



Membership Meeting – Gun Control and Safety

Thursday, February 10, 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM – Zoom

Speakers

- **Marge Easley** has held many leadership positions with the League of Women Voters over the last 29+ years. She has been Clackamas County League Co-President 2014-2015 and LWVOR President 2007-2011. As a member of the state League’s Action team, she advocates at the State Legislature on many issues including gun safety.
- **Steven Thatcher** has been an avid firearms enthusiast and shooter for many years. He is currently an NRA certified pistol instructor and is a graduate of the Critical Balance Shooting Academy with certifications in various self-defense disciplines.

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President's Pen

We have switched up the events calendar: 1) the water panel will now be in March and 2) we look forward to a panel of two (Marge Easley from LWVOR Action and Steve Thatcher, an NRA certified safety trainer) giving us information on gun control and safety, February 10th. I'm anticipating a lively discussion!

Just in case you have not taken advantage of the US Government's offer of 4 free COVID rapid testing kits per household, here is the website: <https://special.usps.com/testkits>. One more tool to help us be safe.

I wanted to take a moment to remember Bill Walsh. I first met Bill and Shirley Weathers at a Health Care for All Oregon (HCAO) meeting in 2016. In a conversation about the common good and my renewed energy to save the world, Shirley and Bill suggested that I might like to come to a League meeting. That was the beginning of a two-organization friendship. I have observed how they both took on responsibilities quietly and with determination, a strong team supporting each other working to make a difference in our lives. Bill followed all the healthcare legislation through the Oregon State Legislature on behalf of LWVOR Action and reporting to LWVRV, as our Action Health Care Coordinator, and to HCAO. He stepped up to be on numerous committees like the website committee and did multiple years on the nominating committee. Bill was also our go-to for publishing in the local papers and advertising. But most of all he was a calm voice and a sweet friend. I will miss sharing a beer and a meal with the other half of a great partnership. If you would like to make a donation in his name, here are the two local organizations he served:

1) HCAO Rogue Valley (c/o Ivend Holand, 1301 Siskiyou Blvd., Medford, OR 97504) and/or 2) LWVRV (donations can be made [online](#) or mailed to LWVRV, PO Box 8555, Medford, OR 97504).

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

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William “Bill” P. Walsh, Jr.
1947 – 2022



LWVRV member William “Bill” P. Walsh, Jr. (74) died peacefully at home in Eagle Point, OR of pancreatic cancer on January 2, 2022. Bill was a “man of few words” who didn’t seek the limelight, but whose authenticity, integrity, intelligence, and tenacity landed him in leadership roles in matters he cared deeply about. There were a number of those. He devoted his life to making things better for people, especially those facing barriers to success. Service on an education project in the VISTA program brought him from his native Wisconsin to Utah, followed by work at a ranch for troubled boys, and work for 15 years at Utah Issues Information Program, a statewide nonprofit policy advocacy organization that sought justice and opportunity for low-income people. He directed the agency for eight years and began there his lifelong commitment to universal healthcare.

Married to Utah Issues coworker Shirley Weathers in 1996, their shared love for the outdoors then led them to purchase and live for 18 years on 40 acres they called “Rosebud” in rural Fruitland, UT. They continued the kind of work they had done at Utah Issues through their consulting business, Walsh & Weathers Research and Policy Studies, as well as operated Rosebud Llamas Utah, a llama packing outfitter guide service. They enjoyed hiking, camping, fishing, biking, and skiing. They found themselves leading their neighbors in a successful effort to repel an oil company planning to drill an oil well in their midst. They also threw energies into preserving and protecting the “longest art gallery in the world,” with Bill holding a seat on the Nine Mile Canyon Coalition Board from 1998 until his death. After moving to Oregon in 2013, Bill and Shirley joined LWVRV and shortly began serving on the local and state Action Committees of the League of Women Voters—Bill headed up health care work for both entities. He also worked with Health Care for All Oregon (HCAO).

Bill wrote these final words before his death: “Remember me. Blessed are the peacemakers for they will possess our earth. Blessings on our caregivers: family, friends, and professionals. They do the essential work to make our lives meaningful and productive. Finally, I declare that all residents of the world have a right to health care—care driven by well-regulated patient care rather than corporate profits. God bless one and all.”

Beyond LWV Membership - Why Serve on LWVRV's Board?

