



League of Women Voters of Corvallis

Serving Benton County

www.LWV.corvallis.or.us

February 2017

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Nominating Committee

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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.

General Meeting

A Time of Change: Public Post-Secondary Education in Oregon

Tuesday, February 14th, 7 PM

Corvallis-Benton County Public Library, 645 NW Monroe Avenue

Co-sponsored by the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library



Consensus meetings, Thursday, February 16th

Choose one: 11:45 AM -1:30 PM (lunches welcome, beverages provided)

Or 7-8:45 PM, both at 3735 NW Van Buren

Post-Secondary education in Oregon faces numerous problems. Three-quarters of the fastest-growing occupations require education and training beyond a high school diploma, yet nearly half the students who begin college in this country don't finish within six years. In addition, tuition continues to rise, putting college out of reach for the very families who need it most to join the middle class.

Oregon faces the challenge of making our higher education institutions the best possible at reasonable cost and with maximum diversity. The level of state support will reflect the commitment of Oregonians to move forward towards goals of a better-educated population.

What solutions can the League of Women Voters of Oregon advocate for to help solve this dilemma? Be a part of the discussion on February 14th and consensus meetings on February 16th and help formulate a new Post-Secondary Education position for League. You should have received background material from LWV of Oregon (call Paula Krane if you haven't), or see it on the web at: lwv.or.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Post-Secondary-Ed-Exec-Summary.pdf and lwv.or.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Postsecondary-Education-Study-FINAL.pdf.

Your committee is Cathy Frischman, Carolyn Gardner, Bouquet Harger, Jeff Hess, Sara Ingle, and JoAnne Trow. — Paula Krane, Governance Chair

First Legislative Town Hall, February 4 – see page 3.



President's Corner – Laura Lahm Evenson

The political climate in our country right now is heated, to say the least. It is hard not to become disenchanted and cynical. On CBS's *Sunday* I heard something that I found encouraging. Political Science Professor Paul Herrnson, from the University of Connecticut, said:

“American politics is really about sustained interest and sustained pressure. It's about organizing. It's about making sure that over time, policy makers bear what you have to say and get the sense that you are determined.”

There is no better way to describe the League of Women Voters: sustained interest, sustained pressure, organization, determination. Let us remain true to our mission of nonpartisan informed and active participation in government, increasing understanding of major public policy issues and influencing public policy through education and advocacy.

February brings another LWVOR study and consensus meetings—this one on Post-Secondary Education in Oregon—one of our top areas of concern. Please review the Everymember publication sent out by LWVOR, then attend both the general and consensus meetings. A special thank you goes to Paula Krane, our Governance Chair, who has very ably coordinated **TWO** state studies this year. Paula and her committees study the issues in order to clarify them for the membership, hold consensus meetings, and then produce a report for LWVOR. Well done, all!

Looking forward, we begin our Saturday morning Legislative Town Halls this month. Come find out what is happening in Salem. If you can provide some morning goodies to share with the public at these meetings, please let Kate Mathews know.

Our March meeting topic will be Air Quality. LWV Corvallis has not focused on this topic in recent memory so it should be an evening full of information. Bring a friend with you!

The Nominating Committee is looking for a few good people! When the committee contacts you, please consider giving the League some of your valuable time.



Oregon Election Methods – Consensus Results

Neither snow, ice, freezing rain, bad roads, nor all the other things “Mother Nature” managed to send our way in December and January were able to keep us from finally holding our LWVOR Election Methods consensus meetings on January 3rd and 6th.

We had lively discussions at the consensus meetings, and used practice ballots on the different methods. We concluded that we do not know enough at this time about any methods, except Instant runoff/rank voting, to support their use in Oregon. We still need to study all the methods—especially the multi-

seat methods of electing our officials—in more detail and with material that is easier to understand before coming to any advocacy decisions. It will be interesting to compare the conclusions of the other Leagues around the state.

I would like to thank my committee for all the time and work they put into this study and for their flexibility in the face of our weather problems: Joan Canan, Camille Freitag, Kate Mathews, Mary Anne Nusrata, Tanya Shively, and JoAnne Trow. – *Paula Krane, Chair*

LWV of Corvallis

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This is the newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Corvallis which is produced nine or ten times a year.

Contact Beth Thoennes or Louise Marquering with your suggestions, submissions, comments, or story ideas. We welcome your input.

Submissions are due no later than the 15th of the month.

Members subscribe through their dues. Membership in the League of Women Voters of Corvallis is open to men and women of all ages and includes membership in the League of Women Voters of Oregon and the League of Women Voters of the United States.



You're Invited to Attend...

