



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ROGUE VALLEY

VOTERS VOICE



February 2005

A VOICE FOR CITIZENS A FORCE FOR CHANGE

Vol. 13 Issue 5

League of Women Voters of Ashland newsletter included

The amount of money being spent on political campaigns is skyrocketing. In Jackson County alone, over \$1 million was spent on the 2004 political race for State Senate District 3.



Learn how Big Money drives our political system and how that can change...

Speakers:

Salvador Peralta

Director of Action Fund for Democracy's Edge

Democracy's Edge is a statewide non-profit organization working with a broad-based coalition to promote political reform in Oregon. Looking to level the political playing field, Democracy's Edge first goal is enacting laws to remove big money from politics.

Sarah Wetherson

Research and Outreach Associate for Money in Politics Research Action Project (MiPRAP)

MiPRAP is a non-partisan, not-for-profit group, which strives to increase accountability and opportunity for participation in politics. MiPRAP has built and maintains a giant database of campaign contributions and tracks spending by registered lobbyists. MiPRAP advocates public funding of campaigns as well as media reform to help drive down costs.

Thursday, February 10, 2005
at 11:30 A.M., program begins at 12 noon
@J.J. North's Restaurant— 1016 N. Riverside
Avenue, Medford, lunch available for \$7.25



President's Message

To make injustice the only measure of our attention is to praise the Devil.” - Jack Gilbert, poet

January has brought three suicides of friends and a number of near-despairing calls and conversations from folks depressed by winter darkness; election irregularities; on-going violence in Iraq, Israel, Darfur, Afghanistan; and the U.S.; Medford as Meth Capital; the tsunami; and fear that greed is undermining efforts to improve the economy, air and water quality, the lives of the disabled; and public education.

Reassuring the callers that the LWV does indeed have positions on and is working on all these concerns, I recommend that each person do ONE specific act each day to help banish the darkness and suffering- and yes, join with others who care.

Meanwhile, let's rejoice and delight in "whatsoever things are of good report." George and Laura Bush have a passive-solar house in Crawford, TX, built of recycled limestone, designed to let breezes blow through, cooled by underground water.

Katharine Hamnett, once named British Designer of the Year, has launched a high-end line of organic and socially responsible cotton clothing to be shown on Milan runways this fall.

Ground has been broken to connect Phoenix to Talent (and thus, Ashland) via the Bear Creek Greenway.

Violets and English Daisies have bloomed in my yard. We can now plant peas, spinach, lettuce kale, broccoli, and watch for crocus and migrating birds.

“We must have the stubbornness to accept our gladness in the ruthless furnace of this world.” - Jack Gilbert, again

Eileen Adee , 773-4450

LOCAL LEAGUE LEADERS...

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LWVRV Voice
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lwvor@open.org / www.lwvor.org

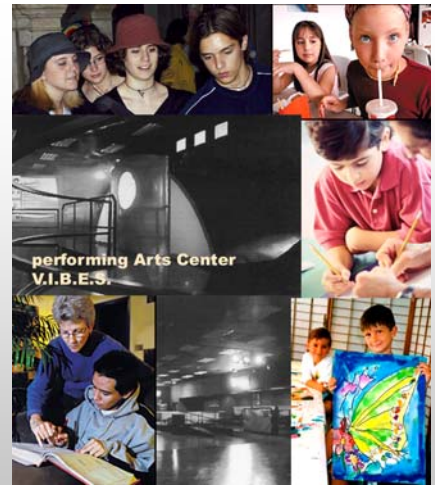
Kids Unlimited

helping Rogue Valley youth to success

December Membership Meeting Summary

By Vicki Keeney

Tom Cole, Kids Unlimited and Will Young B1 (Be an Individual First) gave a very heartwarming, inspirational, and challenging presentation on their youth programs in Medford and White City. Tom showed us a CD about the works of Kids and Unlimited as well as two CDs made by the youth about the boys' basketball program and the girls' basketball program. Will then gave us the history of the B1 program he has started in White City based on the program Tom Cole runs in Medford. Both of these programs need volunteers to work with the youth especially as tutors to help with homework after school.



