



League of Women Voters of Corvallis

Serving Benton County

January 2012

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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.



RETHINKING THE ECONOMY: Are There Viable Alternatives to "Business as Usual"?

Tuesday, January 10, 2012, 7 – 8:45 PM

Corvallis-Benton County Public Library
645 NW Monroe Avenue

Presentations and panel discussion feature:

Rob Dietz, Center for the Advancement of the Steady State Economy

Steve Hughes, Oregon Banks Local
(an outgrowth of Oregonians for a State Bank)

Jason Bradford, Farmland LP

Cheryl Good, Corvallis HOUR Exchange

The global recession of 2008-09 is considered by many economists to be the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. In an effort to analyze and address the causes of the recession, the US Senate issued the *Levin-Coburn Report*, which found that:

“... the crisis was not a natural disaster, but the result of high risk, complex financial products; undisclosed conflicts of interest; and the failure of regulators, the credit rating agencies, and the market itself to rein in the excesses of Wall Street.”

In communities across the nation the impacts of this crisis are still being felt through high rates of unemployment, home foreclosures, an escalating federal debt crisis, inflation, and rising gas and food prices.

- What are the down sides to an economy based on perpetual growth? Are there realistic alternatives?
- What is the purpose of an economy?
- What are some of the initiatives and opportunities that offer a different way of thinking about how we accrue, spend, and invest our money?

These questions and more will be explored and discussed. Mark your calendar and plan to join us for a program that is sure to spark many questions and a lively discussion. As always, please invite your family, friends and colleagues.

*Co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Corvallis
and the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library*



President's Corner – Kate Mathews

I hope everyone has had a good holiday!

Last month was busy for our League, beginning December 6, as 27 members met to make suggestions for new studies, updates, or to stay the same on our various programs on the local and national levels. There was a good deal of input—a summary will be given in the next Bulletin, when the Board has had a chance to discuss what was suggested.

In the first week of December our fruit arrived for the fruit fundraiser. A few of us unloaded 470 boxes into my garage. Then many members helped deliver it. We used a new distributor this year, a company from Medford, and we had a variety of choices. We would like to have input as to how you like having a choice of fruit and about the quality of the fruit from the new company.

The General Meeting on January 10 addresses “Rethinking the Economy,” a very important topic right now. On January 28 we’ll hear from our Legislators in a Town Hall, just before the month-long session starts in Salem. The state League’s “Day at the Legislature” will be at the Capitol on February 7. Registration, due January 31, is enclosed with this Bulletin.

We have two studies with consensus coming up this spring. Our Voter Service activities are easy to understand and arrange, and are an important part of our identity, but it is on the Action side of League that we are able to have influence locally, statewide, and nationally. It’s because we study the issues and then reach positions we can use after we come to consensus. This was done with “The Role of the Federal Government in Education” in November, for which position statements are coming soon from national League.

The 2010 National League convention voted to study Privatization. Information for this study is on the national League website. Our information and consensus meetings will be in March (see p. 3). We need members to work on this committee—it is a short term commitment, but important.

A second study is a state League study on Coastal Management. Information will be available in March. Our informational and consensus meetings will be in April. Again we will need members to study the issue, suggest speakers for the informational meeting, and help to run the consensus meetings.

I encourage all our members to participate in a study or join an existing committee and become more active in our League. Our most active committees currently are the Community Planning, Local Food, Housing, and Dental committees.



Welcome to Cindy Hallett, a new member; **Patricia Daniels**, a returning member; and **Theresa Gibney**, who was a national League member and is now a Corvallis LWV member.

Have you sent in your membership renewal? If you have not we hope to hear from you soon!

Janet Wolf-Esbe, Membership Co-chair



We want you to know:

Board meetings are open to members of the League of Women Voters. They are held on the first Wednesday of each month from 10 AM to 12 Noon. Dates are noted on the League calendar in the bulletin.