Here are the experiences of two current board members. More board members will share next month. Please consider joining the board. It's work, but you spend time with, and get to know, the nicest people. Be forewarned - we laugh a lot!

1. Rick Bennett, LWVRV Board Member

In the coming months, you may get a call from the LWVRV's nominating committee asking you to serve on our Board. When that call comes, think carefully, and then say, "YES."

I was recently asked, "Why do you serve on the LWVRV board?" One answer would be, "Because I was asked." But there's more to it than that.

When I retired in 2014 and moved to the Rogue Valley, I was looking for ways to be engaged in my new community. I became a volunteer for ACCESS, the local food bank, and applied to serve on local government advisory committees. As a former lobbyist, I wanted to continue to use my knowledge and experience as an advocate on governance issues such as campaign finance and election reform. The League of Women Voters was an obvious choice to do so.

I started attending the monthly League meetings. When someone asked about being an observer of local governments, I said, "Yes." When LWVRV's treasurer had to leave due to family health concerns, a volunteer was needed. With an accounting degree and experience with budgets and so forth, I said, "Yes." I served as treasurer for over three years and then as vice president before stepping down last year (I have recently been reappointed to LWVRV's board).

So why do I serve on the LWVRV board? Certainly, I support the LWV's mission and the work of the state and local organizations. And with any organization that I decide to support with my most valuable resource – my time – I have looked for ways that my experience and skills could be utilized. And, of course, serving on the board allows me to be involved in the decisions that impact the work of LWVRV.

One more thing – while serving on the LWVRV board and being engaged in various LWVRV activities, I have met many extraordinary individuals. The variety of experiences, skills, and interests of our board members and those serving on committees is truly amazing!

So, when someone asks you to serve, please say, "YES."

2. Kathleen Donham, LWVRV Board Member

Given the doom & gloom of our current time, it is easy to claim there is little an individual can do to make a difference. I beg to differ: the League board gives you that chance.

Our local LWV is a respected voice and board members are good listeners. A new idea for taking positive action within our guidelines will always be considered, and a member may very well find colleagues who agree to help.

The League has many avenues for engagement, with a reputation of credibility to make the job easier. I have been newsletter editor, president, and membership and voters service chairs, and in each job, I find I don't have to invent the wheel—I can get as much advice as I ask for.

Come join us.



Many hands make light work

Childcare Re-study LWVOR

The LWVOR is updating its [Childcare Study from 1985](#). Part of the update includes interviewing local child care providers with a series of questions. In conversation with study chair Kathleen Hersh, she indicated that these interviews can be done by telephone. Interview questions will be posted on the [Rogue Valley League website](#). Please contact Kathleen Donham at voterservice@lwvroguevalley.org if you would like to participate. Surveys are due March 15, 2022.



The League in Rogue Valley Acknowledges RCV Celebration



1-2-3 is another designation for January 23. Last month, that day was an opportunity to raise awareness of Ranked Choice Voting (RCV), a better voting system.

There's no great need to explain RCV to LWVRV members, as we have a county government position that encourages the use of the system. Yet, an easy way to explain it to others is that RCV uses **Power of a Backup Vote** – if your first-choice candidate receives too few votes to stay in the race, then your 2nd or 3rd choice is counted.

That's the "how" part; more interesting are the benefits it brings: the "instant runoff" guarantees a majority winner and there's no worry of splitting our vote or of "wasting" the vote on an unelectable contender. Campaigns have an incentive for more positive approaches (candidates, knowing it's to their advantage, appeal to a wide range of voters). Ultimately, when electing representatives that have broader support, we are all more satisfied. Additionally, when used to replace a primary, or a delayed runoff, it saves time and money.

Communities across the nation have been using RCV to elect their leaders. In November of 2021, 32 cities across seven states (UT, DE, MA, ME, MI, MN, and NM) successfully used RCV on Election Day.

Ranked Choice Voting Day (Jan. 23) saw many presentations around the nation and celebrated supporters and activists who work to bring RCV to more states/cities/counties. League members were front and center in many of those states. (One of the organizers, FairVote, has a helpful report on RCV successes in the last year; it can be seen at FairVote's [End-of-Year Report](#) about RCV progress in 2021.)

Want more Fun? Time to Sing along?

