



Action: Kick-off Meeting and Opportunities to Get Involved

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 decision makers.

Our kick-off meeting is scheduled for **Friday, September 23, 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm**, 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 are welcome to attend.*

Opportunities for Involvement

There are various opportunities available to League members who want to help make a difference by getting actively involved in the community.

(1) Attend action committee meetings and increase your understanding of critical issues facing Portland.

(2) Add your name to the action and/or Portland Plan email list and receive reminders of monthly Action Committee meetings, Portland Plan public engagement opportunities and announcements of other meetings related to League issues.

(3) Become a League observer by attending public meetings and reporting back to the committee.

(4) Choose an issue, follow it closely and help shape League strategy in that specific area.

Fast Facts: Affordable Housing

Information available from the Portland Housing Bureau based on 2000 census data shows a shortage of 11,577 units for renter households with incomes below 30 percent of median family income (MFI). There is a 36,000+ surplus of units afford-

able to renter households earning between 30 and 80 percent MFI. A family of four earning \$21,600 is at 30 percent MFI; the same size family at 60 percent earns \$43,200.

Five years ago, City Council adopted a policy setting aside 30 percent of urban renewal funds for low-income housing. The money can be used to help pay to develop rental housing affordable to households earning up to 60 percent MFI or assist with homeownership for families earning up to 80 percent MFI and in special circumstances, up to 100 percent MFI. The League testified at a Portland Housing Advisory Commission hearing and encouraged the city to place a priority on developing housing for those earning 30 percent MFI and below. City Council will be considering revisions to the policy this fall.

September Action Committee Meeting

Friday, September 23, 1:00 pm
Room 433, Board of Trade Building,
310 SW 4th Avenue, Portland

All League members welcome. Questions? Email or call Debbie Aiona.

Join the Email Lists for the Action Committee and/or the Portland Plan Study Circle

Action Committee list members receive monthly meeting reminders and occasional updates on committee activities. Portland Plan list members receive information on how to get involved in planning our city's future. Email Debbie Aiona if you would like to sign up.

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Endowment Committee: Corinne Paulson

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Janine Settelmeyer

Budget & Voters' Guide Distribution:
Barbara Stalions

Voter is produced 10 times a year by the League of Women Voters of Portland. We welcome your comments, suggestions, story ideas and submissions. Please contact Lynn Baker or Heather Drake at the League Office.

September 2011



The League of Women Voters of Portland
310 SW 4th Ave Ste 520
Portland, OR 97204
Phone & Fax: 503 228-1675
Email: info@lwvpx.org
Web: www.lwvpx.org

Office Hours
M-F: 8:15 am to 12:15 pm
Closed on 4th Tuesday of each month

President's Column

Mary McWilliams

After a brief rest this summer the LWV of Portland is ready for another exciting year.

SEPTEMBER UNITS – Local Education Position

Ann Mulrone, Member Education Vice President, and her sub-committee of **Marnie Lonsdale, Colleen Shoemaker, and Lisa Wilcke**, have a clever and fun way to test the newly adopted local Education position. It is included in this *Voter*, along with background material; take them with you to your unit meeting. You can choose to attend any unit with the best time and location for you, or go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LWVPDXVirtualUnit/> to participate in the online unit. See page 9 for unit meetings.

SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING – Oregon Legislative Review

See the flyer attached to the front of this month's *Voter* for the exciting information about the brunch on Sept. 24 with Oregon state legislators, sponsored jointly with AAUW of Oregon and the North Central District of AAUW.

FIELD TRIP

Take an all-day field trip to Bull Run Watershed on Sept. 28. Only 3 seats remain to view the watershed that supplies Portland's drinking water; call the office to join us and get further information, if you missed it in

the Summer *Voter*. The cost is \$10 and is open to League and non-League participants.

WE NEED YOUR VOLUNTEER HELP

Committees are organizing to plan activities for the coming year. If you are interested in the topic, please contact the chair. Meetings after the first meeting are generally arranged around the available days and times of committee members.

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE will meet at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, September 6 at the League office to discuss possible fundraising activities for the year. Traditional events have included three direct mail appeals (Pat Osborn is leading this effort) and a silent auction. This year a donor and volunteer recognition has been suggested as well as a possible LWVUS grant opportunity for voter registration (beginning in 2012 before the May primary). Contact **Carol Wilson**, Chair, to join a fun established committee.