The Ever Popular Annual Review

January Membership Meeting Summary

By Trish Bowcock

Annually, local Leagues are asked to review official LWVOR positions on Governance, Natural Resources and Social Policy. Recommendations are then made to State for program planning. LWVORV dedicated the January General Meeting to review, with individual Board members presenting a synopsis of each official State position. Membership voted to retain all positions and to restudy State's position on the Judicial System. For a complete text of all positions, check out www.lwvor.org and click on "Positions for Action".

Every Member Assignment

By Eileen Adee

1. Hunt up your BLUE MEMBER HANDBOOK.
2. Turn to page 39.
3. Browse through our local positions.
4. Should any be dropped, updated, or restudied?
5. Homeless youth, meth destroying families, and shortage of mental health treatment were brought up by members attending the January meeting. Should we study/act on these in 2005-06? *Also review page 4 - LWVOR study proposals.
6. Weigh in by phoning or e-mailing any Board Member. Numbers on page -2- of Voters Voice.

Leagues Offer Two Study Proposals for LWVOR 2005 Program

Two Leagues are trying to generate support for two different state study proposals. Express your opinion on these proposals and bring other program ideas for next year, to any LWVOR Board Member (contact page –2-



From LWV Umpqua Valley: **Homeless Youth in Oregon**

Scope: Research the number and conditions of homeless youth in Oregon, with emphasis on contributing causes, medical, housing and educational needs. Identify the skills and support services homeless youth need to leave street life and to lead sustainable lives avoiding a lifelong homelessness*. Examine programs and proposals for meeting these needs, including state, county, private and faith-based programs and proposals. Identify “best practices” solutions in urban and rural settings wherever they are operating.

Clarify the legal structures that affect the lives of homeless youth. Make recommendations for actions to be taken.

Outlook for Work: (A) Local Leagues will participate by gathering the information outlined in the scope in their counties. You know your counties and your communities but lists and suggestions will be outlined to guide this process. (The County Commissions on Children and Families have begun this process and the report from the Task Force on Homeless and Runaway Youth is available.) This examination will cover what is known, what is unknown, what exists, what is needed.

(B) Identify the local partners interested in working out solutions.

(C) Financing issues will be considered at various levels.

(D) The state committee will visit, examine and describe “best practice programs” in both urban and rural settings with the assistance of those who find them in their locations. The Every Member material compiled and produced by the state committee will present a picture of the situation throughout Oregon.

(E) The committee will provide statements or questions that will lead to concurrence or consensus and a chosen course of action.

*We found it prudent to focus on the needs of the homeless youth (safety, food, education and skill building, counseling and mentoring, and independence) rather than on the stressors they have walked away from (physical and emotional abuse, substance abuse, lack of success in school, domestic violence, familial distress and mental illness).



OREGON COURTS
OREGON JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT

From LWV Corvallis: **The Third Branch of Our Government - The Judicial Branch**

Scope:

- (1) A better understanding of the existing state and local court system and how it is currently functioning in Oregon.
- (2) A study of alternative systems and whether they might improve our system.
- (3) A new position on the judicial branch of our state government that will allow us to advocate in this arena.

Possible Topics: History of the Oregon court system; separation of power/checks and balances; purpose of this branch; responsibilities of the courts; qualifications, selection and number of judges; campaign finance reform of judicial elections; number of courts; kinds of courts; tort reform; financing the courts; jurisdictions; county/city/state court relationship/connection; state/federal courts relationship/connection; judicial independence; sentencing guidelines; jury selection; quasi judicial bodies; recent and prospective changes.

Outlook for Work: This will be a two-year study. The first year will focus in two general areas:

- 1)An overview of the current system, i.e. organization and operation of the court system at the city, county and state level, election of judges, financing, and effectiveness.
- 2)Investigation and discussion of alternative systems.

The second year of the study would review the information gathered in the first year and identify areas of change and conflict. Consensus questions based on findings could be formulated by the state committee if a new position or changes to existing positions seem warranted.