Don't want to read more? Or listen to another webinar or take part in another zoom meeting? Maybe you would like to simply listen to some RCV songs. They were just posted and some have had few views, so you might be in the top 100 viewers.

- Folk /Country - RCV Bounce: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Z9GNKBCweba5Bivil7ArBZrzIJw09zFR/view>
- From Virginia – a parody of "My Sharona": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hZlrf7v-6nw>
- From the show the Greatest Showman: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lePKt7U-hOk>
- For those who like rap (or can appreciate it), check this out: <https://youtu.be/A5v2kCKw38k>
- Based on the Jackson-5 song from the 1960s, A-B-Cs <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFjwlye5UxWdwPAjXVmnhUA>

Back to Learning?

You can learn more about RCV research on representation from the group [RepresentWomen](#) on Sunday, Feb. 6 at 10:00 AM (Pacific) or 1:00 PM (ET). The host for this national zoom meeting will be Rank-the-Vote, a group providing RCV activism in many states, with guest speaker Katie Usalis. Registration is open at: <https://bit.ly/representwomensvp>

Barbara Klein, LWV Rogue Valley, Action Chair

Climate Change News

Shirley Weathers, Climate Change Coordinator

After 15 years of tenacious opposition, the Jordan Cove LNG and Pacific Connector Pipeline Project is finally dead! On January 25, 2022, the last step remaining to declare total defeat of the project occurred: The Court of Appeals of the DC Circuit issued an order dismissing challenges to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) March 2020 authorizations for the project and allows FERC to vacate those authorizations. More specifically, the court granted FERC's request to dismiss the petitions challenging these critical permits filed last year by the State of Oregon; affected landowners; the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw; the Cow Creek band of the Umpqua Tribes; and environmental organizations.

LWVRV has worked hard in opposition to the project—based on natural resources, water and air quality, climate change, offshore and coastal management, land use, public health and safety, energy conservation, and seismic risks positions. Work began early on but ramped up in earnest in early 2018 when the four affected Leagues—Coos and Klamath Counties and Rogue and Umpqua Valleys—began working together largely to stop state and federal permits. LWVOR added their support shortly thereafter, including by contributing funding to the work of an attorney who, with others including the Crag Law Center, successfully fought many local project permits in Douglas and Coos Counties. Defeating a massive project of this nature (\$10 billion price tag) took the tireless work of thousands of people and entities, from individuals acting on their own to lawyers, policy analysts, scientists, academicians, researchers, community organizers, landowners, and state and federal regulatory agency staff. This victory attests to both the independent and collaborative roles the LWV can play in making things happen.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – LWVRV – Our Ongoing Challenge

By Joyce Puccini Chapman

I am writing this column on January 27, 2022, 77 years since January 27, 1945 when the Auschwitz concentration camp was liberated. We now honor those liberated with Holocaust Remembrance Day. A tweet by Rachel Vindman (yes, Col. Alexander Vindman's wife) made me seriously consider where we are in this country on this day:

"Remember, it didn't start with gas chambers. It started with politicians dividing people with "us v. them." It started with intolerance and hate speech and when people stopped caring, became desensitized, and turned a blind eye."

I learned of this tweet through a retweet by "Gracie's Human," a LGBTQ+ advocate and a friend, who is extremely concerned about current events related to suppression of LGBTQ+ rights, voting rights, and other civil liberties. The poem "[First They Came](#)" by Martin Niemoller, a Lutheran minister and holocaust survivor, rings in my mind.

What is in today's news? According to the [Associated Press](#), the Florida legislature is considering a bill forbidding discussions of sexual orientation or gender identity in schools. Activists have named it the "Don't Say Gay" bill. The article continues, telling us that the Florida bill is similar to a number of state laws passed mostly in the 1980's and early 1990's to restrict discussion of LGBTQ+ issues in public schools. Among the states are Utah, Arizona, South Carolina and Alabama. Tennessee, Arkansas, and Montana passed laws last year that allow parents to opt their children out of such discussions.

