



General Meeting: Issues in the Metro Area with Robert Liberty

Robert Liberty, a resident of the Richmond neighborhood in Portland, was elected to the Metro Council in November 2004, and re-elected in 2008 for a second term. He represents District 6, which includes portions of Northeast, Southeast and Southwest Portland.

His interests as Metro Councilor include promoting redevelopment in town centers and along main streets, increasing transportation and housing choices, conserving natural areas inside and outside the urban growth boundary, and giving citizens a stronger role in the regional planning decisions affecting our future.

Liberty received a BA in Political Science from the University of Oregon Honors College, an MA in Modern History from Oxford University and a JD from Harvard Law School. He was a Loeb Fellow at the Harvard Graduate School of Design during the 2002-03 year.

Metro is the only regional government agency in the United States whose governing body, the Metro

September General Meeting



Issues in the Metro Area Robert Liberty, Metro Councilor

Tuesday, September 15, 12:00 noon
Brown Bag Luncheon

Board Room, Multnomah County Building,
501 SE Hawthorne Boulevard

Parking: Ample street parking.

By Bus: Plan your route with TriMet's Trip Planner at www.trimet.org.

Council, is directly elected by the region's voters. This meets a provision of Metro's home rule charter, approved by the voters in 1992, which requires that Metro leadership be elected, visible and accountable.

The Metro Council consists of a president who is elected regionwide and six councilors who are elected by district every four years in nonpartisan races. The president presides over the council, sets its policy agenda, and appoints all members of

Metro committees, commissions, and boards.

Metro's seven councilors work cooperatively with the 25 cities and three counties that make up the Portland metropolitan area

The Metro Council provides leadership from a regional perspective, reflects an ongoing, innovative planning orientation, and focuses on issues that cross local boundaries and require collaborative solutions.

Membership: Share the Wealth!

Carol Cushman

Think of what you value most about your League membership. Maybe it is easier to list all the things you like about being a member of League. Wouldn't you like to share that with a friend?

The September general meeting is a

perfect time to introduce a friend to League. Ask a friend, or two, to join you at the meeting. We are meeting at the County Building – easy access, spacious meeting space, and parking available on the street or in the parking garage (for a fee).

Robert Liberty is a long time fan of

LWV. He has great stories he tells of working with state League members many years ago. I hope he will share some of those experiences with us at the noon meeting on September 15th!

You, as a satisfied member of LWV Portland, are the best person to recruit a new member!

**League of Women Voters
of Portland, OR**

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Voter is produced 9 times a year by the League of Women Voters of Portland. We welcome your comments, suggestions, story ideas and submissions. Please contact Pat Chor or Heather Drake at the League office, 503-228-1675. Submissions must be received no later than the Friday before the board meeting each month.

September 2009



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President's Column

Betsy Pratt

We have a public works project happening in our front yard this summer. It wasn't conceived that way, of course. I had in mind a little economic stimulus package that would relieve my husband of having to mow the slightly sloped lawn. But we live on a corner, so it's become a public project. All the neighbors, and even passers-by, have commented on the project – favorably so far, except for the person who called the City Engineer to complain about the (temporary) pile of rocks in the street. We are a living example of a public process.

As a League member, I am used to dealing with public process in the abstract. We are always asking whether the city or the county has adequately consulted with the public before taking action. Have they sought out solutions that work for the greater benefit or are they responding to narrow special interests? Have they set the appropriate priorities?

One organization that has a commendable record for both effective public process and programs that enhance the region is Metro, which is the directly elected regional govern-

ment that serves residents in Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington Counties, and the 25 cities in the metropolitan area. Our first general meeting of the year will feature Metro Councilor Robert Liberty who will talk about his priorities and issues. Since the agency protects natural areas and parks, plans for land use and transportation, and manages garbage disposal and recycling, he will have a lot of territory to cover.

Our units will be looking at public processes from a different direction. We plan to introduce unit attendees to various web pages offering links to governmental resources, from simple factual information to live legislative hearings (as well as show off our own redesigned web page). The web can be intimidating until we're exposed to some of the tricks that help manage the information, and we hope members will feel more comfortable with this technology.

Public process is an important component of our democracy. If everything goes as intended, the result is a better community – from the block level to the region. Join us in September to get involved!