For information on agenda and location, contact Corvallis League President, Kate Mathews: 541-754-1172, kate.mathews@comcast.net.

LWV of Corvallis

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This bulletin is the newsletter of the *League of Women Voters of Corvallis*, produced 10 times a year.

We welcome your input. If you have suggestions, story ideas, comments, or submissions for the Bulletin, contact Louise Marquering – lwvcLouise@AOL.com.

Submissions must be received no later than the 15th of the month.

Members subscribe through their dues. League membership is open to men and women of all ages.



LEGISLATURE 2012: Town Hall Meetings

Saturdays, January 28 & March 3, 10 AM - NOON
Corvallis-Benton County Public Library

The League of Women Voters of Corvallis, in partnership with the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library, invites you to our "Legislature 2012" Town Hall Meetings. One Town Hall will be offered the Saturday before the Session on January 28 and the second will be March 3 near the end

of the Session. *Note:* This is the first Annual Session in the even years.

Legislators from this area who have been invited to participate are Senator Frank Morse and Representatives Sarah Gelsler, Andy Olsen, and Jim Thompson.



Community Planning Update: Corvallis & OSU Collaborate

As you have probably heard, the City of Corvallis and OSU have embarked on a collaboration project. A Scoping Committee has finished its work and a formal agreement between the entities is being worked on. The project is proposed to end in December 2014 and the \$300,000 cost is to be shared equally between the city and the university. A Project Steering Committee appointed by Mayor Julie Manning and OSU President Ed Ray will establish work groups to address the issues under three areas of concern:

- I. Neighborhood Parking and Traffic Mitigation
- II. Neighborhood Planning
- III. Neighborhood Livability

The Steering Committee will provide project oversight and make time-sensitive, measurable and outcome-based recommendations to the city and OSU to achieve the project's goals. For more information: call 541-766-6981 or go to community.development@ci.corvallis.or.us on the Internet.

While it's important that the concerns of the citizens in the vicinity of the university be addressed, the entire city could

be impacted by decisions made by the Steering Committee and work groups. For example, if adjustments to lower zoning densities near the university were made, an increase in traffic and auto pollution throughout Corvallis could result as students would use cars to access campus. For this reason, it is important that the entire community, not just close neighbors of OSU, be represented on the work groups and at public meetings.

If you are interested in serving on one of the work groups, contact Mayor Julie Manning. Her phone numbers are: Office- 541-766-6901, Home- 541-752-0554, Message- 541-766-6985. Her office hours are Mondays from 8 AM to 5 PM. Don't hesitate to call, as the Mayor's website message says, "Please stay in touch!"

The Community Planning Committee will meet on Thursday, January 12, 2012 at 3:30 PM. Email Shelly Murphy for time, location, and agenda – shellym@peak.org. *All are welcome!*

Privatization Study Committee Needed

Privatization of Government Services, Assets and Functions, and the Impact on Local Communities

Scope of the Privatization Study:

"The purpose of this study is to identify those parameters and policy issues to be considered in connection with proposals to transfer federal, state or local government services, assets and/or functions to the private sector. It will review the stated goals and the community impact of such transfers, and identify strategies to ensure transparency, accountability, and preservation of the common good." – *LWVUS*

The information for this study will come from national League this month. Meanwhile these background papers are on the national League's website (www.lwv.org/content/about-privatization-study): "Subcontracting Public Education," "Privatization of Prisons," "Privatization of a Publicly Owned Water Treatment Plant," "Deregulation of Railroads," as well as "The Legal Framework of Transparency and Accountability within the Context of Privatization."

The Corvallis League's Privatization committee will determine how to present the information on March 13 to our members and plan a consensus meeting the following week. PLEASE consider joining this timely study. Contact Kate: 541-754-1172, kate.mathews@comcast.net.