AUDITOR (City of Portland) STUDY COMMITTEE will be researching such questions as "What is the difference between a financial and a performance audit? How is the office's independence maintained?" Come join this new local study and improve your understanding of how our city works. Contact **Kathleen Hersh**, Chair.

Correction

In the Summer *Voter*, the section "Thank You Contributors, Memory/Honor Gifts," Irene Marvich was listed in the wrong section.

We gratefully recognize the **Honor Gift** for Irene Marvich from her daughter Kim Ball.

Voter Service Activities for November 8 Special Primary Election

Barbara Fredericks

We have an unexpected Special Primary Election on November 8 for the nomination by the Democratic and Republican parties of their respective candidates for the office of Representative to the U. S. Congress from the First Congressional District. The Special General Election to fill that position is scheduled for January 31, 2012.

We are presenting the candidates with two opportunities to educate voters about their candidacy. We will distribute a paper Voters' Guide to libraries and county clerk offices in all five counties in the First Congressional District (a small portion of west Multnomah County and Washington, Yamhill, Columbia, and Clatsop Counties). The Voters' Guide

will be available in PDF format on our website as well.

In partnership with the American Association of University Women, we are planning a forum for candi-



dates for the nomination of the Democratic Party, and a forum for candidates for the nomination of the Republican Party. Both forums will

occur on Thursday, October 20, from 7:00 pm to approximately 9:30 pm in the Hillsboro Civic Center Auditorium, 150 East Main Street, Hillsboro.

The forums will be aired live on local access television by TVCTV in Washington County. Both TVCTV and Portland Community Media will replay the forums numerous times before election day.

We welcome volunteers to help with the forums. Please send an email to our Office Manager, Heather Drake, (info@lwwpdx.org) if you wish to volunteer. Please also continue to email to Heather your questions for the candidates.

The Voter Service team appreciates your help!

Coming Attractions!

November: Oregon's Food Story, From Farm to Many Tables



Ann Mulroney

November 8 General Meeting Panel

Oregon Food Products: Where Do They Reach? • Representative from the Director's Office of the Oregon Department of Agriculture

Achievements and Innovations in Local Food Supply Chains • Allison Hensey, Healthy Food and Farm Program, Oregon Environmental Council

Comparing Local and Mainstream Food Supply Chains • Larry Lev, Professor and Extension Economist, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, OSU

November Units – Get Ready for Another New Adventure!

In 1988 the League of Women Voters of the United States adopted a position on agricultural policy after a two year study. The position supports policies for sustainable agriculture and targeting research programs and technological assistance to mid-sized farms and sustainable agriculture. The League supports moving away from direct payments based on production, moving agriculture toward greater reliance on the free market.

Learn more about the agricultural study at www.lwv.org. Click on **Issues** in the blue bar. Click on **Natural Resources** in green on the left side of the page. Under Read About it... click on **Agriculture Policy**.

Oregon is a major agricultural state. The "economic footprint" of agriculture in Oregon accounts for over \$34 billion or 12% of the state's economic activity. Associated jobs number over 234,000 or 11% of the state's employment. Less than 2% of Oregon farms are non-family corporate entities. "Farmer owned, farmer grown" describes Oregon agricultural production.

The November program is intended to update and educate about Oregon's and Portland's unique positions in food agriculture today and hopefully in the future.

Walk for the Cure September 18

Debbie Kaye

“IMAGINE.....life without breast cancer”. This is a slogan used by the Komen Foundation.

Please join League members to Walk for the Cure in Portland on Sunday, September 18. We have a growing list of participants for the 5K walk through downtown.

To register, go to komenoregon.org and sign up as an “individual” for the “Adult-Untimed Walking & Running

Events”; the cost is \$30. You may sign up on line or print out a form and mail it in.

Members will pick a place and time to gather before the Walk begins. Please email me, Debbie Kaye, (name, email, phone, & cell phone) to let me know you will participate. I will let you know where and when we’ll meet. We’ll carry our League banner!

Thanks for imagining....

Children at Risk

Marnie Lonsdale

The LWV of Oregon is seeking members for a study of Children at Risk to begin in **September**. **The study is expected to last two years**. However, a full two-year commitment is not needed. Study members can commit for full study participation or volunteer to do research in a specific limited area including interviews. Both are appreciated and invaluable.

This study will update our position and enable the League to better advocate for the needs of our children. If you are interested or would like to know more contact Marnie Lonsdale.

