It’s Election Time!

It’s a mixed blessing that Oregon is not considered a swing state for the presidential race this year. On the one hand, we are not being blasted with unpleasant messages. But we aren’t getting a chance to hear directly from the candidates. And the lack of national attention can send the message that our votes don’t count. Which is wrong in so many ways!

We may not be electing a US Senator or a governor this year, but we are still electing US Representatives and there are any number of state and local races where our voices matter. The people elected to these positions will be making decisions that will affect all our lives. And we must not overlook the ballot measures. We are all aware of situations where a handful of votes made a huge difference in the outcome of an election.

So now is the time to get yourselves informed about the candidates and the issues. Leagues across the state are doing their part to prepare voters’ guides, hold candidates’ fairs and forums, and run ballot measure debates. The state League’s voter service team is scrambling to prepare the Vote411.org material for candidates down to county-level positions and to prepare information on the statewide ballot measures. Vote411.org and the printed voters’ guides should be available by the end of September. Look for the standard guide, the easy read version, large print edition, or the Spanish version through your local League. Vote411.org and an audio version can be reached through the LWVOR web site (voteoregon.org) for those who like their information electronically.

In addition to reading this material yourself, please tell your friends and relations about our wonderful, well-researched, impartial information. And remind everyone to vote! Our votes matter!

Be prepared for the Election!
Get Voter Information tailored to your address.
LWVOR Board Takes Positions On November’s Ballot Measures

Alice Bartelt, Action Chair
During its board meeting on August 3rd, the League of Women Voters of Oregon board voted to take the following positions on the following ballot measures. These actions are based recommendations from the Action Committee and positions adopted by our members.

LWVOR, members, will be working with other groups to either support or oppose the following statewide measures.

Measure #78: Amends Constitution: Changes constitutional language describing governmental system of separation of powers; makes grammatical and spelling changes – Support. This is a referral from the Legislature to clean up language and to make it clear that there are 3 branches of government.

Measure #79: Amends Constitution: Prohibits real estate transfer taxes, fees, other assessments, except those operative on December 31, 2009 – Oppose. This measure takes away control from local governments and should not be in the Oregon Constitution.

Measure #84: Phases out existing inheritance taxes on large estates, and all taxes on intra-family property transfers – Oppose. This measure takes away operating funds from the state, where budgets for essential services have been extensively cut, and does not provide a revenue replacement source.

Measure #85: Amends Constitution: Allocates Corporate Income/Excise Tax "Kicker" Refund To Additionally Fund K Through 12 Public Education – Support. This is based on the LWVOR’s position of adequately funding public education.

The League is neutral on the other statewide measures on the November ballot. Local Leagues may have positions on local measures.
President’s Column / Robin Wisdom

The League Abides

Even though it is still summer the League of Women Voters marches on. Thanks to the coordinated efforts by voter service organizers, ballot measure researchers, study committees, advocates, parade marchers, members and non-member supporters, the League advances its mission and everyone takes the vacations they need, too.

This year’s accomplishments will include the full gamut: education as in voter service and action as in preparing for and attending sessions at the Capitol. While we start 2012-13 with a general election and move into a legislative session in February, the main theme of the year must be Membership Leadership Development, or the MLD program presented by LWVUS. It was formerly known as the Membership Recruitment Initiative (MRI), but I think I will call it the ‘Marvelous’ Program.

LWVUS has trained the other 2/3 of the country’s Leagues these past several years. Through a generous grant, LWVUS has been successful in teaching Leagues how to overcome declining membership numbers and increase retention of members. LWVOR plans to focus its energies on this program, recognizing the extreme need and the possibility for turning around dismal membership reports and bringing new life to local Leagues and crucial help needed for those who have worked so loyally for so long. Thank You, Loyal League Members!

Another emphasis for this year will be ‘Being in Touch with Your State League Liaison’. This fits nicely with our ‘Marvelous’ program. Let’s be in communication and relay the problems we are facing and successes we may accentuate. Please look forward to a visit from your Liaison who will coordinate this with you.

More awesome accomplishments this summer include the Coastal Study printing and distribution this September. This study is jam packed with interesting facts about the coast and revealing research regarding wave energy and marine reserves. Copies are being hand-delivered to each legislator in Oregon. A consensus committee has finalized consensus questions. Local Leagues will be scheduling consensus meetings and soon we’ll have a new position from which we can espouse.

