



President's Message

**Greetings all,
It certainly has been a busy April.**

- First, on April 8, the Curry and Coos Leagues hosted a joint Forum with the Secretary of State Tobias Read. He was honest, professional and informative. We have an article in this month's CoastLines written by one of our members who attended for you to read, as well as the link to his speech.
- Secondly, we held three Candidate Forums: one on April 20 in Port Orford, one on April 22 in Gold Beach and one on April 23 in Brookings. All were well attended. Also, there is an article and link later in this newsletter.
- Third, many of us attended the play "Pathbreakers" in Gold Beach. Ann Tlaker did a wonderful job on this. Karol Simas has written an article about it for your review.
- Lastly, I want to thank all the volunteers who helped us put on these events. And encourage all members to attend our Annual Meeting on May 30. Details to follow.

*In League,
MJ LaBelle*

**MARK YOUR
CALENDAR**



Annual Meeting

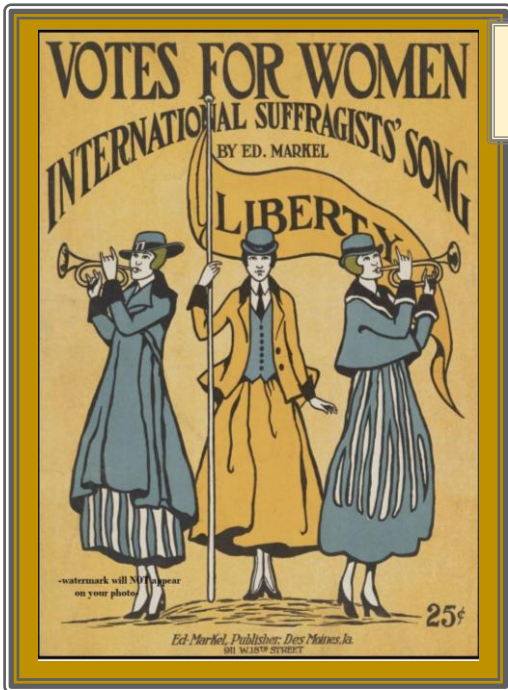
**Saturday, May 30, 2026
10am to 12 noon
Chetco Brewing Company
830 Railroad Street
Brookings, OR 97415**

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Board of Directors 2025-2026

- ▶ **President:** Mary Jane LaBelle (2025-27). Coastlines
- ▶ **Vice-President:** Lucie La Bonte (2025-27). Action/ Observer Corps/ Fundraising
- ▶ **Secretary:** Ann Schmierer (2024-26).
- ▶ **Treasurer:** Alyce Prudden (2024-26). Membership
- ▶ **Directors at Large:**
 - ↳ Director #1: Alex Carr Frederick (2025-27) Unite 8.5
 - ↳ Director #2: Georgia Nowlin (2024-26) Voter Service
 - ↳ Director #3: Evan Kramer (2025-27) Publicity
- ▶ **Team Members:**
 - ↳ Mail: Karol Simas
 - ↳ Membership List: Anne Morgan
 - ↳ Coastlines Publisher: Cindy Machowski
- ▶ **Unit Leaders:**
 - ↳ South County: Alex Carr Frederick
 - ↳ Mid County:
 - ↳ North County: Becky Flake



Pathbreakers: Heroines of Oregon Suffrage,
By Karol Simas

Way back in 2020 when we were ready to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of finally passing women’s right to vote, Anne Tlaker Hall wrote a play on Oregon’s suffragettes. Unfortunately, COVID squelched that performance. Six years later this awesome moment in history was brought to life at the Elizabethan Theatre in Gold Beach. This highly entertaining play used music, comedy, and real-life historical orations to highlight the long struggle to bring equality to our country’s democracy. After all, excluding half the people from voting in a country supposedly “of the people, by the people, and for the people” was ludicrous. This suffragette movement morphed into the League of Women Voters, which champions voters rights to this day. I’m proud to say I graduated from Portland’s Duniway elementary school named after Abigail Duniway, Oregon’s famous pioneer suffragette. I’m sorry to say the play’s run is over but maybe we can entice Anne to run an encore performance for our nation’s 250 anniversary in July.