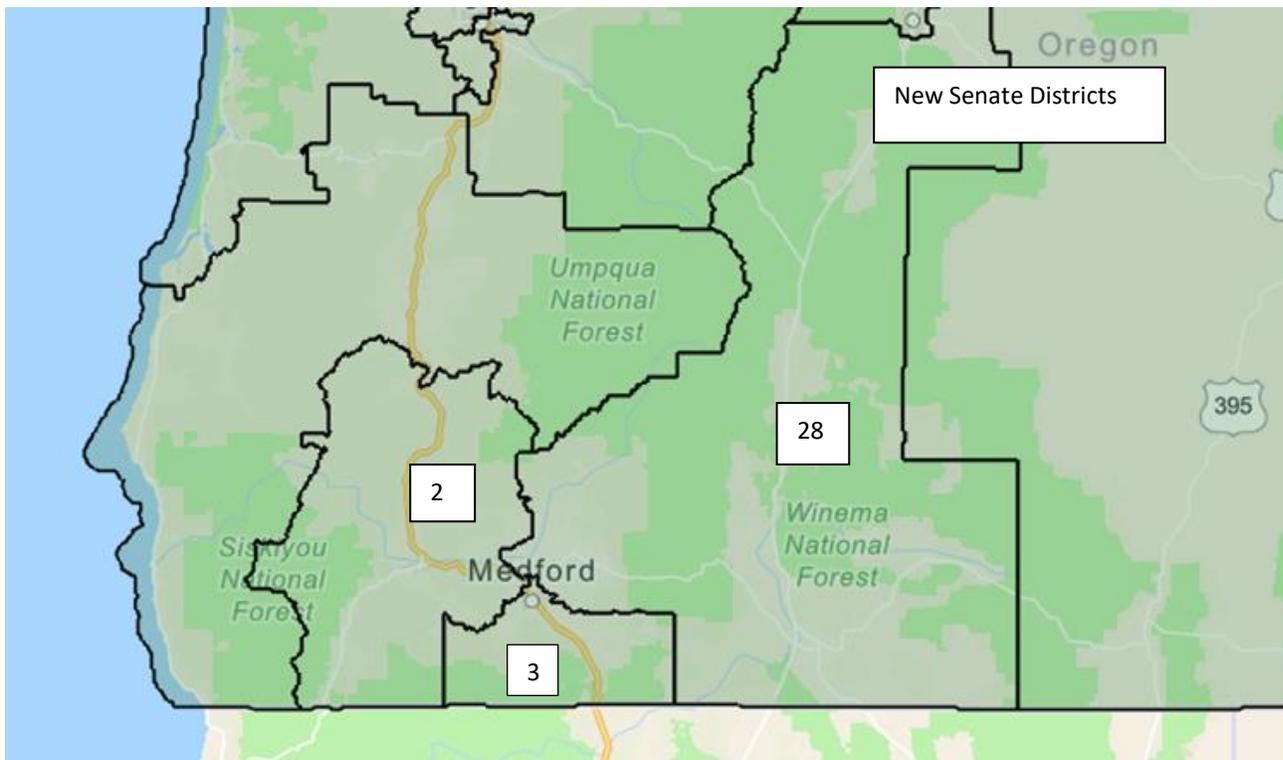
An article in the [Daily Mail](#) tells us that Governor Youngkin of Virginia set up a tip line for parents "to come forward and report any state schools they believe to be 'behaving objectionably'." Governor Youngkin has expressed concern about children being made uncomfortable in the teaching of black history that he incorrectly describes as "critical race theory." Consider how broad the term "behaving objectionably" is.

Also in today's news is the announcement of the retirement of Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer and President Biden's reiteration of his promise to appoint the first black woman Supreme Court Justice. This is good news and a long time coming since the Emancipation Proclamation issued September 22, 1862 and the passage of the 14th Amendment on June 13, 1866.

Going back to Rachel Vindman's warning about politicians dividing us with "us v. them," how many Senators will vote "yes" on President Biden's nominee? Will voting rights legislation pass? There is a lot dividing us these days and many who seem intent on fueling that division. We need to fight these trends and defend our democracy. Note the email from Virginia Kase Solomon, CEO, LWVUS asking us to donate to "...help repair the damage to our democracy and make sure all votes count!" It is time to fight ladies and gentlemen. Can we count on you? What will you do? What would you have done when "First They Came?"

