

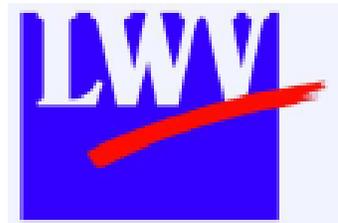


How are local schools coping in this rough economy?

Listen - Ask - Learn

FORUM sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Ashland

Free & Open to the Community



Featuring

- Michelle Zundel, Principal, Ashland High School
- Aaron Santi, Principal, Talent Elementary School
- Heidi Parker, Ashland School Board Member

Thursday, February 17

11:30 for lunch, 12:00 noon for the program

Optional lunch is only \$6.50, including tip

Elks Lodge, 255 E. Main St.

(Enter parking lot off Lithia at 2nd St;

use parking lot entrance; take elevator to 2nd floor)

For lunch reservations, call or email:

541-482-5019 or reginariley@jeffnet.org



THE ADVOCATE

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ASHLAND
February 2011 ADVOCATE

League of Women Voters of Ashland
P.O. Box 1296
Ashland, Oregon 97520
www.ashland.or.lwvnet.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- **Presidents Message**
- **Nominating Committee**
- **Legislative Process Day**
- **Program Planning**
- **Meeting with Representative Buckley**
- **Women's International Day**
- **State Raffle 2011**
- **State Convention 2011**
- **Calendar**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Many of you have recently sent in your annual membership dues but many of you did not and chose not to continue as a member of the League of Women Voters of Ashland. Our current membership is down to 35 members. That is a 50% drop from 2008. What can we do? If our League is going to continue in Ashland, we need to take a serious look at how we are organized and how we continue to support a viable non-partisan political organization here in Ashland. Two years ago at our annual business meeting, we voted to have discussions with the League of Women Voters of Rogue Valley about a merger. Should we consider that possibility again? I will be calling each of our current 35 members and some of you who chose not to renew your membership over the next month to hear your ideas about what to do. The Ashland League provides a valuable service to our community and we want to continue to influence public policy here in our town. We need your ideas and help.

Regina Ayars
President

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Our elected nominating committee, Carol Voisin, chair, Carolyn Wilhite, current Board member, and Iris Milan, past president, will be working over the next few months to identify members who are willing to take on leadership roles in our League: President, Secretary, Treasurer, Voter Services. Without leadership our League cannot thrive, grow or even exist.

Think about it. You can be a part of setting the direction and priorities for our League and influence the state League's priorities.

LEGISLATIVE PROCESS DAY

By Carolyn Wilhite

As a recent resident to Oregon I chose to attend the Legislative Process Day in Salem on Jan. 13th to better understand the issues facing this state. The day was sponsored by LWVOR and AAUWOR although the League had the greater hand in the proceedings. Marge Easley, LWVOR president, ably hosted the day.

Peggy Lynch reviewed the budget for 2011- 13 with highlights of:

- the 15% cut already made;
- an Emergency Board to a] upgrade the budget, b] Emergency Fund;
- Governor to do a line by line assessment to set growth over 10 year period;
- state workers have not had a raise in 4 - 6 years and have blackout days [no pay].

The House has co-chairs of the Revenue Committee from Coos Bay and Roseburg. Peggy also had a handout covering the natural resource battle fronts, 2011-2013.

Karen Nibler presented the Social Policy Agency Budget Impacts zeroing in on:

The Dept. of Human Services

- food credit card recipients increased from 300,000 July 2001 to 700,000 July 2010 and growing;
- Medicaid recipients increased 150,000 for the same period;
- Child Welfare caseload often result in substance abuse and poverty impacts;
- decreased hours of in-home care;
- DD children - loss of family support and case management services;
- MH cuts in community health and substance abuse treatment programs;

Oregon Health Authority will have a separate budget:

- Tobacco Tax Revenues \$4.5m coming in to increase OHP coverage;
- Federal Health Care Grants of \$21M over four[4] years;
- projected budget 2011-13 is \$1.2B to continue current programs [OR State Hospital and all mental health programs included], public health and substance abuse prevention and treatment included;
- private/public partnerships in subsidy and insurance pool programs.