LWV Portland gratefully acknowledges
this thoughtful gift:

*In Memory of
Walter and Judy Handelman*
from JWHands Foundation

Local Convention Silent Auction Update

Debbie Kaye

Thank you to all those members who donated items and to those who purchased them for our silent auction at the May 10 Local Convention. That evening, \$2,590 was raised.

And the financial rewards from our silent auction continue to grow! This is due both to larger attendance at the lovely evening party hosted by Mary McWilliams which included five additional people, and to Pat Osborn’s indefatigable portrait painting; she sold another one. The total funds raised from that fun auction come to \$2,777.50. Thanks again to generous donors and bidders.

Regional Livability Summit

Presented by Coalition for a Livable Future – clfuture.org

Climate Justice: Healthy People, Healthy Places, Healthy Process

Wednesday, September 14, 8:30 am – 6:00 pm
Smith Memorial Student Union, Portland State University

Keynote Speaker: Angela Park

Angela Park is a leading expert on diversity in the environmental field in the United States. She authored the 2009 report, *Everybody’s Movement: Environmental Justice and Climate Change*, and is researching a forthcoming report analyzing 20 years of progress and setbacks in making the environmental field more diverse and inclusive.

Cost: \$40 CLF members before August 31; \$50 after August 31. Other pricing is available to match any budget. Cost includes continental breakfast, lunch, and closing reception.

To register: secure.clfuture.org/Summit_2011_Intro

Education Consensus Opens League Year

Ann Mulrone

September Units: LWV Portland Education Position Adopted Aug. 2011 – From Study to Action

Population growth in the (pretend) Truman High School attendance area has created the “Truman Bubble.” The School Board is proposing shifting attendance areas and school structures to accommodate this increase in the number of young children.

- Does our new position allow us to advocate? In what areas?
- Is there something missing in our position that surfaced during the (pretend) public meeting?
- Is the Truman Bubble situation an issue that merits testimony?

Sept. Units will feature a (pretend) public meeting on the school board proposal. Unit members will role-play the participants. A discussion of whether and how to use the education position will follow.

GET READY!

- Read about the “Truman Bubble” on this page.
- Read the LWV Portland Education Position on page 6.

October 11 General Meeting: A Panel, “The Impact of the Growing Federal Role in Education on Teaching.”

- Dr. Pat Burke, Associate Professor, Grad. School of Education, Dept. of Education Leadership and Policy
- Gwen Sullivan, Executive Director, Portland Association of Teachers
- Charlene Bassine, Assistant Principal, David Douglas High School
- Mark Hansen, Rethinking Schools

October Units: LWVUS Education Study Consensus

GET READY!

- Read the LWVUS Summary Report on page 7, “The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education: Equity and Funding.”
- Read as many as you can of the LWVUS background reports. Go to www.lwv.org. Click on **For Members**. Scroll down and click on **Projects and Programs**. The Education Study is listed in blue of the right side of the screen.

If you would prefer to receive paper copies of the LWVUS materials, you can request a set from the League Office. Mail your check for \$7.50 made out to **LWV Portland** to: PO Box 3491, Portland, OR 97208. We will mail copies in mid-September.

The Truman Bubble

Ann Mulrone

The School Board is holding a public meeting on a current and future capacity problem.

The Carrie Catt School (K-8) in the Truman High School attendance area is 20% over ideal class size (22 to 29 students). Census results indicate a significant (25%) increase in preschool children in that area.

The growth in the young population is both a result of growth in the minority birth rate and city in-fill of young profession couples.

The District must make a decision on how to address the population bubble and future consequences including reducing class size.

Characteristics of the Truman Attendance Area:

- During the last five years there has been a population boom in grades 1-4.
- During the last five years there has been a 25% increase in preschool age children.
- There has been a substantial growth in the minority population.
- The population includes a substantial low income component.
- The area is in an Urban Renewal Area that has invested significantly in affordable housing.
- Older areas are experiencing renovation and in-fill with urban professional families – “the bicycle population”.
- The census projection figures expect continuing growth with similar characteristics.

New LWV Portland Education Position (Approved by Board on 8/11/2011)

Items are numbered for ease of discussion for the September 2011 Units.

Public School Districts in Portland (2011, 2006 revised, 1980, 1979, 1976, 1975, 1973, 1972, 1971, 1969, 1968)

The League of Women Voters believes that public education is critical to the success of our city and that public schools should provide education for all children to develop the greatest potential in each individual.