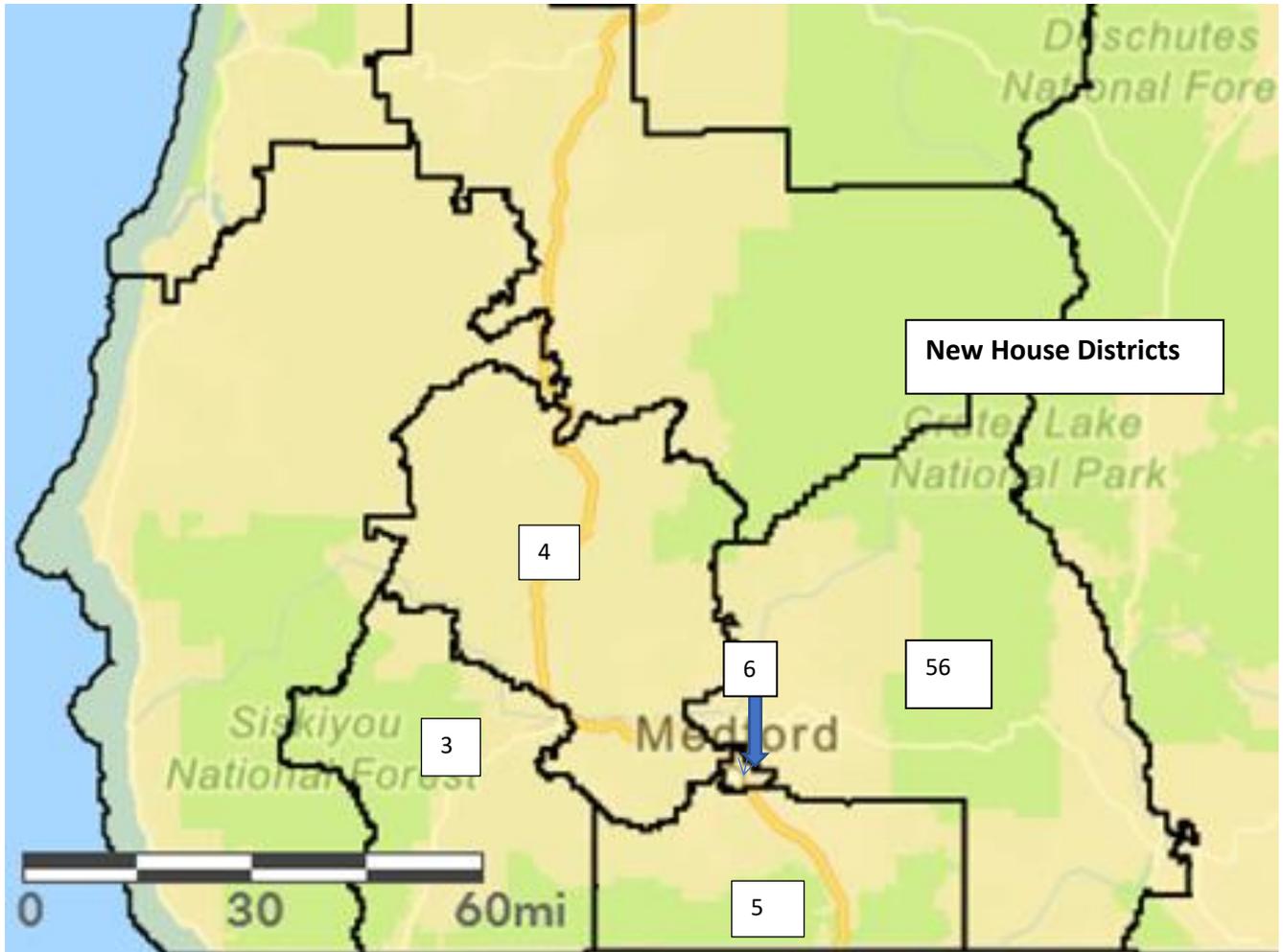
Voters Service Report February 2022

- Have your Oregon House and Senate districts changed as a result of Redistricting? If you live in Northeast Jackson County (e.g., Shady Cove, Eagle Point, White City), there's a good chance you have been moved to House District 56 now instead of HD 55. HD 56 used to be southern Klamath County, but has been expanded. Rep. Breese, formerly of HD 55 is likely to run in another district election.
- Elections in 2022 will use the new district lines with those elected taking their seats in January of 2023. Legislators will continue to serve constituents in the current districts through 2022. Look at the new maps at <https://www.lwvor.org/redistricting-in-oregon>