Dept. of Corrections:

- Junction City Facility building plans on hold;
- Madras facility closed; Community Corrections increased to handle more offenders locally;
- M 57 implementation suspended [sex offenders];
- decrease in prison population by earned time and adjustments to mandatory sentences considered rather than early parole releases.

OR Youth Authority:

- Youth Correction Authority capacity reduced in 2003 from 1200 to 900 so more youth supervised locally;
- E board added back \$3M to cover staff in correction al facilities;

- Counties support local Juvenile Depts. and Detention facilities.

OR Commission on Children/Families:

- Agency may be eliminated and/or lose grant streams for Runaway/Homeless Youth, Juvenile Crime Prevention/Youth Investment;
- Dept. of Human Services may assume funds to contract with local CCF agencies for prevention services;

OR Housing/Community Services:

- Emergency homeless shelter/housing assistance funds not a priority.

Kappy Eaton presented:

Governance Issues:

- Census review by legislature by April 1st must consider redistricting and can change only 1% [can't have gerrymandering];
- Gov. Kitzhaber has issued a "House Building" document outlining his budget priorities and calling for only a projected revenue will be used to form the budget foundation, spending will be based on that revenue and there will be stated goals/outcomes.

Drafted bills:

- Kicker law reform/reserves;
- Measure 50[1997] reform in property taxes;
- Tax expenditures [sun setting tax credits review by policy committees and recommendations for ending, continuing or revising] to come back to Revenue for final action.

Election/Initiative Reform by House/Senate Rules committees:

- Campaign Finance Fund for ORESTAR continuation;
- Prohibits providing prepaid postage for petition sheets;
- Redistricting-technology OK, analyst hired, census data due April 1;
- Ethics Reform by Senate Rules - requires investment and assistant officers in State Treasurer's office to file statements of economic interest;
- Ways/Means constrained in adhering to revenue limits and protecting special areas of education, human services and public safety [agencies will have limited means to change programs and few, if any, new services added].

Govt. Efficiency Task Force Bill recommends:

- consolidation of motor pools across state;
- mitigating police staff over time for court hearings;
- shared housing [between counties] of special [women] populations in county jails;
- public records exemption changes for constituent criteria/processes;
- elimination of county-conducted election precinct people;
- refinement of SB 77 procedure regarding county inability to meet minimally adequate public safety.

In the afternoon we heard from a Media Panel:

Peter Wong [Statesman Journal] , David Steves [Eugene Register Guard] and Chris Lehman [Oregon Public Broadcasting] about their coverage and interaction with legislators.

If you have never attended, plan to go next year. You will learn much!

PROGRAM PLANNING

Iris Milan, Judith Benjamin, Regina Ayars and Carolyn Wilhite came together to respond to the state League's request for local concurrence on state positions. The team submitted the following:

LWVOR Positions

❖ Retain Position

- Citizen Participation and Access
- Constitutional Provisions
- Emergency Board
- Oregon Election Methods
- Oregon State Courts
- Redistricting
- Air Quality
- Conservation
- Nuclear
- Land Use
- Parks
- Seismic Risks
- Water Resources
- Adult Corrections
- Child Care
- Children at Risk
- Farmworkers Issues
- Mental Health Services for Children and Youth

❖ Drop Position- none

❖ Update Position

- Economic Development Revenue Bonds -Why is the population limited to \$300,000 (Portland only) which excludes smaller cities
- Election Laws - Allow for same day registration
- Fiscal Policy - Given change in the economic/fiscal situation.topic warrants review and update
- Initiative and Referendum - Incorporate the 2010 Citizens Initiative Process
- Coastal Management - update in progress
- Water Policy and Planning - update in progress
- Water Quality - update in progress
- Education Post Secondary - update to current educational structure
- Adult Mental Health - court system specifically for mental health
- Homeless Youth - define status offender
- Juvenile Justice - Add sheltering for youth; no reference to \$1 million for implementation

❖ **New Study Proposed**

- Concurrence with the proposed Portland League's K-12 Education Study.

MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVE PETER BUCKLEY

LWV members present:

Regina Ayars, Iris Milan - Ashland League

Lorraine Werblow, Shiena Polehn - Rogue Valley League

- ❖ **Question 1.** The Revenue Forecast has predicted a \$3.4 billion decrease in funds available for the 2011-2013 Legislative Budget. State agencies have slashed budgets in the current biennium to adjust for declining revenue during 2009-2011. What are your priorities? Where would you cut services in the state agencies? Would you support additional revenue sources? Would you favor sunsets of current tax credits?

- **Priorities:** Early Childhood Education and Head Start
 - In-home elderly and disabled care
 - Daycare
- **Cuts in Agencies:**
 - The 2009-2011 budget was well-balanced, appropriately cutting funds where needed. Continue that balance.
 - Means-test long-term care benefits with incomes over \$125,000 receiving no deduction benefit. This will require AARP endorsement
- **Additional Revenue Sources:**
 - Personal kicker proposal to allocate 10% to rainy day fund
 - Corporate kicker proposal to allocate 100% to education or Youth Authority (OYA)
 - Sales Tax will be put forward but will not pass
 - Shifting state police budget of \$93million to the highway budget using increased gasoline tax (6cents)
 - Increase beer/wine tax and dedicate monies to drug/alcohol education
- **Sunsets:**
 - In 2009-2011 legislation required all new tax credits to have a sunset date
 - In 2011-2013 \$200million of credit will sunset; mortgage deduction is NOT included

- ❖ **Question 2.** The Governor has recommended a reset of priorities for state funded services. Which of the recommendations made by the Governor's Reset Cabinet would you support? Would you eliminate or restructure any of the state commissions or departments?

- Reset Cabinet Recommendations:
- Restructuring:
 - Front load agency budgets in 2011 for restructuring costs with the understanding that less money will be available in 2012
 - Integrate Mental Health and Physical healthcare
 - 8 agencies have overlap in management - eliminate redundancy. Require 10-15% maximum on administration. Currently administration is 30-40%
 - Public safety budgets growing due to prison system budget increases - mandatory sentencing

- Review sentencing laws, cap number of beds at 14,000 statewide, use dorms or in-home ankle bracelets
- Madras prison is built but not filled
- Judicial court budgets are in the public safety budget
- PERS - employees will pay more for their healthcare

❖ **Question #3.** How should redistricting be accomplished during this legislative session?

Are you satisfied with the current process for redistricting?

- A committee of representatives and senators will make a recommendation to the congress. If the congress cannot agree it will be given the Secretary of State to determine
- Buckley to have an increase in the size of his district (Greensprings to Ashland, to Jacksonville, to Applegate with 2 West Medford precincts)

❖ **Question #4.** What do you see as the biggest concerns of your constituents this session?

What are your plans for helping to resolve these issues?

- K-12 education could remain flat. Higher Ed budget will increase due to increased enrollment. Could remain stable for the next 5 years with a maximum tuition increase of 10% each year
- OR could move away from a model of hours in class to a proficiency based model

WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL DAY - MARCH 8TH

Come celebrate with the women of Ashland, Women's International Day on March 8th on the plaza. Mayor Stromberg will read the proclamation and then the celebration will begin: music, famous quotes read by famous Ashland women. Louie's will offer a special discount for the occasion and fun will be had by all. Mark your calendar now!

STATE CONVENTION MAY 13-15, 2011

Meeting Big Challenges: Economics & Demographics

This year's state convention will be held at the Keizer Renaissance Inn & Conference Center in Keizer. The hosts are LWV of Marion and Polk Counties.

STATE RAFFLE 2011

Win \$3,000 for the Vacation of Your choice. The winner will receive a certificate for \$3,000 to be used for travel anywhere in the world. Each ticket costs \$10 with only 2,000 tickets to be printed. The drawing will be held at the May convention. The winner does NOT have to be present. The raffle will raise \$15,000. More information to follow in March.

CALENDAR

February 17	Education Panel
February 18	Board of Directors Meeting
March 8	Women's International Day
March 18	Board of Directors Meeting
April TBD	Special Election Forum
April 15	Board of Directors Meeting
May 11	Special Election: Fire station levy
May 13-15	State Convention
May TBD	Annual Business Meeting: Election of new officers

June TBD

National Convention