



LWV Corvallis

Serving Benton and Linn Counties

March 2004

The LWV Corvallis invites its members and the public to a forum on

State Funded Human Services in Benton County

The 2001 State Legislature mandated reorganization of the Department of Human Services. What has been the outcome of these changes? What services are provided by this Department? How have the budget cuts affected clients and service delivery?

Tuesday, March 9, 2004

7:00–9:00 PM

**Corvallis–Benton County Public Library
645 NW Monroe Ave, Corvallis**

Co-sponsored by the Corvallis–Benton County Public Library and the
Benton Commission for Children and Families

Participants:

Children, Adults and Families Branch Offices

- *Sandy Chase, Supervisor for Self Sufficiency Services*
- *Sven Johnson, Supervisor for Child Welfare*
- *Peter Norman, Manager for Vocational Rehabilitation*

Senior and Persons with Disabilities

- *Scot Bond, Regional Director, Benton, Linn & Lincoln Counties*

Benton County Health Department Health Services

- *Mitch Anderson, Manager of Mental Health Services*
- *Charlie Fautin, Manager of Community Health Services*

Moderator: Barbara Ross

***Former State Representative on
Joint Ways and Means Human Services Subcommittee***

*– If you need a ride, volunteer drivers may be available.
Contact a Board member for more information. –*

PRESIDENT'S CORNER: Local Studies

This month's program will feature the local study on the reorganization of the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) and the local delivery of services provided by this Department. The DHS reorganization was ordered in the 2001 Legislature, and our questions focus on the services available at the local level. After we adopted this study two years ago, the Department has been impacted by budget cuts resulting from Ballot Measures 28 and 30. The budget cuts from the failure of Measure 30 were stipulated in HB 5077 before the 2003 Legislature closed. Since then, the director of the Department has printed a list of priority cuts to meet these budget shortfalls. The DHS website includes the updated reorganization charts and this list of cuts. The website address is www.dhs.state.or.us if you would like to read ahead.

LWVUS formed positions on "Meeting Basic Human Needs" and "Access to Health Care" in 1989. LWV Corvallis participated in the Basic Human Needs study; committee members interviewed local City and County service providers regarding areas of income, food, housing and health care. In September 1987, a program titled "A Dream Deferred" on meeting basic human needs was presented in Corvallis as a result of the local study efforts. So, it does seem to be an opportune time to revisit this topic.

LWVOR has had positions on mental health services for adults and children since 1975; it updated its positions after a 1990 mental health services study. LWV Corvallis has positions on "Public Health Services" and "Health Care of the Elderly." Other local positions on human services relate to child care and at-risk youth. All of these positions are relevant to DHS services. These positions are cited within this monthly bulletin.

Local program planning has not been scheduled for this spring. The LWVC Board members decided to recommend that it be skipped this year. Two studies have been adopted the past two years and have not been completed. The Board will recommend at the annual meeting that no new studies be adopted for the coming year. The current DHS study and the Judicial System study should be resolved before new studies are adopted. Members may make recommendations for studies or program emphasis at the annual meeting. The motions for studies must be presented in writing for formal consideration. During discussion, suggestions for monthly programs topics will be welcome.

A LWVOR study on "Funding Oregon" is scheduled to be completed this spring. This material will be available for local leagues to use for programs or action. LWVOR has sent out a first call to the State Council meeting, scheduled for May 15 and 16 at the Salishan resort in Lincoln County. Two Board members will represent LWV Corvallis, and observers are welcome. The Council may entertain changes in program and action recommendations.

-- Karen Nibler

LWV Corvallis

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Mission

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.

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The bulletin is the newsletter of the LWV Corvallis and is produced nine times a year. Members subscribe through their dues. Membership is open to anyone 18 years or older.



SETTLE DOWN WITH A GOOD BOOK: LWVC BOOK CLUB

On March 8th, the book club will discuss *Winter Wheat*, first published in 1944 and reprinted in 1994. Mildred Walker's book details one year in the life of 18 year old Ellen Webb, a year inextricably linked to the wheat grown on her parents' farm in northern Montana. In addition to talking about *Winter Wheat*, you'll get to peruse an advance proof of *The Book Club Cook Book* by Judy Gelman and Vicki Levy Krupp, which includes book summaries, recipes (e.g. Sue Monk Kidd's, author of *The Secret Life of Bees*, recipe for honey cake) and a profile of the LWVC book club. Join us on Monday, 7:30 PM, at Martha Brookes' home (check the LWV directory for address). Let Martha know if you plan to attend.