Thank you for your League loyalty and your effective & thoughtful participation. I look forward to advancing League principles with you this year!

Sincerely,
Convention 2013

Robin Wisdom, President
LWVOR has secured facilities at the Mill Casino in North Bend for the Convention 2013 to be held May 17-19, 2013. Please put this on your calendar now and look forward to more information next year as time grows closer.

Flo Alvergue, past state League events chair, helped organize this process along with the Coos County League. The LWVOR board is thankful to Flo for the great work she has done in organizing many of our recent events, and to the Coos County League for stepping up. If you know someone who would like to take on Flo’s position, please let us know.

Because the state and local Leagues share in responsibilities and the financial arrangements are made and paid by the state, putting on such an event can be fairly simple for the host League. The shared responsibilities are listed in the LWVOR Policies and Procedures Guidelines on pg. 19.

Basically, the LWVOR Board appoints a Convention/Council committee to work with a host League and makes arrangements with a facility. The LWVOR board is responsible for approving the site and contracts and determines the theme and program.

The Local Host League is responsible for registration, credentials and decorations. The host League will be reimbursed by LWVOR a total of $200 (Council) and $300 (Convention) regardless of whether the actual expenses meet these amounts. In addition, the local arrangements chair and local committee members will be reimbursed for mileage at a rate specified under Section 5.3 of the LWVOR Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, if traveling is necessary to carry out the work. The Host League(s) will receive complete guidelines and suggestions for implementing host functions the year before the event.

Looking for a Vibrant Volunteer

Got office skills that are getting rusty from lack of use? Want to learn new skills? Volunteer at the state League office to refresh your tool chest. We are seeking a volunteer to help out between mid-January and mid-July 2013 and help Kathy Greysmith, our Administrative Services Manager, while she supports the Legislative Action Team. As interim office support person, you will be responsible for:

- General administrative activities,
- League outreach and communication tasks, and
- Financial, development, and membership support.

The job includes lots of staff support (if you want) and a flexible schedule. Some work can be done from home, even. The job is located at the state League office in Salem and is expected to involve about 60 hours per month. We will donate $5 to your local League for each hour that you work. If you are interested or have questions, please contact Rebecca Smith (lwvor@lwvor.org, or 503-581-5722). Thank you.

Do You Like Water?

Drinking Water Advisory Board Representative Needed.

Assist the Action Team by attending quarterly meetings in Salem.

Contact the office ASAP!
National Popular Vote: Time For Oregon

Kappy Eaton, LWVOR Governance Coordinator

Oregon and Minnesota are the two states selected for major efforts in 2013 to enact the interstate compact legislation which will ensure that every vote, in every state, will matter in every presidential election. LWVUS has a long-standing position in opposition to the Electoral College. After the 2010 national convention, the National Board enlarged the position to allow consideration of alternative methods of allocating presidential election votes such as the National Popular Vote (NPV).

The shortcomings of the current system stem from state winner-take-all statutes (awarding of all of the state’s electoral votes to the candidate receiving the most popular votes in each state). This has permitted candidates to win the Presidency without winning the most popular votes nationwide - 4 times in 56 elections. Further, the system promotes the action of presidential candidates to ignore the concerns of voters in states where they are comfortably ahead or hopelessly behind. In 2004 and 2008 candidates concentrated two thirds of their visits and ad money in the post-convention campaign in just six closely divided “battleground” states – with 98% going to 15 states. Two-thirds of the states were ignored.

Article II, Section 1 of the U.S. Constitution gives the states the exclusive control over the manner of awarding their electoral votes. The winner-take-all rule is not in the Constitution, and was used by only three states in the first national election. The National Popular Vote bill preserves the Electoral College and state control of elections.

Under NPV, all the electoral votes from the enacting states would be awarded to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in all states and D.C. The bill would only take affect when enacted by states possessing a majority of the electoral votes – enough to elect a president -(270 of 538). The legislation, in the form of an interstate compact, has been passed by nine jurisdictions possessing 132 electoral votes, or 49% of the total needed to activate it. It has passed in Vermont, Washington, Maryland, Illinois, New Jersey, Massachusetts, California, Hawaii, and the District of Columbia. The Oregon House of Representatives passed the bill in 2009, but not the Senate.