Political activism: Fight threats to democracy by raising your voice

By Guest Columnist, Robin Wisdom - *The Oregonian*, Friday, November 25, 2011

The United States has the framework of a great democracy that must be vigilantly maintained through the efforts of all its citizens. As an advocacy and voter education organization for more than 90 years, the League of Women Voters of Oregon is dedicated to making democracy work for everyone. Accordingly, we find the current outpouring of public activism invigorating, as Oregonians join citizens across the nation to peacefully protest the status quo. It reminds us of our own roots, when our founders labored to provide women the right to vote.

Although we support many issues raised by Occupy protesters in Oregon, especially the need for campaign finance reform and equity in access to our political system, we are saddened that these issues are obscured by headlines of physical conflict. Dissatisfaction with our political process deserves the spotlight.

For example, there are real threats to our democracy, especially to our campaign finance system. The U.S. Supreme Court's 2010 ruling in the Citizens United case overturned bipartisan campaign finance rules, opening floodgates to corporate and union campaign donations, and muting the average citizen's influence on campaigns.

The League of Women Voters has advocated for campaign finance reform since the 1970s, believing the best long-term solution is public financing of campaigns. Meanwhile, the league is working for congressional legislation to increase disclosure and transparency in political campaigns.

Furthermore, our entire electoral system is under attack. Right now, Congress is considering eliminating the

Election Assistance Commission. The EAC was established after the 2000 election to make elections throughout the nation open, fair and accountable. The LWV is asking the public to join in calling on Congress to not only retain the EAC, but also to strengthen it.

Time and time again when Congress has been flooded with letters, phone calls and emails, lawmakers have listened. There are numerous advocacy organizations such as the LWV that are advocating for the health of our democracy. The more citizen support these organizations have, the more they can get the attention of Congress and the president to ultimately be heard.

As a concerned citizen, you can do something about these threats to our democracy. There are ways to make your voice heard as an individual and as part of a larger group. Though some disagree with its methods, the Occupy movement is raising important issues that need to be addressed. Whether you move your bank account to protest fees or attend a demonstration to bring attention to economic fairness and political justice, creating change requires transforming passion and momentum into political engagement.

Whether by simply being an informed voter, serving on a local board or commission, joining an advocacy group or running for elected office, we invite you to join in strengthening our government's irreplaceable role as the ultimate custodian of the public interest.

Robin Wisdom is president of the League of Women Voters of Oregon.



Thinking of you

- ▶ Kathy Conner recently had a rather severe heart attack, but is home and able to get around now. She'd love phone calls (cell phone- 541-602-3014).
- ▶ Diana Carsten had a stroke last January, and her condition has necessitated a move to a foster home. She isn't able to do email or read League materials, so she won't continue her League membership. Until her stroke Diana was an active League member and initially chaired the Local Food study. We appreciate all that she has done and wish her comfort in her new situation.

Save the date – Tuesday, February 7. *Registration is included with this bulletin for LWVOR's Day at the Legislature. To carpool with other members contact Paula Krane at kranep@peak.org or 541-752-2361.*



Coalition Sets Dates for Two Key Community Sustainability Events

The League of Women Voters of Corvallis is a member of the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition – a network of more than 200 organizations in Corvallis and Benton County that are working together to accelerate the development of a sustainable community. The Coalition includes non-profits, businesses, government agencies, educational institutions, and faith-based organizations. League members are invited and encouraged to participate in these upcoming events:

Thursday, January 5 – SUSTAINABILITY COALITION ANNUAL MEETING

12:00 NOON – 1:30 PM at the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library

An annual meeting of Coalition partners and action teams is takes place each January so that partners can be updated on the activities of the Coalition and advise the Steering Committee on the Coalition’s direction for the coming year. Following introductions of the Coalition’s Steering Committee, partner representatives, and action team and committee members, there will be an overview of the past

year’s accomplishments and a look at what is planned for 2012. The Coalition’s action teams have many exciting projects under way and committees that are hard at work to support them, so this will be a good time to find out what’s happening and to give your input. This event is open to the public.