State Budget Review for Nov Units

Exceptional League Volunteer Opportunity – Two Months, Hot Topic, Team Effort

Requirements:

- Locate and Review Material (Great Resources Available)
- Select Material for Members
- Prepare Discussion Outline and Questions
- Meet with Team Once Or Twice
- Attend Two Units in November

To volunteer for this committee, contact Ann Mulrone.

Action Committee Sept Kick-off Meeting

Debbie Aiona

The Action Committee consists of League members interested in learning more about local public policy issues and exploring ways in which the League can influence related decisions based on our positions. All members, including those who are actively involved and those who want an in-depth understanding of current issues, are invited to attend any of the monthly meetings. At the meetings the committee reviews current action items and develops recommendations to the board. Quite often, invited

speakers address the group and provide detailed background information that is used to more effectively influence appropriate decisionmakers.

Our kick-off meeting is scheduled for **Friday, September 11, 1 p.m.**, Board of Trade Building, room 433. We will review the activity that took place over the summer, discuss strategy, and make plans for the upcoming year. Please plan to join us and help the League make a difference. *All members welcome to attend.*



Decline to Sign

Initiative petitions being circulated by "Oregonians Against Job-Killing Taxes" would force a referral in a special January election of tax measures passed by the Legislature. The tax measures are part of a legislative plan that attempts to balance the state budget in the face of a \$4 billion shortfall in revenue. The goal is to protect essential services, such as education, public safety, and health care, without shifting the tax burden to middle-class families or small business owners. These measures would:

- Raise the \$10 corporate minimum income tax for the first time since it was lowered (from \$25) in 1931. Replace the \$10 corporate minimum tax with a sliding rate equal to one-tenth of one percent of Oregon sales. The new minimum would be set at \$150 and capped at \$100,000.
- Increase the tax rates on corporate profits over \$250,000 to 7.9 percent (until 2011, when it drops to 7.6 percent).
- Increase the marginal tax rate on income over \$125,000 for individuals and \$250,000 for households to 10.8 percent (until 2012, when it drops to 9.9 percent).
- Increase the marginal tax rate on income over \$250,000 for individuals and \$500,000 for households to 11 percent (until 2012, when it drops to 9.9 percent).

The League of Women Voters supports the legislative plan to balance the state budget and opposes the attempts by out-of-state special interest groups and corporations to defeat the tax fairness packages. **We urge you to join with us and "Decline to Sign".**

September Action Committee Meeting

Kick-off Meeting

Friday, September 11, 1:00 pm

Room 433, Board of Trade Building
310 SW 4th Avenue, Portland

All members welcome. Questions? Contact Debbie Aiona.

Email Debbie if you'd like to have your name added to the **Action Committee Email List** and receive occasional reminders and updates.

The **Portland Plan Study Circle** will be reactivated this fall. If you'd like to join this stimulating group and participate in the city's efforts to plan for our future, email Debbie.

In Memoriam

Louise Questad, a long-time Portland Leaguer who moved to Seattle in 2006, died in July 2009. Louise was widely recognized as our local expert on water issues and was an active participant in a number of state studies. Her expertise contributed to the League's public credibility.

Don't Miss a Great Opportunity...



To own a beautiful, fine-quality, red, white and blue **LWV umbrella**. They are printed with the League logo and the message "Be Informed and VOTE". Buy yours at any League event for a mere \$15.

Open World Civic Hosting Plans Underway

Pat Osborn

The Open World Hosting committee has been meeting over the summer to plan the week-long field trip on accountable government for the Russian delegates coming to Portland October 10th through 18th.

We have reached out to other groups in Portland that have experience in this type of work. We met with Theresa Burks at the World Affairs Council to learn of her experiences with Open World. We also met with Sandra Freels and Martha Hickey at Portland State University's Russian Program. PSU and Friends of Russian Culture will host the delegates at a campus event where they will make short presentations to PSU's Russian students and the public. The delegates will also be honorary guests at the "Bridge to Russia" event at Portland City Hall on October 15 hosted by Portland Sister Cities program.

Portland's Russian Sister City is Khabarovsk, far to the east of the country.

We also talked with David Bragdon, Metro President, who met with our 2005 Russian delegates and has traveled to Russia and the Ukraine to meet with government leaders. He advised us about the differences between American and Russian expectations of government, and how governmental decisions are made.

The work of planning for our hosting week is interesting and challenging. We hope all League members will be able to meet the delegates. There will be a League member reception for delegates at Mary McWilliams home on October 12 at 5 pm, and the PSU presentation will be held October 15 from 3:30 to 5:30 pm. The Sister Cities event is later that night and open to the public.