The LWVOR Action committee has adopted NPV as the major governance issue for the 2013 legislative session. The National Popular Vote Board has hired two lobbyists, lined up legislative leadership support, started meeting with editorial boards across the state, and Barry Fadem, president of the NPV Board is travelling the state. We will be providing local leagues with every member materials later this fall in preparation for advocacy during the legislative session.

Resources: “Every Vote Equal: A State-Based Plan for Electing the President by National Popular Vote” 2nd edition; NationalPopularVote.com; Interview with Barry Fadem

LWVOR Program

Karan Kuntz, Program Chair

The Coastal Management report will be mailed to all League members in September. The report and an executive summary are also available on-line at http://voteoregon.org/issues/study-reports/recent-study-reports/. A PowerPoint presentation is being prepared, and the consensus questions will be published this fall.

Local Leagues must submit their consensus results by January 15, 2013. An off-board consensus committee person is needed. Please contact Robin Wisdom or Betsy Pratt if you are interested.

(Continued on page 6.)
Program (Continued)

The LWVOR board voted to table the **Children at Risk** study indefinitely. At the June retreat the scope of the study was narrowed to cover at-risk children from birth through third grade. More committee members are needed before the study can proceed and a co-chair would be helpful in enabling this important study to move forward (Petra Berger, the current chair, is unavailable until January).

**Remember the League**

*Betsy Pratt, Education Fund Chair*

If your rich uncle just left you a major bequest or if your long-lost treasure ship finally hit port, you might think about sharing your good fortune with the League’s educational programs. There are a number of ways to help out the League financially. The easiest way is simply to write a check, to either the LWVOR or LWVOREF, which many of our members do regularly. Another option is to designate stock shares or securities as a gift to the League. You may do this anonymously if you wish.

There are two other mechanisms that are more complicated to arrange -- a **charitable gift annuity** and a **pooled income fund**. A **charitable gift annuity**, arranged through a bank or financial professional, provides the donor with an immediate tax deduction (tied to the size of the donation and the donor’s age) and quarterly income for life (based on the same factors). When the donor dies, the League receives a gift based on the original tax deduction. These days, the income rate associated with gift annuities is higher than many other investments.

The **pooled income fund** is offered through the national League. You may have noticed the description in LWVUS newsletters:

> By making a gift of cash or securities of $5,000 or more to the LWVEF Pooled Income Fund, you can receive an immediate income tax deduction for a portion of the gift’s value and continue earning a quarterly return on the interest earned for life. Best of all, you can name your state and/or local League, along with the LWVEF, to benefit from the residual funds when you’re gone. For more information, please contact the Development office at 202-263-1355 or **plannedgiving@lwv.org**.

This is the approach that Portland League member Leeanne MacColl and her late husband used. They joined the pooled income fund back in the 1980s when making long-term plans. The couple was listed in the *LWVUS/LWVEF 2011 Annual Report* as members of the Carrie Chapman Catt Legacy Society in recognition of their gift.

Finally, League members may include the League as a beneficiary in their wills.

However you choose to make a contribution, the League will be grateful. And you will feel proud for your long-term support for our public policy education efforts — needed today more than ever.
Natural Resource Issues

Peggy Lynch, Natural Resources Coordinator

Integrated Water Resources Strategy Adopted


League members participated in the development of the strategy. This document will be an important guide for legislators in 2013 as natural resources agencies ask for funding to implement the strategy. The League will be asking for support for data collection and monitoring. Local Leagues might consider a program about the completed strategy and the investments needed to implement. Here is a summary of the recommendations:

The IWRS calls for a significant investment in groundwater and surface water data, both quantity and quality. The State needs a more robust network of stream gages and observation wells in place to track the health of Oregon’s water in each basin—to monitor groundwater levels, streamflows, and water quality. Further, professional personnel that are able to collect data, provide quality control, and process and share the results, are a critical part of Oregon’s data needs.

The IWRS calls for increased support for tools such as: built storage, natural storage, water conservation and re-use, water right transfers and other water management and development tools. The Strategy also calls for the development of new tools, such as a water supply development program, to strengthen the State’s role as a direct partner in water supply development.

A statewide groundwater quality-monitoring program does not exist today. Oregon needs to establish and maintain a statewide program, particularly related to nitrates, a known groundwater quality problem throughout Oregon.

The Strategy advocates for funding to benefit local communities—to participate in place-based planning; to finance water and wastewater infrastructure; to improve fish passage, screening, and other ecological restoration efforts; and to develop water resources projects.

