

## Annual Giving Meeting 2021 – Rogue Community Health

Thursday, December 9, 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM - Zoom



William North is the CEO of Rogue Community Health. We are asking him to spend about 20 minutes describing the accomplishments and goals for the organization and ten minutes for questions. Please join us as we prioritize our health care positions for 2022 amid a year of disruption to hospitals and caregivers.



11:30 AM presentation

12 Noon Social Time

- President’s Pen...p. 2
- Ranked Choice Voting...pp. 3-4
- Blue Heron Park Field Trip...p. 5
- Ballot Measure 15-201 Results...p. 6
- Jordan Cove Update...p. 6
- Calendar...p. 7

## President's Pen

We just returned from Pennsylvania on the 22<sup>nd</sup> to a preordered Thanksgiving dinner from the Ashland Co-op. John, my mother, and I are trying to simplify to save energy for our big move back East. Mom, John and I have bought a lovely house on a small lake in southern Adams County, just over the border from Maryland. We've found a contractor to remodel and get it ready for our return in the Spring. Our daughter, who lives in Baltimore, is extremely happy that we will all be within an hour's drive of one another. It may be a bit crazy to buy this much larger house, especially while others our age are down-sizing, but it will give us all space and there will be plenty of room for Chloe and her partner AND their friends if they want to come and ski at the resort around the corner--also room for visiting League friends!

The plan is to move in late March. Sheila McGuinnis is waiting to take the baton until we hold elections in May. (Zoom is now my useful tool to stay connected with you all. I held the November Board Meeting from a camp table and Dick's folding chairs in the empty PA lake house. The only obstacle was calculating the time difference.) While I'm thinking of finding a League in Pennsylvania, I hope you will be thinking ahead to jumping into committees and positions on the Board. I have learned so much these few years and my involvement with the League has given me purpose through dark times. It's good to step out of your comfort zone whether it be driving cross-country with a 93-year-old mother and 2 cats or trying desperately to remember Robert's Rules of Order!

On a more somber note, Bill Walsh has asked me to share with the membership that he is receiving hospice care at home in Eagle Point. As many of you are aware, he and Shirley (Weathers) are a dynamic team fighting continually for better healthcare and a better environment and their combined energy and dedication is unsurpassed in our local League and LWVOR. Shirley will happily share emails and cards with Bill, but we must respect that visitation and phone calls are not appropriate at this time.

Our 'Giving Meeting' is December 9<sup>th</sup> @ 11:30. I'm particularly aware at this time that it is important to connect with and cherish friends. I hope to see you all on Zoom.

Margie Peterson, President LWVRV

The League of Women Voters Rogue Valley welcomes submissions to the newsletter, *The Voters' Voice*. Editor Jim Buck can be reached at 541-830-0602 and [newsletter@lwvroguevalley.org](mailto:newsletter@lwvroguevalley.org)

LWVRV  
P.O. Box 8555  
Medford OR 97501  
541-479-4486

Contact the webmaster:  
[webadmin@lwvroguevalley.org](mailto:webadmin@lwvroguevalley.org)

Website: <https://lwvroguevalley.org/wp/>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/lwvrv/>

Email: [pres@lwvroguevalley.org](mailto:pres@lwvroguevalley.org)

# Good Lessons for LWV when Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) is implemented

Our Rogue Valley Local League supports Ranked Choice Voting (RCV), along with LWV Oregon; both who are open to some other options as well. But we have learned that frequently the new ballot types used (for different systems) are greatly affected by HOW the election is implemented. And there's the rub. Implementation is not always smooth-sailing.

As Pew Trust's November 2021 Stateline reported: "[Ranked Choice Voting Survived Its Biggest Election Season Yet](#)." The successes included winning ballot initiatives for RCV in Ann Arbor, Michigan; Westbrook, Maine and Broomfield, Colorado, joining what is now about 50 US jurisdictions using a new ballot. But that is not the whole story, and making the choice to use RCV does not always ensure a successful implementation.

Often, election administrators are the biggest opponents of moving to RCV, and are not fans of changing their system, which is understandable because it takes extra work to ramp up. But RCV advocates have learned over and over that the most important elements of implementation include transparency (of rules), ballot design, and VOTER EDUCATION. Often the election offices need all the help available (especially with voter education).

Can implementation really make a difference? Yes, and here are two examples of a glitch.

In the much-publicized 2021 New York City mayoral RCV primary, the city's Board of Elections understandably used test ballots before the election to verify everything was working. But unfortunately, they failed to remove the 135,000 test ballots before running the actual results. The snafu and delay had nothing to do with the RCV process, and the board later apologized. Still, the public saw 'complicated' and postponed results for their first RCV election.

In Utah, 23 cities used RCV in 2021 (up from 2 in 2019). On the good side, a [Salt Lake Tribune piece](#) (Nov 15 2021) reported on a poll showing that "86% of voters in cities and towns that used ranked choice voting were either satisfied or very satisfied with the voting method, 81% said it was very easy or somewhat easy to use, and 63% somewhat liked it or liked it a great deal." But the story doesn't end there.

Commotion took place with the Sandy, Utah city mayor's race when certification was delayed due to a reported "misunderstanding/misapplication of state law regarding whether a recount was needed or even possible." Evidently, the questioning was not from elections experts, nevertheless, the delay reflected badly on RCV, although it had nothing to do with RCV.

