouged out and sold were not replaced with new acreage. So it is unlikely that any orchardist would use the capital from orchard sales at development prices to expand or upgrade their orchards.

Porter Lombard

FEBRUARY MEETING SUMMARY

Members of LWVRV gathered at Lorraine Werblow's last month for a pot luck luncheon and lively discussion. As always, the food was wonderful and creative. Many thanks go to Lorraine for opening her home. The group made suggestions on updates to our local league positions. The proposed changes will be reviewed and voted upon at our Annual Meeting in April. These changes will be fully stated in the Annual Meeting Package. The group also suggested a one-year extension for completion of the County Budget Study. Watch for full information, which will arrive via regular mail in early March.



LWVRV BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 17, 2009

12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

Sun Oaks Club House

1. Call to order:

President Trish Bowcock called the meeting to order at 12:08 p.m. Present were Mickey Ketchum, Carol Hazeltine, Joan Rogers, Trish Bowcock, Willie Bijon, Marcia Smith, Eileen Adee and Cynthia Lora. Special guest/ presenters Michael Cavallaro, Director RVCOG and Kate Jackson, Ashland City Councilor and RPS Chair, were also present.

2. The first one hour of this Board Meeting was dedicated to a question and answer session between Board members of LWVRV and Mr. Cavallaro and Ms. Jackson.

3. Approval of minutes: Stand as written.

4. Treasurer's Report:

Treasurer, Willie Bijon, reports \$3,930.31 in checking and \$7,061.42 in Money Market. Willie also presented the budget for 2009 - 2010 for the Annual Meeting in April.

5. Correspondence: No report.

6. Reports:

Public Relations: Coverage on March meeting

Action: No report.

Studies: No report.

Membership: Mickey Ketchum reports Cynthia Lora will be taking over Mickey's position on membership. The Board agreed to purchase "File Maker Pro", a software program that will enable Cynthia to maintain membership data via the computer. \$268.00 was approved for the purchase.

Program:

March: Sunshine Week and Open Government. This will be a forum presentation by three local people involved in media. Trish will contact Patsy Smullen of TV5 and Keith Henty with NPR. Gary Nelson, of The Medford Mail Tribune, has already accepted Trish's invitation.

April 8, 2009: Annual Meeting. Eileen Adee has information on potential speakers for this occasion. Eileen will contact Carole Levi, Barbara Davidson and Mary Sinclair. This committee will pick a speaker.

Voters Voice: Articles must be submitted to Editor, Carole Levi no later than Friday, February 20, 2009.

7. Other Business

A brief discussion was held regarding LWVRV's position on RPS and the board did not see any reason to retract or that position.

8. LWVOR

Convention 2009. Committee meeting set for February 24, 10:00 a.m. To be held at Carole Levi's home.

Citrus Fruit sale: Close to \$4,000.00 in sales.

LWVUS: No report.

8. New Business:

Need to update LWVRV positions.

9. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.

Next Board Meeting: Tuesday, March 17, 2009, 12:00P.M. - 1:30 P.M., Main Library, Medford

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"My Administration is committed to creating an unprecedented level of openness in Government. We will work together to ensure the public trust and establish a system of transparency, public participation, and collaboration. Openness will strengthen our democracy and promote efficiency and effectiveness in Government."

President Barack Obama, January 2008

LOOKING FOR A QUIET JOB ?? Be a League Observer!

Sign-up with Eileen Adee. For further details and/or to volunteer, speak with Eileen at the next LWVRV general meeting or call her at 773-4450

LWVRV MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



Return this application with your check for dues, please

2008/2009 League of Women Voters of Rogue Valley

Membership Application

Name _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Zip _____ Phone ; _____ e-mail _____

Make out a check for Year Dues \$56. Spouse dues \$28

Send to Box 8555, Medford 97501

Check which of the following about which you are most interested in attending a branch meeting. List as many as applicable.\

- Land Use Planning Local Government Transportation Children at Risk Education
 Election issues Health issues Environment National issues

Other (list) _____

NOTE: New Members who join in February, March or April can join for half price membership

March Calendar of Events

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat/Sun
					31/1
2	3	4	5	6	7/8 Daylight Savings Time begins
9	10	11	12 LWVRV General Meeting, Open Government. see p. 1	13	14/15
16	17 LWVRV Board Meeting, 12 noon—1:30pm, Medford Library	18	19	20	21/22
23	24	25	26	27	28/29
30	31				