Southern Oregon Regional Planning

On May 10, 2012, Governor John Kitzhaber issued Executive Order No. 12-07 “to direct certain state agencies to work with three Southern Oregon counties, if those counties elect to participate, in developing a pilot program that allows appropriate additional regional variation in what lands must be planned and managed as farm and forest lands.”

On July 17, 2012, Jackson, Josephine and Douglas Counties sent a letter accepting the invitation to participate in this pilot. They provided to the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) a Problem Statement: “Rural lifestyle is an integral part of the fabric of Oregon. Counties have been struggling for years within the structure of Oregon’s laws to provide for rural development opportunities. The broad scope and definition of farm and forest lands, together with the lack of Statewide Planning Program recognition of rural development, has created a regulatory environment that has constrained a rural lifestyle. An examination of farm and forest lands, recognizing that non-resource areas exist in Southern Oregon, may provide an opportunity to address this issue.

Any refinement of the scope of the definitions of farm and forest land will continue to focus on protection and conservation of higher value resource areas.
Natural Resource Issues
(Continued)

The Executive Order comes with monies from the 2012 legislature for the counties, under a grant agreement with the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD), to complete technical studies, mapping and other materials required to prepare a rulemaking petition to LCDC. The Executive Order includes these expectations: “The process for considering such changes must provide for wide-scale public involvement, and include an analysis of costs, benefits and likely outcomes.” Monies were also authorized for DLCD and the Departments of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Resources to help in this project. We might also expect to see the Departments of Transportation and Environmental Quality to play a role.

We encourage the Rogue Valley and Umpqua Leagues to hold a program as this project moves forward and we hope League members attend meetings and participate in this important project. As a pilot program, this project could be important for the rest of Oregon in the future.

Onsite Septic Management Program for Coastal Regions
Oregon’s Environmental Quality Commission is addressing a requirement by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to reduce nitrates and other contaminants in the Coastal Nonpoint Pollution Control Program Area (Clatsop, Coos, Curry, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Lincoln and Tillamook Counties and parts of Lane County) by adopting a rule where septic systems will be required to be inspected at time of transfer of sale of real property. This rule should be adopted no later than March 2013. The League has supported this requirement not only for the coastal zone but throughout Oregon since septic systems are not required to be inspected once they are installed and we know that there are areas in Oregon where our streams and groundwater are adversely affected by these contaminants.

The League suggests that a local program to explain this new requirement would be helpful, especially in the Coastal Zone. Kitsap County, Washington and the State of Massachusetts both address this clean water issue. To better understand the reason read from our new Coastal Study, pages 32-33: “In Oregon, over 30% of residences and businesses have septic systems, and the EPA estimates that 10-20% of all septic systems fail each year.”

LWVUS Agriculture Position Update

Many of you have asked about the motion passed at Convention to review and update the Agriculture position. Last week in the Leaders Update, this wording was posted, as follows: “The motion calls for a review that will investigate genetic modification, consolidation in the food industry, money in the regulatory process, and the consumer’s right to accurate and comprehensive food labeling. In late 2012, the LWVUS Board will discuss the proposed study, solicit committee members and define the scope. Look to the Leaders Update for information later this year.”
Featuring:
Chuck Sheketoff
Executive Director
Oregon Center for Public Policy

Election Highlights
What does the fall election mean for us?
League positions on measures
Mini ballot measure forum

Membership and Leadership Development
Concrete ways to bring in new members and grow new leaders

Join us for this and more at the...

LWVOR Fall Workshop
Saturday, October 13
9:30 AM - 3:00 PM
First United Methodist Church
1376 Olive St., Eugene

LWVOR Fall Workshop registration form
Advance registration required—due Oct. 5, 2012

Yes, I want to attend the LWVOR Fall Workshop!

Name: ____________________________________________________________

LWV Member? □ Yes  □ No    If yes, indicate League: __________________________

Phone: ___________________________ Email: ___________________________

□ Workshop with lunch: $25.00 member; $30.00 guest
   Choose sandwich type:  □ Turkey  □ Beef  □ Vegetarian

□ Workshop only: $15.00 member; $20.00 guest

Make checks payable to LWVOR and return with this form to LWVOR, 1330 12th St. SE, Suite 200, Salem, OR 97302 by October 5, 2012. Questions? Call 503-581-5722 or email lwvor@lwvor.org.
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