- The state League plans to host candidate forums for the State Supreme Court, the Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor and Industry, and possibly the Governor's race if there are a manageable number of candidates. We will also have traditional printed Voters Guides in Braille and Large Print. *Let Voters Service know if you have preferences for Rogue Valley candidate forums.*
- There are currently no Ballot Measures for Jackson County, but there is **Ballot Measure #17-105, Repeal of Josephine County Ordinance 2021-002** regarding civil "infraction citations" for violations of Title 19 of the Rural Land Development Code.
- Voters who use the Oregon on-line voter registration site will recognize the "Oregon Votes" website that is a collaboration between the Secretary of State and the 36 county

election offices. Oregon Votes establishes data standards for elections statistics, participation, results, and reporting across the state, and is in the process of being modernized this year. Visit <https://data.oregon.gov/stories/s/mak5-sgn2> to see the timeline for the updates and the budget for this \$10 million dollar project.



The Voters Service Committee will be meeting in March to accomplish the following:

- 1) review the vote411 entries
- 2) discuss the forum plans for April and the May elections
- 3) determine how to spend our allotment for election publicity
- 4) decide on distribution plan for Voters Guides
- 5) survey need for Voter Education/Speakers Bureau presentations

COME JOIN US! Kathleen Donham kdonham@gmail.com

What's a SOCAN and what use is it? Alan Journet, Co-facilitator of SOCAN

Southern Oregon Climate Action Now (SOCAN.eco) is closing in on its tenth anniversary (September 2022). The grassroots, volunteer climate activist organization was formed because co-founders and current co-facilitators Kathy Conway and Alan Journet relocated to Ashland in 2010 and were surprised to find no such organization already existed. In consort with a corps of dozens of energetic and enthusiastic wannabe climate-concerned activist area residents, Kathy and Alan remedied that regional oversight. Since then, SOCAN has grown to boast a mailing list of over 1600 area residents and a corps of many dedicated activists. In addition, a couple of other local organizations spun off SOCAN while yet others have since incorporated climate concern into their missions. Southern Oregon is now known throughout the state as a hotbed of climate activism.

SOCAN's [mission statement](#) incorporates two prongs: (1) promoting awareness and understanding about the science of global warming, its climate change consequences, and remedies, and (2) promoting individual and collective (political) action to address the climate crisis through mitigation of its cause and adapting to its impact.

The education prong led to our establishment in 2017 of the Master Climate Protector – A Primer for Action course, offered for the seventh time starting February 9th (socanmcp.eco). The course has produced over 100 graduates so far, graduates who are spreading informed words about the climate crisis and the need for action. The education prong also includes our offerings of presentations to local community and service groups on all aspects of climate change and our engaging with regional teachers to help them incorporate climate science into their curriculum.

The action and government prong involves an array of projects through which SOCAN helps area residents understand what they can do individually. This prong also includes a federal and state project that has been engaging with state legislators and the statewide coalition of climate activists since we were established. The goal has been to establish meaningful greenhouse gas emissions reduction programs in the state. Since Governor Brown's Executive Order 20-04 (March 2020) charged state agencies with developing programs to reduce emissions, promote carbon sequestration, and do so through the lens of social justice, we have collaborated with the same statewide coalition and now state agencies as these programs are being developed. SOCAN was instrumental in persuading the state Department of Environmental Quality and Environmental Quality Commission to develop and approve respectively a State Climate Protection Program that is stronger than was initially proposed.

A second aspect of this prong was initiated about a year ago with a County and City Project that targets more local government entities. This project now comprises a series of action teams in regional cities, each attempting to encourage climate action appropriate for that city and its current level of engagement on the issue.

Addressing our mission, SOCAN now has 22 projects scattered across the five programs of Education, Government, Transportation, Natural Resources, and Community Outreach. Please look for news about our tenth anniversary celebration and join us if you can.

Kathy Conway and Alan Journet (alan@socan.eco) are both members of the LWVRV.

LWVRV Calendar

February

- Tuesday 1 Oregon Legislature begins
- Thursday 10 Membership meeting, 11:30 – Zoom, Gun Control & Safety
- Thursday 17 Board meeting, 10:30 – Zoom
- Sunday 27 Newsletter submissions due

March

- Monday 7 Oregon Legislature ends
- Thursday 10 Membership meeting, 11:30 – Zoom, Water Discussion
- Thursday 17 Board meeting, 10:30 – Zoom
- Sunday 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
- 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>