Legislature 2017 Town Hall Meetings

Saturdays, February 4, March 4, April 8, May 6, and June 10

10 to 11:30 AM at Corvallis-Benton County Public Library, 645 NW Monroe Avenue

The League of Women Voters of Corvallis, in partnership with the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library, invites you to meet your state legislators, hear about their work, ask questions, and converse with them. Area legislators invited to participate are: Representative Andy Olsen, Representative Dan Rayfield, Representative Mike Nearman, and Senator Sara Gelser.



January 17th Program Planning Meeting

After enjoying a delicious soup supper and each other's company, twenty-five League members participated in this year's program planning meeting.

While our local positions are reviewed annually, League's state and national positions are reviewed bi-annually. This year's focus was on LWVOR positions. Members offered their opinions and asked questions about a variety of state positions, including Emergency Board, Water Policy, Corrections, Land Use, Air Quality, Parks, Gun Safety, Health Policy, and Housing.

During the review of our local positions, we clarified that the LWV of Corvallis is currently doing a restudy (not an update) of our Housing position. There was also discussion about our Know Your Schools position and a suggestion that we do a new study on Financing Local Government.

At the end of the evening, the group agreed to send the following to the LWV of Corvallis Board

- A new LWVOR study on Annual Legislative Sessions – structure, Emergency Board, and other changes that might happen, now that sessions are annual. Advocacy priorities should be Water Quantity, inequality in the state corrections system, Gun Safety/Gun Violence, Health Care, and Housing. (These recommendations have since been approved by the Board and forwarded to the LWV of Oregon.)
- Local League – Continue the Restudy of our Housing position (i.e., review the position in order to potentially change it). Consider a study on Financing Local Government.

-- Annette Mills, Program



WELCOME!

New and Returning Members, Jen Akeroyd, Josefine Fleetwood and
Jitsopa Bouquet Harger

Happy Birthday, League of Women Voters!
Congratulations on 97 Years of
Making Democracy Work!
February 14, 1920 - February 14, 2017



Community Planning Update

Save Our Right to Vote on Annexations

There are two identical bills in the 2017 Legislature to repeal SB 1573,

which requires cities to annex territory without a vote of the people: Sen. Riley's SB 114 and Sen. Gelser's SB 258. If either of these gets a hearing, we will need Corvallis citizens to testify and explain the importance of:

- 1) the right of voters to amend their home rule charters and
- 2) the reasons that voting on annexations is important to Corvallis citizens.

In the 2016 Oregon Legislative Session, a package of bills to address the shortage of affordable housing was passed. This legislation made it possible for cities to set up a construction excise tax and to implement inclusionary zoning (Inclusionary zoning requires large residential developments to include some low cost housing units.) HB 1573 the product of “backroom deals” by development interests at the 11th hour was part of this package.

SB 114 and SB 258 are identical:

Relating to boundary changes: declaring an emergency.

Repeals provision requiring city whose laws require petition proposing annexation of territory to be submitted to electors to annex territory without vote upon receipt of petition for annexation submitted by all owners of land in territory, provided territory is included within urban growth boundary of city or Metro, territory is, or will be, subject to acknowledged comprehensive plan of city, at least one lot or parcel in territory is contiguous to city limits, and proposal conforms to all other requirements of city's ordinances. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

Both bills have been assigned to the Senate Committee on Environment & Natural Resources.

Committee members and contacts are:

Senator Michael Dembrow (Chair)

503-986-1723 S-407 State Capitol

Sen.MichaelDembrow@oregonlegislature.gov

Senator Alan Olsen (Vice Chair)

503-986-1720 S-425 State Capitol

Sen.AlanOlsen@oregonlegislature.gov

Senator Floyd Prozanski

503-986-1704 S-413 State Capitol

Sen.FloydProzanski@oregonlegislature.gov

Senator Arnie Roblan

503-986-1705 S-417 State Capitol

Sen.ArnieRoblan@oregonlegislature.gov

Senator Herman Baertschiger, Jr.

503-986-1702 S-403 State Capitol

Sen.HermanBaertschiger@oregonlegislature.gov

Some talking points:

1. SB 1573 amended 33 city charters by repealing long-standing annexation voting rights embedded in those charters. Article XI, Sec 2 of the Oregon Constitution states: *“The Legislative Assembly shall not enact, amend or repeal any charter or act of incorporation for any municipality, city or town.”*
2. SB 1573 was sold to the Legislature as a remedy for the affordable housing crisis, but no credible evidence has been found linking voting on annexations to housing costs.
3. The right to vote on annexations has been repeatedly recognized by multiple Oregon high court rulings, e.g., *Heritage Enterprises vs. Corvallis (708 P.2d 601 (OR. 1985))* and *Bear Creek Sanitary Authority vs. City of Medford (130 Or. App.24 (1994))*. SB 1573 trampled those rulings.
4. SB 1573 limits, and in many cases eliminates community input by requiring cities to annex territory, regardless of impacts and cost to citizens.