Meetings are scheduled for the second Monday of the month. Upcoming books include:

- April 12: *The Power of One* by Bryce Courtenay (Corrine Gobeli's home)
- May 10: *The Inextinguishable Symphony* by Martin Goldsmith

LWV POSITIONS RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES

LWV Corvallis Positions on Public Health Services & Health Care of the Elderly

Public Health Services

1. Support of Public Health Services in Benton County, including:
 - a. Dissemination of public health information;
 - b. Adequate personnel and facilities in the County Health Department; and
 - c. Family Planning information and techniques (*adopted 1967*).
2. Recognition of drug abuse as a health problem in Benton County (*1971*).

Health Care of the Elderly

1. LWV Corvallis believes the government has a responsibility to provide for the health and welfare of its senior citizens. Individuals and families should share this responsibility and those who have the ability to pay for services should do so at whatever level possible. This position includes independent living, support services for families who care for relatives in their homes, an ombudsman for residents of long term care facilities, and prevention. Medicare and Medicaid should consider cost containment, accountability and focus on prevention.

2. LWV Corvallis believes that the government has a responsibility to ensure quality health care services for the elderly. The position includes adequate training and pay for staff in long term care facilities, adequate supervision of staff, and stringent government standards and inspections of long term care facilities. The position states there should be qualitative and financial evaluation of public agencies providing health care services for the elderly.

LWVOR Positions on Adult Mental Health in Oregon & Mental Health Services for Children and Youth

Adult Mental Health in Oregon (*adopted January 1987, updated 2001*)

- A. The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports a comprehensive and integrated adult mental health services delivery system in Oregon which:
 1. Includes both community and state programs and facilities;
 2. Provides for coordination of local and state mental health planning based on regular needs assessments;
 3. Provides funding by a coordinated mix of federal, state, local, and private sector dollars;
 4. Includes state budget allocations which reflect service priorities jointly determined by Community Mental Health Programs and the state Mental Health Division.
- B. The League supports the concept of care, treatment, and support in the least restrictive environment possible which:
 1. Ensures continuity of care and humaneness;
 2. Balances the rights and safety of afflicted individuals, other interested parties, and society in general.
- C. The League believes that the mental health delivery system should include:
 1. Adults suffering from:
 - a. mental and emotional illness;
 - b. alcohol and drug addiction; and
 - c. developmental disabilities. (Under the new definition used within the Oregon Mental Health Division, "developmental disability" includes mental retardation.)

(continued on page 4)

LWVOR Position on Adult Mental Health in Oregon (continued)

2. Crisis, residential treatment, support, and early intervention programs in sufficient quantity to afford an acceptable quality of life for afflicted individuals.
3. Mental health service providers, administrators, advocates, clients and lay citizens as participants in:
 - a. service delivery planning;
 - b. the evaluation of services;
 - c. the provision of community education.
- D. The League supports an adult mental health civil commitment process which:
 1. Ensures statewide consistency in the application of commitment statutes;
 2. Provides for adequate and equitable investigation and examination;
 3. Protects the rights and needs of all interested parties.

Mental Health Services for Children and Youth (adopted January 1975)

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports a coordinated plan for comprehensive mental health services for all levels of need to children and youth provided under the direction of a single state service agency responsible for basic state standards. We support the appropriation of consistent and sufficient funds to implement state-mandated programs.

- A. A well-coordinated comprehensive mental health service delivery plan should cover such concerns as:
1. Community level services that are accessible, visible, and available to all income levels through a graduated fee schedule;
 2. Community level programs that provide early diagnostic and referral services, 24-hour emergency care, treatment services and facilities, aftercare, and follow-up care;
 3. The development of preventive programs;
 4. Coordination of all levels of government and all public and private agencies working with children;
 5. Standards of training for all personnel appropriate to job placement;
 6. Consistent state funds supplemented by all available resources, public and private;
 7. Utilization of all local resources;
 8. Basic state standards which encourage quality treatment and care while permitting alternative programs.

LWVUS Positions on Social Policy – Creating a Just Society

–Meeting Basic Human Needs

Position in Brief: Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

–Access to Health Care

Position in Brief: Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents and controls health care costs.

–Income Assistance

Preventing and Reducing Poverty:

In order to prevent or reduce poverty, the LWVUS supports policies and programs designed to:

- Increase job opportunities;
- Increase access to health insurance;
- Provide support services such as child care and transportation;
- Provide opportunities and/or incentives for basic or remedial education and job training;
- Decrease teen pregnancy; and
- Ensure that non-custodial parents contribute to the support of their children.