OBSERVERS REPORT

by John Ramsey



November 11/23/04 County Board of Commissioners Working Meeting

Dave Gilmour and Jack Walker attended this working meeting. The first topic was whether the county should continue issuing and administering septic system permits. The other choice was to let the state Department of Environmental quality do it as do 13 of 36 Oregon counties. The issue is that our county spends about 25% more than the income from permit fees. On the other hand, our customer service is assumed to be better than the state run program. The commissioners want to gather more data before making a decision.

A charter review by the League of Women Voters was scheduled, but no one showed up?

A long, sometimes contentious discussion was conducted on Measure 37 implementation. The county legal department is looking for direction on how to handle the claims applications that are expected beginning on December 2nd. According to experts the meaning of the new law isn't clear. It was pointed out that Multnomah County intends to fight every claim; Walker pointed out that he supports granting every application that falls within the spirit of the measure vs. paying the claim. Issues were discussed such as whether to charge for application processing, wording of the proposed application form, and litigating claims both denied and approved but contested by those that don't want that use in their neighborhood. It was agreed that state government needs to clarify this new law. Since applications must be resolved within 180 days of submission, there isn't much time. It was agreed that a letter re-

December 12/07/04 County Board of Commissioners Working Meeting

Dave Gilmour and Jack Walker attended. Also, CW Smith attended unofficially.

A report was made on the status of the Wimer bridge by the citizens committee. Approximately \$900k is required to rebuild as a wooden covered bridge. After the unused original repair funding and a government grant, an additional \$373k must be raised. The plan is to solicit contributions of cash and materials and conduct fund raisers such as apparel sales. To date, \$25k has been raised. The committee hopes the replacement bridge will go out for bids in 2006.

Five Measure 37 applications have been received by Jackson County as of 6 December. The two most significant are requesting compensation or a waiver to allow ten and five acre subdivisions near Roxy Ann Peak. Walker requested the Planning Department to expedite qualification of the applications.

With the possible loss of federal funds to the county in 2007, there is concern that our libraries will need to find other sources of funding or use volunteer labor. County Librarian, Ronnie Budge, with her Josephine and Douglas counties counterparts is seeking a grant to conduct a study to provide options.

December 12/21/04 County Board of Commissioners Working Meeting

Dave Gilmour and Jack Walker were the commissioners in attendance.

Pepper Trail made a presentation on behalf of the Greenway Stewardship Alliance (GSA). They want to seek grant funding to take on restoration and stewardship of the six acre portion of the Bear Creek Greenway that the Billings Ranch (BR) Golf Course Group wants to lease from the county. Since BR hasn't made formal application,

Continued—Observers Report

Walker pointed out that the BoC has already given their intent to proceed with the lease to BR. Gil-mour stated that BR hasn't filed their paperwork nor have they been fully cooperative with county staff. Walker expressed his position that it is better to turn "idle land" into taxable land. GSA pushed for a hearing before the full board next year.

County staff presented a list of policy and process questions on Measure 37 for BoC direction. Of particular interest to the LWV, is Walker's position that claims not be subject to public hearings. Gil-mour's position is that, due to the expected heavy workload, only routine applications should not be subject to public hearings. CW Smith will be the tie breaker on this issue.

An opinion on M37 is expected from the Department of Justice by the first week in January 2005.

The League of Women Voters "was born" on February 14, 1920....

Look for historic local LWVRV clippings at the next General Meeting!

Mt. Hood Resort is the Site of Convention 2005

Situated in the shadow of Mt. Hood, Resort at the Mountain will be the site of the LWVOR Convention, May 20-22, 2005. The Resort is located in Welches at the western base of Mt. Hood.



Mark your calendars!

LWVOR is looking for a Parliamentarian:

If you are familiar with Robert's Rules, please consider signing up as a Parliamentarian for the State Convention at Mt.

Hood Resort! Your task would be the oversight of the business meetings and giving a short workshop in parliamentary procedures. Contact Eileen Adee for further information.



MEDFORD

Jefferson Elementary School
333 Holmes Avenue
Cafeteria / Commons

Wednesday, February 2nd
6:30-8:30 p.m.