League Members Welcome New Citizens



Lynn Baker

Naturalization ceremonies for new citizens were attended this summer by representatives of the League. Many thanks to Peggy Sanders, Joella Werlin, and Bev Wilson for taking on this work.

It is always amazing to see how many countries are represented in each ceremony. In one ceremony in July, for example, there were 76 new citizens from 39 countries! In every ceremony, an overwhelming percentage of people choose to fill out voter registration cards.

Left: Lynn Baker answers questions from new citizens as they fill out voter registration cards.

Reader Alert!!

Bev Wilson

"Viva Libra" (long live the book), the LWV book group, has an opening for one new member now that Amy Hjerstedt and her Coast Guard husband have left for his next posting. The intent of this group is to be a kind of adult tutorial for each other, learning about the world in which we find we are living today. To that end, we have chosen books for the next year as follows:

- *The Looming Tower, Al-Qaida and the Road to 9-11*, Lawrence Wright
- *The Battle for God*, Karen Armstrong
- *The Accidental Asian: Notes of a Native Speaker*, Eric Liu
- *The Lemon Tree: An Arab, A Jew and the Heart of the Middle East*, Sandy Tolan
- *Dreams from My Father*, Barack Obama
- *Backlash, The Undeclared War Against American Women*, Susan Faludi
- *Stubborn Twig, Three Generations in the life of A Japanese family*, Lauren Kessler
- *Portland: People, Politics, and Power, 1851-2001*, Jewel Lansing
- *Forward From Here: Leaving Middle Age and Other Unexpected Adventures*, Reeve Lindberg
- *The Guns of August*, Barbara W. Tuchman
- *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jane Jacobs

We take turns hosting at members' houses on the first Thursday evening of the month. People come prepared to discuss the book at hand. If this sounds like you, please contact Bev Wilson.

Position Review: Multnomah Education Service District

Carol Cushman

One position regularly retained by LWV Portland, that does not receive much attention other than during position review, is "Multnomah Education Service District (MESD)." The position is very basic, was adopted in 1986 in conjunction with East Multnomah County LWV, and does not include any detail about the MESD.

In review, our position states:

The League of Women Voters of Portland and East Multnomah County believe Education Service Districts (ESDs) as currently structured are the most effective way to deliver regional educational services. The option of merging ESDs into fewer units should remain open for future consideration.

The League supports efforts to increase public awareness of MESD services. Such efforts could include the identification of MESD services used by school districts for parents and teachers as well as increased public information activities by MESD.

The League supports election of board members on primary election day. The League also supports wide distribution of sufficient information about the candidates to assure visibility to the voters.

There are currently twenty Education Service Districts (ESDs) which cover the entire state; the boundary of our ESD coincides with the boundaries of Multnomah County. Each ESD has a superintendent, a school board with elected directors, and both classified and certified employees. One might think of it as an umbrella school district which provides services to all public school districts within the service area. MESD states its mission is to: "... support our local school districts and share in

providing a quality education for the children and families of our communities."

One program many may readily identify is the Outdoor School Program. Administrative services such as an audio-visual library, payroll, printing or purchasing are included in many ESDs to take advantage of an economy of scale. The ESD sets up the programs and services; local districts decide if and at what level they choose to participate.

The ESDs also provide specialized programs for special needs students that a local district might not be able to provide as efficiently. These services include evaluation, home and hospital, migrant education, incarcerated youth, behavioral programs, speech pathology services, life skill classes, school nurses, and more.

School districts may choose to provide these services within their system, or contract with the ESD to provide the service to students.

The 2009 legislative session once again attempted to make changes in the ESD system; however, the bill failed to pass both houses of the legislature. The primary changes proposed by SB574 would have consolidated the 20 service districts into 13 and made the ESD boards appointed.

More detail is available at the MESD website (www.mesd.k12.or.us/).

One document giving more specific detail is the Multnomah ESD Local Service Plan for the coming school year, found at:

www.mesd.k12.or.us/bus/budget/200910LSP/2009-10LocalServicePlan.pdf

Go Online! Let's Begin

At September unit meetings, we will show you how to use the internet to get the most out of League membership and assist in your political advocacy. Here are a few websites to start your League year online:

League Sites:

www.lwv.org - A great beginning from LWVUS, excellent background information on topics we will be studying this year: education and water. This is a national program planning year so use this site to get up to date!

www.lwv.or.org - A terrific site from LWVOR. The 2009 Legislative wrap-up report is the best I have read.

www.lwvpx.org - Portland's new site, check it out and share your thoughts at September units.