The **w** World

Oregon's Secretary of State visits the South Coast ahead of May primaries

MaryJane Labelle, President League of Women Voters of Curry County
 Tobia Read, Secretary of State
 Jackie Clary, President of League of Women Voters of Coos County



Oregon Secretary of State Tobias Read spoke to a room full of engaged voters on April 8, 2026, at the Sprague Community Theatre in Bandon. The event, which brought the Oregon executive branch's second-in-command to town, was hosted by the Coos and Curry Chapters of the League of Women Voters. Read spoke extensively about the importance of civic engagement, voter participation, and ongoing efforts to prevent election interference.

In the current political climate, there has been an intentionally sewn sense of mistrust in our election apparatus. There have been repeated attempts from the Trump administration to abolish vote-by-mail. Oregon has been a pioneer of universal vote-by-mail for decades; the practice was expanded to include primary and general elections by a vote of the people in 1998.

"Democracy is not self-sustaining; it depends on patriation. That's why voting by mail is not simply a convenience, it is also a safeguard," said Read from the stage of the Sprague. "Oregon is the gold standard when it comes to running safe, accurate and fair elections. Voting by mail makes sure that every eligible voter can participate, amidst busy and complicated lives."

The practice has seen Oregon leading the pack in terms of voter participation. In primary elections since 2000, Oregon has had an average voter participation of 46.25 percent compared to the national average of 18 percent. Read credits a huge part of that level of participation to vote-by-mail.

"It removes barriers that we see too often in other places, like voter intimidation and long lines. It gives all of us, as voters, the time to be thoughtful. To make smart decisions and informed choices. You can sit on your couch in your pajamas and vote, that's a nice thing," said Read.

Vote-by-mail also has many built-in security measures that protect the integrity of elections. Each ballot has an individual barcode, allowing election authorities to track them easily. Our county clerks independently verify each signature against multiple records. Everything is on paper ballots, and the machines used to count them are never connected to the internet, and independent inspectors test them before and after each election. The president himself voted by mail from DC for his residence in Florida.

Despite that, Trump has issued two executive orders that have attempted to gut vote-by-mail: the first was shot down in a legal challenge led by multiple states (including Oregon), and the second is currently on the Supreme Court's docket. The writing of Article 1, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution is cut and dry on the matter.

Continued on page 4

Continued from page 3

“The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof,” states our foundational document.

Read went on to praise the work of county clerks across the state, calling them the backbone of our democracy and urging us all to support the work they do. Clerks, who administer, count, and verify our elections at the local level, have seen a rise in threats and harassment amid heightened suspicion and misinformation.

“Social media is flooded with misinformation. Lies about how votes are counted, who’s registered, who’s eligible. These public officials are being vilified for following the law and doing their job, and we can’t have that,” said Read. “Elections offices across Oregon have been threatened. Ballot boxes have been vandalized. We’ve had staff harassed online and in person, and yet they keep showing up. They keep doing the work, maintaining the rolls, counting the ballots. That is service, that is protection of democracy.”

Read wrapped up with a couple of public service announcements. With cuts to the U.S. Postal Service, it’s been encouraged that voters drop their ballots off themselves at any of the valid drop boxes around the county. A list of locations is available on the county website.

If you need to use the mail, be sure to have your ballot sent at least one week before election day. If you can’t manage that, the ballot must be postmarked by May 19. The safest way to ensure that happens is to take your envelope to the Post Office and request it be postmarked then and there. Also, verifying your signature, most commonly against the one on your driver’s license, is important for preventing any irregularities with your ballot.