Opponents of RCV like to lay blame in that direction. Our own LWVRV county government study addressed these often-unsubstantial claims before. For example, we cited a New York

Times Editorial Opinion ([Vote for Me! For Second Place, at Least?](#)) which while covering Maine's 2018 first-in-the country statewide RCV race, described a 2018 San Francisco election in which "voters *made eight times as many errors on ballots for the gubernatorial primary, which was run using the **standard method**, as they did on mayoral ballots, which used ranked-choice.*" As the Times said, "*ballots can be designed intuitively.*"

Perhaps some problems cannot be easily avoided, yet every preemptive step is a plus toward a smooth election. There are lessons for us in Oregon if changes are implemented. In cities in Minnesota and around the nation, election administrators, RCV advocates, and LWV groups have taken efforts to avoid problems when a new type of ballot is used. These include:

- Transparent tabulation process open to the public;
- Research and testing on best ballot design;
- Reach-out work (via video webinars or zoom) with election administrators from other states, or a group like [Ranked Choice Voting Resource Center](#), which is an organization by former election administrators with a goal of aiding other officials;
- Voter education via **videos, newsletter and social media**. (Many advocate groups don't reinvent the wheel, but borrow materials from groups such as [FairVote.org](#) or [RankIT](#), which have many of these items prepared);
- Public Mock-elections (as an example, asking resident to rank their favorite city park or rec center).

Around the nation, many local and state Leagues have been an active part of this implementation effort, especially the last two (centered on voter education). Most are willing to help other League members who wish to work on programs in their communities. One day that might include us.

Barbara Klein, LWVRV Action Chair

## Field Trip to Blue Heron Fire Restoration Project with Jim Buck

November 11, 2021

A dozen+ toured the aftermath and recovery of Blue Heron Park in Phoenix on a sunny day field trip with our newsletter editor Jim Buck. Jim has considerable professional experience with water management and is a Master Gardener volunteer with the project to replant the ravages of the Alameda Fire. Dead alders and melted playground equipment were part of the original landscape, but so was renewal of the Pollinator Garden, the sprouting groundcover along Bear Creek, and the refurbished community garden. Jim encouraged us to consider our recent League Pesticide discussion and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion when viewing the restoration work.

When discussing the Greenway blackberry control effort, the use of herbicides and other control measures like the plusses and minuses of goats were mentioned. When we broached the topic of water quality in Bear Creek, one attendee mentioned that a nearby beaver dam on a tributary of Bear Creek might be helping to hold back toxins and sediment from the fire ravaged landscape.

Zoe West, from the Blue Heron Community Garden, spoke with us about the importance of community gardens from a DEI perspective. Nearby community gardens reduce the obstacles of lacking transportation, not having access to fresh and organic food, not having space for a garden, and the ability to grow culturally relevant food. She ended her talk by offering that the community garden provides a place to “heal”.

At the recently refurbished pollinator garden, Kathleen Donham identified the many bees and other pollinators enjoying the colorful, flowering plants. They were a reminder of the resilience of nature when given a chance.

The Park rehabilitation has involved Jackson County, Bee City USA, Southern Oregon Landscape Association, FEMA, Cascade Girl, and Business Oregon, among others. The Rogue Valley Council of Governments will receive funds for restoration as well. (Photo courtesy of Alan Journet)



## Ballot Measure 15-201 [County Assessor] Fails 55% to 45% - Kathleen Donham

The Medford Mail Tribune (MMT) has 17,138 subscribers, which is close to the number of citizens who voted for Ballot Measure 15-201 concerning appointment (rather than election) of the Jackson County Assessor. The LWV Rogue Valley President wrote a supporting guest editorial, and a careful member wrote a supportive letter-to-the-editor, as well as positive editorials from the MMT staff. There were no arguments in the Voters' Guide.

Turnout was low with only 25% of registered voters bothering to vote. Out of 38,830 votes, 45% voted for the measure and 55% voted against. Precincts supporting included Jacksonville, Talent, and Ashland by significant margins. The town of Phoenix, which was particularly affected by the Assessor errors, voted against the measure.

Yes 17,503 45.08%

No 21,327 54.92%

---

## Battle over Jordan Cove energy project is over after developers pull plug

By Liam Moriarty (Jefferson Public Radio) Dec. 1, 2021 3:22 p.m.

The bitter and protracted battle over the Jordan Cove Energy Project has finally come to a close. The Calgary-based Pembina company has [formally asked](#) federal energy regulators to withdraw authorizations for the proposed pipeline and liquified natural gas export terminal in southwest Oregon.

Susan Jane Brown is an attorney with the Western Environmental Law Center in Eugene. She says the decision to abandon Jordan Cove represents a hard-fought victory for the environmental groups, landowners, tribes and others who've opposed it.

"For all of us that have been working together to fight this project for so long, it's a huge sigh of relief. And in a lot of ways it's hard to believe that maybe it's finally true," Brown said.

Jordan Cove was given a key permit by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission last year. But Pembina was unable to convince Oregon state regulators that the proposal could meet environmental standards. [When legal efforts to overturn those state denials failed](#), the company was left with no real path forward, and finally pulled the plug.



## LWVRV Calendar

### December

- Thursday 9 Membership Annual Giving Meeting, 11:30 – 12:30 (Zoom)
- Thursday 16 Board meeting, 10:30
- Monday 27 Newsletter submissions due

### January

- Thursday 13 Membership meeting, 11:30 – Zoom
- Thursday 20 Board meeting, 10:30
- Thursday 27 Newsletter submissions due

- If you must have a mailed paper copy of this newsletter, please call Jim at 541-830-0602 or email [newsletter@lwvroguevalley.org](mailto:newsletter@lwvroguevalley.org)
- You should also be receiving newsletters by email from State and National.
- **For a membership application**, go to <http://lwvroguevalley.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/MembershipApplication501c3AsOf20190725.pdf>