Watch for Emails of Scheduled Hearings.



Housing Committee Report

The Housing Committee continues to monitor the outcome of the City Council's Housing Development Task Force final report. Members have attended council meetings where the report was accepted and referred to the Community Development and Housing Advisory Board. (HCDAB)

When I, as Housing Committee chair, attended the meetings of HCDAB, I learned that the report had been parsed out with some aspect going to Public Works, some going to the advisory board and some in apparent limbo.

The Housing Committee with guest, Claudia Keith, reviewed the report, agreed on priorities and charged the chair with writing a letter to come from our LWV board to HCDAB outlining our concerns.

The Housing Committee also discussed our concern that the search for a new cold weather men's shelter was not on fast track. (*see below*) We agreed that a letter from the LWV board to Mayor Traber was in order – committee member Karen Rockwell agreed to do this. Both letters were approved by the LWV board.

The committee discussed our concern that the issue of affordable housing in Corvallis does not have the same visibility and traction as do other League issues such as climate change and sustainability. We thought a meeting with the climate change committee might be useful to determine where there might be ways to share ideas and coordinate actions. Claudia Keith, chair of the Climate change committee, has agreed to help set the meeting.

– Karyle Butcher, Housing Committee Chair



League testimony to City Council:

To: Mayor Traber and Members of Corvallis City Council

From: Laura Lahm Evenson, President, League of Women Voters of Corvallis

Subject: Cold-weather Shelter for Homeless Men

The League of Women Voters of Corvallis Housing position includes the following statement:

“Emergency shelter should be available year round in our community for both women and men. Volunteer organizations should be given support for their efforts to meet this need through city and county leadership and some allocation of dollars to help stabilize private programs.”

The League has serious concerns about the progress being made on the future of the men's homeless cold-weather shelter for the 2017-2018 season.

In less than ten months a new location will need to be identified and acquired, an organization will need to be identified to manage the shelter, funding will need to be appropriated to cover the costs, and all of this will need to

be communicated to our community (specifically those in need of the services) in a timely manner.

It is not acceptable to leave members of our community (many sick and disabled) without adequate, accessible emergency shelter. Winter shelter can be the difference between life and death. While we appreciate this is a community-wide issue that will take a community to find a solution, the leadership for this effort must come from our elected officials.

The League of Women Voters of Corvallis understands that a committee of community leaders is working to find a solution to this urgent problem. However, we urge the City Council to keep this issue front and center as it works with others in our community to find an acceptable solution before we run out of time.

February Fridays! 13th Annual Eco-film Festival

This year's local Eco-film Festival kicks off on Friday, February 3, with "Wolf OR-7 Expedition" – a documentary that tells the story of Oregon adventurers who traveled 1200 miles to track the remarkable journey of an ordinary wolf.

The festival lineup also includes:

Feb. 10 – "To the Ends of the Earth" follows concerned communities living at the frontiers of extreme oil and gas extraction and leads us to the promise of a renewable energy economy.

Feb. 17 – "Seed: The Untold Story" features passionate seed keepers protecting our 12,000 year-old food legacy.

Feb. 24 – "A Plastic Ocean" brings to light the consequences of our global disposable lifestyle.

The Eco-Film Festival takes place every Friday in February at Odd Fellows Hall, 223 SW 2nd Street (above New Morning Bakery). Doors open at 6:30 PM, and the program begins at 7:00 PM. Come early to save your seat and visit exhibitors. Beer from Oregon Trail Brewery and snacks from New Morning Bakery will be available for purchase. Local experts will be on hand after each film for a brief discussion and audience Q & A.

A suggested donation of \$5 per person or \$10 per family is requested to help cover costs of the festival.

The Eco-Film Festival is organized by the Corvallis Odd Fellows, the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition, and the Corvallis Environmental Center. This year's sponsors are the Linn-Benton Pacific Green Party, Abundant Solar, Farmland LP, OSU Organic Growers Club, and Republic Services.

For further information, go to www.sustainablecorvallis.org or call 541-230-1237.

Public Safety Committee – Join In, Stay Tuned!

The Public Safety (Jail) Committee is interviewing Benton County staff about the jail and the Benton County corrections system. We attend the Willamette Criminal Justice Council too. The County Commissioners are planning to hire a consultant to explore the jail options.