Therefore the League supports:

- 1) A quality basic education provided for all students, with services available in an equitable way so that all students have access to comparable services, regardless of circumstances as income, race, ethnicity, geographical location, or family background.
- 2) Programs or services provided by districts which offer an alternate approach or focus for students with different learning needs, including a strong mix of off-site and on-site vocational education programs.
- 3) Teacher evaluation that improves teaching quality and student learning.
- 4) Grade organization that is determined by a number of factors, including evidence-based research, student needs, logistical impacts, and community input.
- 5) Adherence to set school boundaries with few exceptions, which may be based on educational, emotional, behavioral, or medical criteria, and offering all students access to a consistent and broad spectrum of classes.
- 6) Creative approaches to achieve diversity in school populations.
- 7) Changes in the school education structure which positively affect the quality of education and which take into consideration the preservation of neighborhoods and the needs of the community.
- 8) Adequate physical facilities, with buildings and all facilities meeting state and local standards.
- 9) School districts' decisions on future use of land and buildings based on a strategic facility plan that takes into account population projections, physical conditions, land use designations, and community needs, with coordination between the City of Portland and school districts in long-range planning.
- 10) An effort made to generate income to offset the costs of maintaining underused facilities, while those facilities deemed to have no future use sold in accordance with a sound investment strategy. Public announcements of district facility plans with adequate information and opportunity for public discussion and participation in the decision-making.

School Funding (2011, 2000)

While the League of Women Voters of Portland recognizes that the major responsibility for funding public schools has shifted to the state level, the League supports local measures when necessary to ensure quality education.

Therefore, the League supports:

- 1) Using local taxes such as local property tax and business income taxes to augment the funding provided by the State.
- 2) Using grants and other temporary funding for professional development, pilot projects, or for other one-time needs.
- 3) Using a combination of local, state, federal or private sources of funding for special education for the gifted and physically, emotionally, and mentally challenged students.
- 4) Allowing private funds to be raised in support of individual schools, provided those funds are shared across the district in an equitable and transparent manner.
- 5) Tracking and making available to the public information in an understandable format, including class size, per-pupil expenditures, costs for educating special-needs students, or other cost data.
- 6) Employing the services of a chief financial officer to provide strong, transparent fiscal leadership.
- 7) Participation by local schools and their communities in budget discussions via site-based management.

Note:

For the purpose of this study, these were the public school districts considered: Portland Public Schools, David Douglas, and Parkrose.

The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education: Equity and Funding

Lynn Baker

The following is a synopsis of “Equity and Funding,” one of five background reports LWVUS published for the study “The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education.”

The federal government provides less than ten percent of funding of local education budgets, but contributes significantly to the rules for how funding is used. Five percent of the US’s GDP is used for public education. Nearly half of K-12 education funding is intended to come from the states, with the rest from fees and income and other taxes. However, often states are not able to contribute that amount and the rest often comes from local property taxes.

Equity -- States that rely heavily on property taxes for this purpose tend to have greater inequities in school funding. In the US, the wealthiest 20% own 84% of total wealth. Inequities also reflect housing patterns; three quarters of Black and Latino students attend predominately non-white schools.

Adequacy -- Recently lawsuits have focused on adequacy, not equity. Adequacy means having just enough funding for basic education which has been taken to mean full-day kindergarten, class sizes of 15 for K-3 and 25 for 4-6, and specialist teachers. But adequate education costs vary—more money is needed for students from impoverished communities and those with special needs.

Funding Priorities -- Inadequate school funding has an impact. Drop-outs cost much in lost wages and taxes and costs of social services and crime. The US spends three times more for prisons than for education.

The national average for educating a child is \$9,500; it is \$43,000 to keep a person in prison. We have five percent of the world’s population and 25% of the world’s criminals.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) -- The 2001 program was intended to close achievement gaps for minority and underachieving children. Data reveal that scores in math and reading were higher for minority children



before NCLB. Sanctions imposed on low-performing schools allow courts and education agencies to step in and decide on changes. Parents receive vouchers which partially pay for a school with higher test scores.

Supporters like the increased accountability and a focus on low-scoring students. Critics point to a lack of funding for some of the mandates, the emphasis on penalties, the reliance on standardized tests, a lack of focus on gifted students, and passing over science, social studies, and the arts.

Voucher school students show little difference in their performance, and vouchers have not raised the performance of the neediest students. Many also argue that the goal of 95% of students meeting standards in reading and math by 2014 is unrealistic.