Criteria for Income Assistance:

- Eligibility of all low-income individuals for assistance should be based on need.
- Eligibility should be established through simplified procedures such as a declaration of need, spot-checked in a manner similar to that used in checking the validity of income tax returns.
- Benefit levels should be sufficient to provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing and shelter. Minimum income standards should be adjusted for regional differences in the cost of living and should be revised periodically to take into account changes in the purchasing value of the dollar. Until a federal welfare program achieves an adequate level of benefits, some states will need to supplement federal payments.
- There should be increasing emphasis on cash assistance, but in-kind assistance (e.g. food stamps, housing subsidies, medical aid) should be continued to help assure that these needs are met.
- Under a revised program participants should not have their benefits reduced.

TAX REFORM PUBLIC HEARINGS SCHEDULED

In February and March, the Legislative Joint Committee on Tax Reform is holding public hearings in eight communities around the state. LWVC members may still have time to participate in the Beaverton and Portland public hearings; information about these hearings is provided below. The "Fund Oregon's Future Today" (FOFT) coalition has been hosting pre-hearing meetings in several of these communities. For further information about FOFT's efforts, contact director Chris Coughlin at 503-312-8178 or go to the website www.fundoregon.org.

BEAVERTON

Public Hearing:

Tuesday, March 2, 5-8 PM
Southridge High School
9625 SW 125th

PORTLAND

Public Hearing:

Wednesday, March 3, 5-8 PM
Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs
4134 N. Vancouver Ave

DIRECT RECORDING ELECTRONIC VOTING – PRO & CON POSITIONS

In the last Bulletin, some information was provided about a proposed LWV study on the using of "direct recording electronic" (DRE) voting machines. LWVC member Walter Barkan forwarded the following information regarding the use of this technology from the LWVUS web site.

Comments from Michael Shamos, Carnegie Mellon University Professor, and Rob Randhava, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and LCCR Education Fund:

"So-called voter-verifiable ballot systems are nothing of the kind. They simply replace electronic voting, which has a perfect security record, with a paper medium, which is easy to tamper with. The voter is given the false impression that he knows how his vote will be counted, which is simply untrue."

"The call for supposedly 'voter-verifiable' ballots is based on paranoia run amuck. We are asked to fear the possibility of an all-powerful programmer who is so clever that he can cause anyone in the U. S. to be elected yet no one else could ever be smart enough to catch him or even detect his crime. It's a scenario much better suited to a summer novel than a state legislature."

"To achieve the false claim of 'voter-verifiability' we are asked to discard all the advances in computers and computer security of the 20th century -- advances so reliable that we regularly trust our lives and fortunes to them -- and return to the same paper voting methods that people have been using to fix elections for a hundred years."

"I have nothing against voter-verifiable ballots except that they aren't voter-verifiable, have no greater security than any other physical ballot (including punched cards), are slow and inconvenient to use, maintain and count, disenfranchise blind and disabled voters and I possibly forgot to mention that no such ballots have actually been used or tested in any jurisdiction of significant size."

"If you can trust your life to the computers in an airplane, the Powerball can trust \$240 million to a computer in a convenience store and banks can conduct their entire business with computers, then the same technology can work just fine for voting."

Selected Responses from Walter Barkan:

"...I do not know of any serious proponent of voter verifiable ballots who suggests that they supplant the electronic recording and tabulation of votes. The purpose of the paper copies is as a back-up in the event that either an electronic system fails or there is reason to suspect it has been corrupted."

"... technology is not the issue. The weaknesses in electronic voting are in the human systems by which the technology is managed and controlled."

"The question is not whether there are those who could detect the crime and catch the criminal, but whether the laws and procedures governing DREs effectively preclude or impede their doing so."

"...there are three considerations here. First, the proprietary nature of DRE software enables its owners to shield their source code from public examination. Second, the esoteric nature of object code makes it impossible for any likely poll worker to detect anything that might be amiss with it. They are in no position to verify that the software installed on the machines in their polling place is identical to that which may have been certified in advance of the election. Third, electronic records are ephemeral and leave no trace. Absent the rigorous, independent control of DRE software, it is hardly "paranoia run amuck" to be concerned about software that could be altered to distort the recording of votes, then automatically revert to the "certified version" by the end of the election or very shortly thereafter."

Upcoming Events: March 2004

- Mar 8** Book Club, 7:30 PM, Martha Brookes' home
- Mar 9** State Funded Human Services in Benton County, 7 – 9 PM, Library Main Meeting Room, 645 NW Monroe
- Mar 16** LWVC Board meeting, 4 – 7 PM, Karen Nibler's home
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**Mark Your Calendar
Thrift Shop Consignment
Days**

March 4 & 18, 2:30 – 3:30 PM

**Call ahead to make arrangements
Miriam Miller 753-7261**

*Thrift Shop consignment number:
1073*