Read went on to take questions from the audience on combating misinformation, reaching young voters, and how to best support our county clerks. Those answers included a sobering story of a county clerk who was relieved to have bulletproof glass installed in the elections office.

One recited fact that was pertinent: despite economic struggles, famine, pandemic, and war in the United States of America, never in its history has a primary or general election been canceled.

“Democracy has never been easy. We wouldn’t have had to fight for it, we wouldn’t have marched for it, we wouldn’t have amended our constitution, time and time again, to bring more people into the promise of our country. Every generation inherits this fragile, remarkable thing. And every generation decides if it will be strengthened or diminished on their watch.

“I think this is our moment. It’s not that democracy is failing, it’s being tested. It’s being tested by fear, by cynicism, and by powerful interests that want to weaken faith in our institutions and our obligation to follow the will of the people. But our democracy does not belong to the loudest voice, or the wealthiest person, or the most powerful office.

It belongs to people who show up, who tell the truth, and refuse to give in to apathy and despair... Don’t underestimate your power,” closed Read.



Tobias Read speaking in Bandon
on April 8, 2026.

Forum: Secretary of State Tobias Read, by MJ LaBelle

- On April 8, 2026 from 4pm to 5:30pm Tobias Read, SOS, came to Bandon to present an informational forum on “Voting in Oregon, A Conversation with Tobias Read”.
- The **Coos** and **Curry Leagues of Women Voters** hosted the event, and it was terrific.
- The following is a note we received from the SOS (Secretary of State) after the forum: “Anytime I can get in front of engaged people who care about the future of our democracy, I’m happy.
- Being with all of you this week in Bandon was a real highlight, and I want to thank you for the opportunity.
- But at the same time, I also want to thank you for your ongoing commitment and leadership of the League.
- Please keep up your good work, please let me know whenever I can be helpful and please keep in touch.”
- To view the two videos, go to this [link](#).



Oregon’s Secretary of State Visits the Coast by Anne Guerin

If you were looking for some reassurance about Oregon’s elections being in good hands, attending the recent talk by Tobias Read was the place to find it. What an uplifting experience to hear his talk and then how he responded to questions from the audience.

Dedicated to preserving our state elections in the time of multiple threats, his passionate responses were a balm for our spirits. He emphasized how our mail-in voting is secure and fair and protecting our system through a case that is now in the courts.

Oregon citizens are fortunate to have someone like Tobias Read in state government, a dedicated servant who is willing to visit citizens all over the state promoting democracy and states’ rights. An articulate speaker, he spoke extemporaneously on a variety of issues of concern to those who submitted their questions.

He spent time in Bandon at the request of both **Coos** and **Curry LWVs**. This organization is to be thanked for their continuing efforts to educated citizens and inspire participation in our elections.

League Achievements in

The national League has released its survey of League activity around the country in 2025. About 600 of the Leagues across the nation (out of 800) reported statistics, so the actual numbers are higher.



These are a few of the highlights:

- Nearly 13 million voter contacts made in person, through forums, and online
- 234,000 people registered to vote, including via Vote411—50,700 were youth and 97,550 were new citizens
- Held 13,400 election-related activities and events
- Contributed nearly 1 million volunteer hours
- Visited 1,720 high schools
- Hosted 9,640 non-election-related activities and events
- 928 lobby volunteers visited state legislators (this number does not include LWVUS's lobbying in D.C.)
- 707 testimonies given to state legislatures