For additional information call
541.261.6131

what do you think oregon? | chalkboardproject.org

Chalkboard Project is led by five Oregon charitable foundations. We exist because a vast majority of Oregonians want to elevate our schools to among the nation's best and still live within our means. We don't have the answers yet, but—armed with balanced information—you can get us there.

get online. get involved. speak out.

Chalkboard Citizen Feedback Regional Meeting in Medford

By Margaret Noel, President LWVOR

Dear Rogue Valley League leaders,
PLEASE NOTE: there will be a Chalkboard Citizen Feedback Regional Meeting in MEDFORD next week from **6:30 to 8:30, Wednesday, February 2nd - at Jefferson Elementary School**. This is a great opportunity for League members and other citizens to make their voices heard to help Oregon schools!

Please let all League members know, as well as all your friends and all the school activists among your contacts. The Chalkboard Project is fine-tuning its citizen feedback events, after a few weeks of doing them in other communities. Their process and feedback forms are excellent. I think it will be an important and valuable event.

For more information contact: Stefani Jacobson Willis, Chalkboard Project

<www.chalkboardproject.org>
425 NW Tenth Ave., Suite 400
Portland, OR 97209
503.542.4325

**NEW MEMBER SURVEY TABULATION BY THE NATIONAL LEAGUE
(LWVUS) - an excerpt of a non-scientific survey compiled among 58 new members surveyed who
joined the League online between 10/25 and 11/9/04 :**

What made you decide to join the League?

- The election process in this country is in need to reform and I want to help make that happen
- I made the choice to become more active politically and liked the idea of a non-partisan group.
- I was a political science major in college and I have a passion for teaching people about the system. I firmly believe that if people are not educated on both sides of the issues, we can not have a truly democratic society.
- Respect for the League's services to voters and for your position on issues. The League provides an invaluable service during election period, especially in these strained times.
- I'd like to become involved in local events - and the issues the League are concerned with are those that I am concerned with.
- I wish to become more educated and active in both the political process and the issues that drive it. I wish to give something back to my community and learn more at the same time. The League's commitment to the exchange of knowledge is very attractive to me; that free exchange must be encouraged more widely. Your reputation is stellar!

For Robin Stroh, who lost her father: In a time like this there is sorrow for which no heart can be prepared. Please Robin, know that you have the support and caring of many that are close to you in thought and wish you comfort and peace!



2004/05 League of Women Voters of Rogue Valley

Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Zip: _____

Phone: _____

e-mail: _____

Give a copy of this to a prospective member or send the person's name to the address below

Send this application with \$24.50 (spouse/student \$12.25) for 1/2 of 2004-2005 membership to:



**LWVRV
P.O. Box 8555
Medford, OR 97501**

For more information call Mickey Ketchum,
Membership Committee, at 773-2968

February 2005 Calendar

Thursday	Febr. 3	10:00 AM - noon	LWV of Ashland Board Meeting, for details call Vanya Sloan at 482-4544
Thursday	Febr. 10	11:30 AM - 1 PM	LWVRV General Meeting: Campaign Finance Reform, speakers: Salvador Peralta with Democracy's Edge and Sarah Wetherson with MiPRAP @ J.J. North's Restaurant—Riverside Ave., Medford
Thursday	Febr. 17	11:30AM -1PM	LWVRV Board meeting at Eileen's home (date change!)
Thursday	Febr. 17	11:30 AM - 1:30 PM	LWV of Ashland General Meeting: Program Planning @ Ashland Elks Lodge, for details please call Kate Culbertson at 488-8693
Tuesday	March 1	6 PM	Rogue Valley Women's Alliance Annual Networking Dinner "Women in the Visual Arts" - Reservation deadline February 23 - for more information call Jan Waitt at 482-8249
Thursday	March 10	11:30 AM - 1 PM	LWVRV General Meeting: Funding Oregon - booklets on this topic will be made available at the February 10 General Meeting. @ J.J. North's Restaurant—Riverside Ave., Medford
Wed.	March 16	tba	Day at the Legislature in Salem—mark your calendars!