



LWV Corvallis

Serving Benton and Linn Counties

September 2003

LWV Fall Kick-off

Benton County Courts & Judicial System



*Funding and
New Trends In
Court Processes*

Featuring:

Hon. Janet S. Holcomb

Presiding Judge, Circuit Court in Benton County

&

Tracey Cordes

Trial Court Administrator

Tuesday, September 23, 2003

7:00–9:00 PM

Benton Plaza*

408 SW Monroe Ave, Corvallis

**Note location*

- Come to listen and talk about the new drug court program and revenue for the next biennium.
- Preview League program and activities for the coming year.
- Explore LWV Corvallis membership opportunities.

EVERYBODY WELCOME • BRING A FRIEND!

PRESIDENT'S CORNER: Moving Right Along

We are moving into the new LWVC calendar year 2003–04 with some overlap from last year. The longest legislative session ever started on January 13, 2003 and ran through August 27. Our last Legislative Townhall was scheduled for September 6. Your LWVOR Action Committee met through September to track bills and write up summaries for the legislative reports. The last (sine die) edition is still in process.

Thanks to Senator Frank Morse, and Representatives Lane Shetterly and Kelley Wirth for their participation in our Townhall forums. Senator Morse kept the kicker reform idea in play until the end of the session. Representative Shetterly developed the revenue bill and pushed it through the House in order to find funds for approved budgets. Representative Wirth supported natural resource issues in the House Agriculture and Natural Resource committee. We are grateful for the dedication they have shown in the lengthy legislative process. May they get a vacation soon.

Thanks to Charlie Tomlinson for his organization of the Townhall meetings, and the Corvallis–Benton County Library for providing the meeting room. Thanks to the following LWVC members for moderating: Walter Barkan, Ann Brodie, Paula Krane, and Charlie Tomlinson. Thanks also to Shelly Murphy for publicizing the Townhalls and for her assistance revising our website. We have contracted with Cynthia McMahon to maintain our website. We may put sections of the bulletin on–line. Kathy Seeburger will continue to edit the bulletin, and we will continue to send out a paper copy because we have many members who do not have internet access.

The LWVC calendar for the year will be included in this bulletin so that you may put the meeting dates on your personal calendars. We have planned many substantive programs for the coming year and we need your assistance. As usual, membership checks are due in September, but we need more than your financial support. We need your attendance at our general meetings, especially when we have invited speakers. Most of these people are professionals, sharing their expertise and time. We need to provide an audience if we expect to use their time. We will work on putting together informative programs on timely topics. We have been sending e–mail announcements of meetings that may be of interest to our members. For instance, 20 members attended the ACLU–sponsored Patriot Act program this past spring.

Currently, we have active committees on Funding Options for Local Government and Affordable Housing; committee members are busy gathering information and preparing programs. The Land Use committee will follow up on legislative measures. Federal Finance will spin off of the local and state studies of funding. We have a few members lined up for Judicial Independence presentations and a few for interviewing Department of Human Services agencies. We have not initiated the Health Care program committee. There are many issues in Health Care, and we need an active committee to choose which issues to explore. We need volunteers for these committees, so please join one of the committees that interest you and help develop that program.

— Karen Nibler

LWV Corvallis

P.O. Box 1679
Corvallis, OR 97339–1679
541–758–2922
www.lwv.corvallis.or.us

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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.

LWVOR

2659 Commercial St. SE, Suite 260
Salem, OR 97302,
503–581–5722, e–mail: lwvor@open.org,
www.open.org/lwvor

LWVUS

1730 M Street NW, Suite 1000
Washington DC 20036–4508
202–429–1965
FAX 202–429–0854
www.lwv.org

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.



BENTON COUNTY COURTS: FUNDING AND NEW TRENDS

Our first program of the year will be on the Benton County judicial system in Benton County. This topic was chosen as a part of the LWVUS Judicial Independence project and as a local study of the changes within the court system. The state-funded circuit courts had taken an unprecedented cut in hours of service and staff time as a result of the state's revenue shortfall at the end of the 2001–03 biennium. Tracey Cordes, Trial Court Administrator, will provide information on the funding outcome regarding the recently-approved state budget for the Judicial Department. Tracey also will talk about grant funds for new programs.

Judge Janet S. Holcomb, Presiding Judge of the Circuit Court in Benton County, will talk about the new trends in the court system, specifically the family and drug court programs. The family court program was initiated in the 1997 legislature, and demonstration projects were funded. The family court was implemented in circuit courts but not fully funded through 2005. The drug court program was in the planning phases through 2001 and was implemented in the last biennium. Benton County has had a drug court for adults who have been in the criminal system, and they are working on a drug court for juveniles.