We would like to host an informational meeting and discussion after the report is received. The current committee members are Phoebe Lansing-Lee, Mary Anne Nusrata, and Loretta Rielly. If you are interested in joining the committee, please send me an e-mail at niblerk@comcast.net. Look for future programs.

– Karen Nibler, *Public Safety Committee Chair*

The Foundation for a Sustainable and Just Future: Land Use Planning



Thursday, February 2nd, 7-8:30 PM

Corvallis-Benton County Public Library, 645 NW Monroe Avenue

What's the connection between affordable housing, transportation options, equity, and a host of other sustainable community features?

This presentation features former Planning Commission Chair Jennifer Gervais will surprise and enlighten you! The program includes an interactive discussion and pathways for action.

Sponsored by Corvallis Sustainability Coalition – Info@sustainablecorvallis.org, 541-230-1237.

2017 Sustainability Coalition Fair & Town Hall Meeting

Thursday, March 9th, 5–9 PM

CH2MHill Alumni Center, OSU

Don't miss the sustainability event of the year! The annual Sustainability Fair features delicious local food, lively music, and more than 50 hands-on exhibits. It will be held at the Alumni Center from 5 to 7 PM, prior to the Town Hall. Registration is not required for attendance at the Fair. Be sure to visit the League booth at the Fair and plan to stay for the Sustainability Town Hall.

Registration is open for the Town Hall, to be held on Thursday, March 9, from 7 to 9 pm at the CH2MHill Alumni Center on the OSU campus.

The Alumni Center Ballroom holds just 350 people and it may be standing-room-only crowd, so sign up now to save your place by registering at www.sustainablecorvallis.org.

Participants will sit at 40 tables of eight for a fast-paced, interactive Town Hall program that includes three parts, each with a presentation from the main stage followed by discussion and activity at the tables.

A highlight of the program will be the opening remarks by Samantha Chisholm Hatfield (*pictured*), an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians who earned her PhD from OSU in Environmental Sciences. She has worked with Oregon

Climate Change Research Institute and completed a Post-Doctoral Research position with Northwest Climate Science Center. She will speak on “Traditional Ecological Knowledge: Groundwork for a Sustainable Community”.

Other event highlights include the annual “Community Scrapbook” featuring sustainability accomplishments of local businesses and organizations during the past year, as well as activities to determine the direction of sustainability efforts in the coming year.

The 2017 Sustainability Town Hall is organized by the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition and supported by a variety of business and organizational sponsors and individual donors (“Town Hall Heroes”).



See www.sustainablecorvallis.org or call 541-230-1237 for more information and to register for the Town Hall.

The LWV of Corvallis is a member of the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition – a network of 350 organizations and individuals in Corvallis and Benton County working to create a more sustainable community. The Coalition includes non-profits, businesses, government agencies, educational institutions, and faith-based organizations.



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Post-Secondary Education in Oregon
Tuesday, February 14th - 7 PM



Join us on Facebook –
[LWVCorvallis](https://www.facebook.com/LWVCorvallis)



LWV Calendar

February

- Wed 1** Legislature re-convenes
- Sat 4** Legislative Town Hall 10-11:30 AM, Library
- Tue 14** Happy Birthday to LWV and to Oregon!
General Meeting: Post-Secondary Ed. 7 PM, Library
- Thu 16** *Consensus Meetings:* Post-Secondary Ed.
- Tue 21** Board Meeting 12:30-2:30 PM

March

Women's History Month

- Sat 4** Legislative Town Hall 10-11:30 AM, Library
- Wed 8** International Women's Day
- Thur 9** Sustainability Fair & Town Hall 5-7 & 7-9 PM
- Mon 20** *General Meeting:* Air Quality 7 PM, Library
- Tue 21** Board Meeting 12:30-2:30 PM

April

- Sat 8** Legislative Town Hall 10-11:30 AM, Library
- Tue 11** *General Meeting:* Community Planning 7 PM, Library
- Tue 18** Board meeting 12:30-2:30 PM
- Wed 19** Voter Service
- Sat 22** Earth Day

Join the League!

Name _____

Address City, Zip+4 digits _____

Phone _____

Email _____

____ \$60 individual membership ____ \$90 household

____ \$30 student ____ Renewal ____ Contribution*

____ Dues assistance information to help you join the League of Women Voters

I would like to be considered:

Active ____ Inactive Member / Supporter ____

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

What special skills/talents/interests can you share with League?

LWV's membership year begins October 1.

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 *BUT* contributions to *LWVOR* or the *LWVUS Education Fund*, paid with a separate check, are deductible.