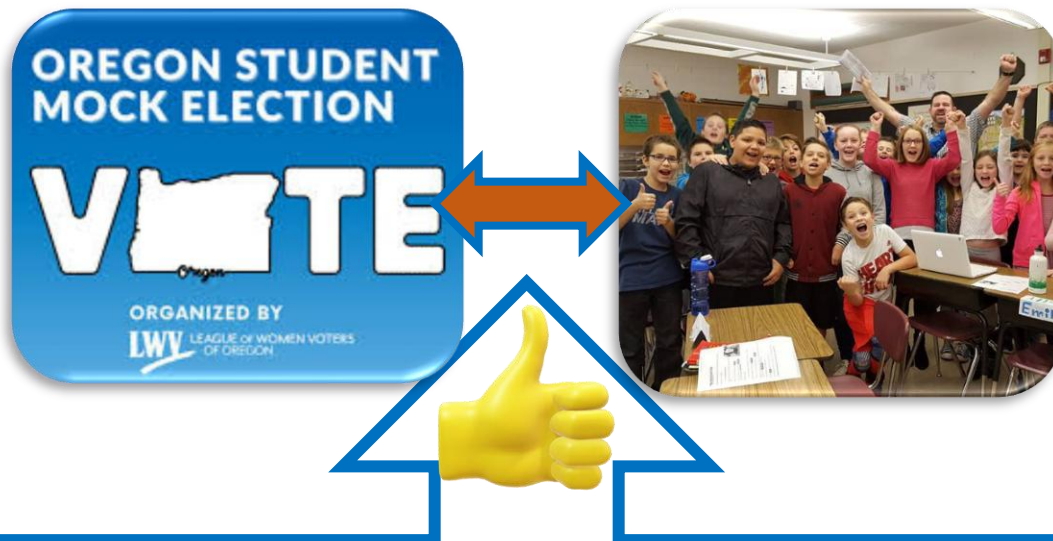


A New League Partnership



The League often seeks to amplify its voice by partnering with like-minded organizations, celebrities, and companies. Its latest is with The Civics Center, a nonprofit that seeks to pre-register millions of teens in high school. You can learn more about The Civics Center [here](#). Since Leagues are trusted experts in local communities, they can help The Civics Center gain access to classrooms. The two organizations are partnering to develop state-specific training programs and tool kits to help volunteers.

League Legal Action around the Country

- ➔ **LWV Louisiana** joined a coalition of pro-voter groups to intervene as defendants in *Louisiana v. EAC* [U.S. Election Assistance Commission]. The EAC denied the state's request to modify the nationwide voter registration form, seeking to require voters to provide extra information about their citizenship, such as a unique immigration number, and the state sued. The League alleges that the requirements proposed by the state violate the National Voter Registration Act.
- ➔ **LWV Michigan** filed an amicus brief urging an appeals court to uphold a lower court's dismissal of *US v. Benson*, the case in which the federal government is seeking access to Michigan's unredacted voter rolls.
- ➔ **LWV Massachusetts** and a coalition of voting rights groups sued to challenge the Administration's executive order concerning mail-in voting.



Student Mock Elections

-  The state League has a program called Oregon Student Mock Elections (OSME), which creates election-related curriculum content and realistic-looking ballots and provides them to the schools.
-  For the May election, 20 school districts around the state, including North Bend High School, and 3,000 students are getting real-life experience in how to consider candidates and vote thanks to this League effort.

HEADS-UP

- 🛒 Did you know that there's a cost-free, hassle-free way to earn money for the **League of Women Voters of Curry County**?
- 🛒 It's the Fred Meyer Community Rewards program.
- 🛒 The program was created by the Kroger Family of Companies as a way to support community engagement, positive social impact, and charitable giving.
- 🛒 The program donates to community organizations based on the shopping you do every day.
 - ⦿ **No cost** – You don't lose card savings or fuel points.
 - ⦿ **No hassle** – The online process is quick and easy.
 - ⦿ Link your shopper's card to **LWVCC** in your digital account, then simply swipe your card whenever you shop at Fred Meyer.
- 🛒 **Voila!** Community rewards for the League!

HOW-TO

To participate in the community rewards program, you start with a digital account with Fred Meyer. Then link your shopper's card to **LWVCC** – and shop!

Create an Account

1. Set up a digital account with Fred Meyer if you don't have one already.
2. [Here's the link.](#)
3. You'll enter your email address, create a password, and put in your shopper's card number. If you don't have a shopper's card, you can enter a 10-digit "Alt ID" instead (such as your phone number).
4. You'll also be prompted to select a preferred store.