The LWVOR has taken positions on the Judicial System and Adult Corrections (see column to the right). The circuit court system has operated under criminal court sentencing guidelines since 1989, with mandatory sentences for adults and some juveniles since 1995. The law changed in subsequent legislative sessions to add crimes and departures in some cases. Judges have to work within the guidelines and allowed adjustments. The speakers will be prepared to answer questions about finances and court operations.

Both of our speakers are aware of the LWVUS Judicial Independence Study and can speak about this topic, but this is not the primary focus of the program. Presentations on the Judicial Independence study will be available for other groups this fall and requests can be made by phone (758–2922, voice mail) or mail to LWV Corvallis, P.O. 1679, Corvallis, OR 97339.

GRAPEFRUIT FUNDRAISING HELP NEEDED!

It's time to think grapefruit, our only fundraiser for LWV Corvallis. We need help from the membership for a mailing party on October 2, 9:30 AM, at Doris Waring's home, 2911 NW 13th Place. This is expected to take about one and one-half hours. We also need lots of help with the delivery of grapefruit boxes the first week of December—we have 30 routes. If you can do either of the above please e-mail Doris at Waringx2@exchangenet.net or call 752–4635.

LWVOR POSITIONS ON JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND ADULT CORRECTIONS

LWVOR formulated a position on the Judicial System in 1979 and supported the legislative effort to create a statewide judicial system in 1981. The legislature has provided full funding for district and circuit courts since 1983. LWVOR also has a position on Adult Corrections, which was adopted in 1983. The League supported the adoption of sentencing guidelines that set parameters for judges throughout the state in order to reduce sentencing disparities. According to LWVOR, "Judges should be responsible for determining the length of sentences. The League supports continuation of the Parole Board." LWVOR supported sentencing guidelines in 1989, but opposed Ballot Measure 4 in 1988 and Ballot Measure 11 in 1995, both of which required mandatory sentences for A and B felonies. LWVOR did a study of Measure 11 charges of juveniles at the end of 1999. LWVOR remains opposed to mandatory sentencing, especially in juvenile cases.

GOOD READING AHEAD

Join League readers for another year of good reading, good books, and good desserts! The year begins with Sandra Gulland's *The Many Lives and Secret Sorrows of Josephine*. We'll meet Monday, September 15, 7:30 PM, at Mary Elizabeth Thomas', 4005 SW Brooklane Drive. Call after 5:00 PM if you plan to attend this meeting. Also come prepared to suggest additional books for the upcoming year. For more information about the LWV Book Club, call Corrine Gobeli, 745–7736, cgobeli@aol.com.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

The LWV Corvallis welcomes new member Jo Ann Crim! Jo Ann and her husband moved to Corvallis ten years ago to be closer to her daughter who is a teacher at Adams Elementary School. Jo Ann's husband is a retired Episcopal minister and they have moved 40 times during their marriage. Their last position was in Guam. Jo Ann graduated from Montana State University in home economics with an emphasis on child development. She has worked with Head Start and many other programs related to children. She has been singing in choirs since she was a young girl.

Upcoming Events:

September & October

Sept 15	Book Club, 7:30 PM, Mary Elizabeth Thomas', 4005 SW Brooklane
Sept 16	Board meeting, 4–7 PM, Karen Nibler's, 2750 DeArmond
Sept 16	Special election
Sept 19	New member party, 5:30 PM, Marolyn Tarrant's, 3310 NW Norwood Drive
Sept 23	Kickoff meeting, 7 –9 PM, Benton Plaza, 408 SW Monroe Avenue
Sept 27–28	Fall Festival, Voter registration table, in front of Library
Oct 2	Grapefruit fundraising mailing party, 9:30 AM, Doris Waring's, 2911 NW 13th Place
Oct 4	LWVOR Fall Workshop, 9:30 AM – 2:45 PM, Phoenix Inn, 850 Franklin Blvd, Eugene
Oct 14	General meeting, 7 PM, Library

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION LWVOR FALL WORKSHOP SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2003 PHOENIX INN, EUGENE

850 Franklin Blvd (next to U of O campus)
1–800–344–0131

AGENDA:

- 9:30 Registration
- 9:45 Introductions and Welcome
- 10:00 Keynote Speaker: Jim Van Leuven, Professor and Endowed Chair in Public Relations, U of O
- 10:45 Break
- 11:00 Evaluating Communications: Small Group Discussions
- 12:00 Group Presentations of Main Findings
- 12:15 Lunch
- 1:00 Panel Discussion & Dialogue with League Members

Journalists present their views on Citizen Access to the Legislature

- Ê Part I: Problems
- Ê Part II: Solutions

2:45 Adjourn, turn in evaluations

Note: The Phoenix Inn is offering reduced overnight room rates for League members who are attending the Fall Workshop.

Registration deadline: September 30

Visit <http://www.lwvor.org> for registration form