Race To The Top (RttT)—This 2009 program featured competitive grants to reward planned reform. Two requirements were paramount: to improve teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance, and to lift the cap on the number of allowed charter schools.

Research shows that increased pay based on teacher effectiveness is not an effective incentive, particularly when evaluation is based only on student test scores.

Some charter schools are effective, but not all. A pro-charter research study showed that only 17% of charter schools showed significant growth compared to public schools, and 37% showed less growth. Many charter schools do not accept or keep high-needs students.

*See the complete reports and summaries at www.lwv.org. Go to www.lwv.org. Click on **For Members**. Scroll down and click on **Projects and Programs**. The *Education Study* is listed in blue on the right side of the screen.*

*If you would prefer to receive paper copies of the LWVUS materials, you can request a set from the League Office. Mail your check for \$7.50 made out to **LWV Portland** to: PO Box 3491, Portland, OR 97208. We will mail copies in mid-September.*

Membership

Below you will find a handy list of all the new members who have joined since the Membership Directory was printed. (# marks continuing members who renewed after the Directory printing deadline.)

Membership Reminder!

Debbie Kaye

Many people responded immediately to the renewal letters; we thank you for continuing your support of the League of Women Voters of Portland. For those who have not yet taken the opportunity to pay dues for 2011-12, please do. We receive so much value for \$70! This issue of the Voter is a great example of that value. In it we find information on upcoming events and activities, reports on what our League has been doing, contact information, and discussion of civic affairs. We look forward to remaining engaged with all our members, and hope you will invite your friends to join, too.

Directory Updates

Elaine Hakala

Anne Willer

Bev Wilson

Calendar

September 2011							October 2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
25	26	27	28	29	30	1	30	31					

<p>5: Office Closed</p> <p>6: Development Comm 10:00 am, Room 520</p> <p>8: Action (Urban Re-nenewal) 1:00 pm, Room 520</p> <p>8: Board Meeting 3:00 pm, Room 433</p> <p>15: Media / Voter Deadline</p> <p>18: Komen Walk 9:00 am, TBA</p> <p>22: Naturalization Ceremony</p> <p>22: Auditor Study 1:00 pm, Room 433</p> <p>23: Action 1:00 pm, Room 433</p> <p>24: Legislative Brunch 9:30 am, Eastmoreland Golf Course and Club</p> <p>27: Office Closed</p> <p>28: Bull Run Field Trip 8:00 am, TBA</p> <p>28: Mailing Party 10:0 am, Room 520</p>	<p>5: Executive Committee 12:00 noon, Room 520</p> <p>11: General Meeting 7:00 pm, Board Room, Multnomah County Bldg</p> <p>13: Board Meeting 3:00 pm, Room 433</p> <p>14: Media / Voter Deadline</p> <p>19: Voter Registration Deadline</p> <p>20: Naturalization Ceremony</p> <p>20: Candidate Forum 7:00 pm, Auditorium, Hillsboro Civic Center</p> <p>22: LWVOR Fall Workshop Eugene</p> <p>25: Office Closed</p> <p>26: Mailing Party 10:00 am, Room 520</p> <p>28: Action 1:00 pm, Room 433</p>
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September Unit Meetings

Education: The Truman Bubble

Unit #1-Southwest-Evening
Monday, September 26, 7 pm

Leader: Ann Mulroney

Host: Kris Hudson

Unit #2-Southeast
Monday, September 26, 10 am

Leaders: Paulette Meyer AND

Beth Johnson

Host: Beth Johnson

Unit #4—North/Northeast
Thursday, September 15, 1 pm

Leader: Brenda Smith

Host: Bev Wilson

Unit #5—Terwilliger Plaza
Monday, September 19, 3 pm

Leader: Jeanne Steed

No Host: Convene at Terwilliger Plaza Auditorium A, 2545 SW Terwilliger Blvd

Unit #6 Southwest/Northwest Hills
Friday, September 16, 9:30 am

Leader: Mary Hepokoski

Host: Mary Hepokoski

Unit #7—Vermont Hills
Monday, September 19, 9:30 am

Leader: Jeanne Steed

Host: Jeanne Steed

Unit #8—Online

Leader: Kathleen Hersh

Location: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LWVPDXVirtualUnit/>

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 **Eastmoreland Golf Course and Club** is located at 2425 SE Bybee Rd, Portland



The League of Women of Voters® of Portland

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