Thursday, March 1 – COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY FAIR & TOWN HALL MEETING

5:00 PM – 9:00 PM at the CH2MHill Alumni Center on the OSU campus

An important part of the Sustainability Coalition’s commitment to action is the sponsorship of an annual town hall meeting that gives the Corvallis community an opportunity to assess how we’re doing as a community in our efforts to become more sustainable.

The March 1st event focuses on the sustainability efforts of the whole community. It begins with a Sustainability Fair that features Coalition partner organizations and gives them an opportunity to tell participants about their activities and engage them in projects.

During the Town Hall Meeting portion of the evening, attendees will gather in the ballroom for a community conversation about how we’re doing and what else needs to happen to accelerate our efforts to become a thriving, sustainable city and county. Event organizers are planning a highly interactive event that will include food, entertainment, and opportunities to visit with old friends and meet new ones.

On-line pre-registration (sustainablecorvallis.org) opens in mid-January. The Alumni Center Ballroom holds just under 500 people, so everyone is encouraged to sign up early!

Plan to come and be a part of these important and engaging events – and help spread the word to all who may have an interest in being part of the action!



League’s Fruit Sale Was a Success!

The fall Fruit Fundraiser was very successful. We ordered 410 boxes of fruit and sold them all. LWV of Corvallis made \$2,950 on the sale and received \$300 in donations, which brought in a total of \$3,250. 70 members and 155 non-members purchased fruit. Thanks to all who support League in such a substantial way.

The Fruit Sale is definitely a team effort. Thanks go to all the members who helped with mailing and delivering fruit. Some of these people even helped deliver a second route.

- | | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Jan Ames | Marcia Cutler | Nancy & Craig Leman | Denise Nervik | Janet Wolf-Eshe |
| Sheryl Bernard | Elinor Griffiths | Kate Mathews | Richard Raymond | Mary & Russ Youmans |
| Ann Brodie | Dagmar Johnson | Patty & Tom McClintock | Rod Terry | Lois Marie Zaerr |
| Carolyn Brumley | Paula Krane | Jean Nath | Ann Smart | |

A very special thanks to the wonderful men who helped unload the truck at 8:00 on a Friday morning:

- | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Jan Bottjer | Josh Hamilton | Chris Mathews | Rod Terry | Charlie Tomlinson |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|-------------------|

Additional thanks go to Kate and Chris Mathews for allowing us to leave the fruit at their house until all of it could be delivered.
 – Louise Marquering



League of Women Voters of Corvallis

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You're Invited to
Legislature 2012
Town Hall Meetings
January 28 and March 3

League Membership

Name _____

Address *City, Zip+4 digits* _____

Phone _____

Email _____

_____ \$55 individual membership _____ \$82.50 household

_____ \$27.50 student _____ Renewal _____ Contribution*

I would like to be considered:

Active _____ **Inactive Member / Supporter** _____

I first joined the League in _____ (year) _____ (place).

What special skills/talents/interests would you like to share with the League?

LWV's membership year begins in October.

Make checks payable to the LWV of Corvallis and mail to:

LWV of Corvallis, Attn: Membership
P.O. Box 1679, Corvallis, OR 97339-1679

* Regular dues are not tax-deductible. However, contributions to the *LWVUS Education Fund*, paid with a separate check, are deductible.



League Calendar

January 2012

- Wed 4** Board Meeting 10 AM
- Thu 5** Sustainability Coalition Annual Meeting, Library NOON -1:30 PM
- Tue 10** General Meeting: Rethinking the Economy, Library 7 PM
- Thu 12** Community Planning Committee 3:30 PM
- Sat 28** Legislative Town Hall, Library 10 AM

February 2012

- Wed 1** Board Meeting 10 AM
- Tue 7** LWVOR Day at the Legislature, Salem
- Tue 14** *Happy Birthday, League!*
General Meeting: Young Women/Older Women, Library 7 PM