Action in Portland:

www.portlandonline.com - The gateway site to City Council members and agencies.

The Portland League has been a civic leader for many years on urban renewal and housing issues. Here are some well-used sites:

www.pdc.us - The gateway site for all urban renewal topics.

www.oregonhousingalliance.org - The League is a member of the Alliance, a state leader on housing issues.

www.oregonon.org - The home site for the Oregon Opportunity Network, a collaborative organization for community development non-profit organizations.

Membership Directory Supplement

Below you will find a handy list of all the new members who have joined since the Membership Directory was printed. (Continuing members who renewed late, after the printing deadline, are also included.)

Calendar

September 2009							October 2009						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5					1		3
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1: Membership Comm 9:30 am, Room 520 2: Exec Committee 12:00 pm, Room 520 3: Unit Training 10:00 am, Room 520 7: Office Closed 10: LWVCRR TriMet Study 11:00 am, Room 433 11: Action 1:00 pm, Room 433 15: General Meeting 12:00 noon, Mult. Bldg. 18: Voter Deadline 21: Board Meeting 5:45 pm, Room 433 29: Mailing Party 10:00 am, Room 520							7: Exec Committee 12:00 pm, Room 520 10-18: Open World Civic Hosting Visitors 13: General Meeting 7:00 pm, Mult. Bldg. 16: Voter Deadline 17: LWVOR Fall Workshop 19: Board Meeting 5:45 pm, Room 433 28: Mailing Party 10:00 am, Room 520						

Calendar Location Key:

Room 520 and **Room 433** are located at our office building: Board of Trade Building, 310 SW 4th Avenue, Portland (4th Avenue between Stark and Oak Streets)

The **Mult. Bldg.** is located at 501 SE Hawthorne Boulevard. The Board Room is located on the first floor.



Chinook Books are Coming!
Entertainment Books are Coming!

Get yours at fall meetings and events!

Unit Meetings

SEPTEMBER TOPIC: Renew and Refresh: Friendships and League Year Ahead

Special Feature: A Primer – Where Does the Web Fit In?

A League Resource Team will review the National, State and Local League web sites, how to navigate and use as a resource. The Action Committee will review the web sites and blogs they consult each day to track League action priorities. (See pg. 5 for websites to get started.)

Unit 1 – Southwest

Monday, Sept. 28, 7:00 p.m.

Leader – Ann Mulrone
Host – Barbara Stalions

Unit 2 – Southeast

Monday, Sept. 28, 10:00 a.m.

Leader – Mary McWilliams
Host – Beth Johnson

No Unit 3 this year

Unit 4 – North/Northeast

Thursday, Sept. 17, 1:00 p.m.

Leader – Susan Proppe Tong
Host – Bev Wilson

Unit 5 – Terwilliger Plaza

Tuesday, Sept. 22nd, 3:00 p.m.

Leader – Jeanne Steed
No host – Convene at Terwilliger Plaza Auditorium A, 2545 SW Terwilliger Blvd.

Unit 6 – Southwest/Northwest Hills

Friday, Sept. 18, 9:30 a.m.

Leader – Debbie Kaye
Host – Debbie Kaye

Unit 7 – Vermont Hills

Monday, Sept. 21st, 9:30 a.m.

Leader – Jeanne Steed
Host – Irene Marvich

Unit 8 – Online

Leader: Kathleen Hersh, 503-245-7434,
itpdx@comcast.net

Location: groups.yahoo.com/group/
LWVPDXVirtual Unit/

See the Summer *Voter* for guidance on how to sign up and participate.



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“to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government”

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Inside this issue...

- ◆ Robert Liberty on Metro - Sept. 15
- ◆ Action Kick-off - Sept. 11

Have you sent in your membership renewal yet? Don't forget!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF PORTLAND

“to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government”

Why not invite a friend to join?
Help us make democracy work.

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- Limited Income Membership \$43.60
- Student Membership \$25.00

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 Phone/Fax: 503-228-1675

GIVE THIS TO A FRIEND MEMBERSHIP COUPON

- ___ I am a new member!
- ___ I am interested in working with the League this year. Please call me.
- ___ Please send me more information about the League.
- ___ I cannot join right now, but I am enclosing \$_____ to support League education activities. (Tax deductible if made to the LWV Portland Ed. Fund.)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____