Link Your Card to LWVCC

- 👉 [Here's the link.](#)
- 👉 In the drop-down "my account" menu, select community rewards.
- 👉 To choose the league as your preferred organization, enter either our name (League of Women Voters of Curry County) or our number (FH475).
- 👉 **Click "Save."**

Watch the Donations Roll In

- 🛒 After you've linked and used your shopper's card, your purchases automatically benefit the league.
- 🛒 Rewards accumulate based on every transaction you make with the shopper's card associated with
- 🛒 your digital account. Your donation summary for the current quarter will display in the Community Rewards section of your digital account.



Donates annually to participating organization like **LWVCC**.

CANDIDATE FORUMS



- # We held three Candidate Forums: one on April 20 in Port Orford, one on April 22 in Gold Beach and one on April 23 in Brookings.
- # Each one was well attended, and we have included some pictures here.
- # To view the video of the entire Port Orford Forum, click [here](#)

- # Many, many thanks to Cindy Meyers for bringing her Girl Scouts to help out at the Gold Beach forum.
- # The **LWVOR** began a program with the Girl Scouts called “**Voter Girl**” over a year ago.
- # The girls attend some of our Forums, perhaps help out, and earn civics badges.
- # This is a wonderful program, and it brings a sense of community to all of us.
- # The contested race for this primary election is for Position #1, Curry County Board of Commissioners, and all three candidates (Lynn Coker (incumbent), Jeremy Dumire and Jeffrey Schoonover) attended all three Forums.
- # Philip Dickson moderated all the forums and did a wonderful job, as usual.
- # We are also grateful to all the League volunteers who staffed the Forums. **Thank You!!**
- # From now on, we will set up a question team prior to each Candidate Forum so that we can be assured that some policy questions are included.





League of Women Voters Founding Principles



The League of Women Voters believes in

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT and the **INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES** established in the Constitution of the United States.



The League of Women Voters believes that

Democratic government depends upon **INFORMED AND ACTIVE PARTICIPATION** in government and requires that governmental bodies **PROTECT THE CITIZEN'S RIGHT TO KNOW** by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.



The League of Women Voters believes that

EVERY CITIZEN SHOULD BE PROTECTED IN THE RIGHT TO VOTE; every person should have access to **FREE PUBLIC EDUCATION** that provides equal opportunity for all; and **NO PERSON OR GROUP SHOULD SUFFER LEGAL, ECONOMIC OR ADMINISTRATIVE DISCRIMINATION**.



The League of Women Voters believes that

EFFICIENT AND ECONOMICAL GOVERNMENT requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, and adequate financing and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government.



The League of Women Voters believes that

Responsible government should be **RESPNSIVE TO THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE**; government should maintain an **EQUITABLE AND FLEXIBLE SYSTEM OF TAXATION**, promote the **CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES** in the public interest, share in the **SOLUTION OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS** that affect the general welfare, promote a **SOUND ECONOMY**, and adopt domestic policies that **FACILITATE THE SOLUTION OF INTERNATION PROBLEMS**.



The League of Women Voters believes that

COOPERATION WITH OTHER NATIONS is essential in the search for solutions to problems and the **DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AND INTERNATION LAW** is imperative in the promotion of world peace.



**IMPORTANT
NOTICE**
**VENUE
CHANGE**



Westminster Presbyterian Church
3737 Liberty Rd. S., Salem
AND VIRTUALLY

Every year **LWVOR** holds either a weekend-long convention or a shorter council. These meetings are great opportunities to learn more about the League.

- ▶ This is a council year, and it is being held on May 16 in **Salem at Westminster Presbyterian Church. 3737 Liberty Road S. Salem, 97302**
- ▶ Attendees can choose either hotel accommodations with a group discount or in-home hosting by League members.
- ▶ The hours are 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and there will be an optional reception and networking event the evening before at 5:00 p.m.
- ▶ There is also a hybrid option for virtual attendance.
- ▶ Our League can send two voting delegates, and any member is welcome to attend for the workshops and keynote speaker.

FOR DETAILS & TO REGISTER: [here](#)

COST: \$33.85 in person; \$0 virtual

HOTEL RATE: \$189 for a double room with 2 queen beds at the Grand Hotel (deadline to book April 23)

CALL: 503-540-7800 and refer to **“League of Women Voters Oregon Statewide Conference”**



4TH OF JULY



250th ANNIVERSARY 1776 - 2026

- ★ Some of us **Leaguers** are considering marching in the Port Orford **4th of July Parade** for the **250th Anniversary** of our nation.
- ★ They are planning a big parade this year!
- ★ I've reached out to Ann Tlaker to see where she obtained the costumes for "Pathbreakers".
- ★ If you are interested in joining us for the fun, email me at maryjanelabelle@gmail.com.
- ★ More info TBA

REMINDER

Annual Meeting

- 🗓️ **May 30, 2026**
- 🕒 **10am to noon**
- 📍 **Chetco Brewing Company**
830 Railroad Avenue, Brookings



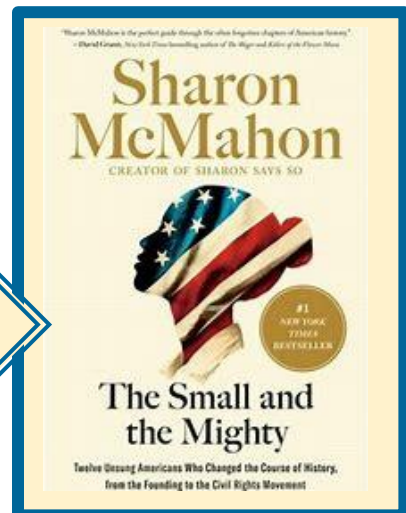
**Ballots have been
Mailed April 28!**
VOTE!!

Recommended Reading:

The Small and the Mighty, by Sharon McMahon

Needing a little inspiration?

America's favorite government teacher offers us 12 stories of ordinary Americans whose small acts made a big difference.



May 2026						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6 Board Meeting TBD 11:00 am	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 LWVOR Council Salem
17	18	19 Election Vote	20	21 Local Leaders Zoom Call	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30 Annual Meeting New/Old Board Meeting Gold Beach
31						

June 2026						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3 	4	5	6
7	8 	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 	27
28	29	30				

Summer Break Until September 1

July 2026						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		3	1	2	3	4 
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

AUGUST: New Board Retreat Date TBA



From left to right

- ▶ **Evan Kramer**
- ▶ **Georgia Nowlin**
- ▶ **Alex Kramer**
- ▶ **Ann Schmierer**
- ▶ **Lucie La Bonte**
- ▶ **MaryJane LaBelle**

The League of Women Voters of Curry County

CoastLines – A publication of the League of Women Voters® of Curry County

CoastLines is produced 8 to 10 times a year by the League of Women Voters of Curry County

Website Information: [here](#)

Election Information: [vote411 here](#)

LWVCC is a nonpartisan, nonprofit civics organization.
Our mission is to encourage informed and active participation in government.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership in LWVCC is open to everyone who supports the purposes and policies of the League.

Join us! Make your voice heard Stay informed on issues that concern you.

LWVCC is a qualified 501 © (3) nonprofit organization (tax ID #93-0838450).

Dues & donation s are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES:

Dues are Pay-what-you-can, with a minimum of \$20. The recommended rate is \$75. Per individual per year.

You can pay by check (see below) or go to our website [here](#) and follow the "JOIN" link.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Volunteer Interest in the League _____

*Please make your check payable to the League of Women Voters of Currey County & send it to:
LWVCC - P.O. Box 1859 - Gold Beach, OR 97444*