



CoastLines

The League of Women Voters ® of Curry County

Volume 32, Issue 7

www.lwvcurry.org

March 2016

**Time, Dates and
Places -
2015-2016
Calendar
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*Unit Meetings,
Studies, Forums and
More!*

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Homeless Resources Forums in March

Throughout the county homeless colonies continue to grow, some living on the beach, some under bridges and many homeless children in our schools. In Gold Beach there are 69 children that are homeless attending school. In Port Orford 35% of the population are below the poverty rate. In Brookings there are 56 homeless children in K-12 schools.

10 years ago the League of Women Voters of Curry County was highly involved in the *Homeless Youth and Affordable Housing* issues. The LWVOR completed a study on Homeless Youth in 2007. (*see articles on page 3 & 4*). Where are we today? How are our communities addressing this very serious issue?

Member Connie Hunter has arranged and will moderate LWVCC Homeless Resource forums in all three portions of the County. Panelists include representatives from: Veterans associations, law enforcement personnel, food banks, Oregon Coast Community Action, city officials, county department heads, church representatives, community health workers from Curry Community Health and Coast Community Health, and the Oregon Employment Department.

Connie Hunter- Community Builders, has worked for 45 years with the veteran community on the issue of homelessness as a small part of a life long commitment as a non-profit and community developer. We encourage all members to attend and invite members of the public. It is your county, participate!

**March 8 - Port Orford Library,
Community Room - 1PM**

**March 15 - Southwest Community
College - Brookings - 5:30 PM**

**March 24th - Gold Beach City Hall -
5:30 PM** (unless construction is not
complete, change will be announced)

Economic Campaign Meetings

Speaking of poverty rates and homeless children, our County's Economic Development Director, Julie Schmeltzer is very concerned. How do we deal with this issue and keep a positive message going out to visitors regarding our beautiful coastal county with so much to offer?

Julie spoke at all three February Unit Meetings. Working throughout the county on some new promotion ideas an obstacle has been negative press, squabbling in the letters to the editors, and Curry County has a bad reputation. According to Schmeltzer, communities should be emphasizing our coastal uniqueness and beauty. Historical Port Orford with its incredible fishing industry, Brookings the Number #1 grow zone with spectacular flowers, Gold Beach with its unique airport and world class fishing river are all draws. Ms. Schmeltzer is working on projects to encourage small businesses, veteran's businesses and entrepreneurs. Highlighting unique resources she spearheaded the *Fungi Fest* in 2015 which is up for awards. She has developed a www site: travelcurrycoast.com and hopes to list all events and happenings countywide. Bicycle opportunities, arts and culture promotion and working with schools and libraries on "Gear-up", "STEM and "STEAM" programs are all on her project list.



President's Notes by Lucie La Bonté



Dear Members and Friends;

After reading the 1920 Platform of the newly formed League of Women Voters I asked my mentor, "Don't you ever get tired of the same issues surfacing year after year?" or in some cases century after century? At the time it was universal health care. Now after searching through old issues of *CoastLines* Homeless Resources, Homeless Youth and Housing are problems we worked on and worked on but in Curry County still seems to be the number #1 issue to many. We hope that our members will turn out for our last round of Unit Meetings, forums on Homeless Resources. Thank you Connie Hunter for arranging all three forums. (see article page 1)

The nominating committee has filled most positions for next year's Board but is still looking for a Secretary. We hope one of you will volunteer and contact Chair Charlene Enoch who has done a superb job with her committee. Just as we thought we were there, our wonderful Treasurer Marta West informed us she is moving north to Lincoln County! Marta has not only been Treasurer but also our Roster Manager and helped tremendously at fundraising. She was our representative on Membership Leadership Development and sometimes checks *CoastLines* for errors. I will really, really miss her. Thank you Marta for being there, always. When I sent out the alert one person emailed back that she would "love to be Treasurer!!" Thank you Connie Hunter! Your Board is working on the transition to be completed April 1 when Marta leaves us.

As we move towards the end of our year please mark your calendars for the Annual Meeting May 21 10-1PM. (guests welcome). Tentative guest speaker is Norman Turill, President of the LWVOR. He has interesting information for us so I hope you are all there to welcome him. Copies of the proposed budget will be emailed to members soon. More information is in the calendar.

Have a wonderful March!

Lucie La Bonté
President

Making Democracy Work

The League of Women Voters®, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



The League of Women Voters of Curry County

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CoastLines

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Curry League Has History Working on Homeless Issues

In 2005 the LWVOR conducted a study of the issue of Homeless Youth in Oregon. The LWVCC formed a committee: Ann Younger, Georgia Nowlin, Connie Wilson, Jan Krick, Sara Wilson and Margret McHugh were all members.

The Curry League became very active on this issue and held forums bringing in speakers from all our local agencies. We had a Children's and Families Commission at the County and they were very concerned about runaways and homeless youth. Many kids showed up at school without a real home to go back to. The law enforcement agencies were all working on the issue too. In 2006 the Committee completed work on interviews of over 30 sources in Curry County and compiled questionnaires for the LWVOR report. In 2007 the LWVOR adopted positions on Homeless Youth. The LWVCC work continued through 2008 on this issue.

In 2009-2011 the LWVCC conducted a project related to Homelessness, "Analysis of Work Force Housing". This was not a new issue to LWVCC. Back in 1990 the LWVCC was holding forums on what was then called "Affordable Housing". CoastLines October 1990 "November Units - John Zia will be organizing a discussion on affordable housing for November Units. John has recently returned from Washington, D.C. where the issue was discussed by national representatives. With land-use being restricted in Curry County and rising building costs this is a problem of present and future." *Ellen Babin, Editor*. Mr. Zia did build a development in Dawson Tract which is now part of Brookings. Only folks with a certain income level who worked were able to purchase these homes. Without affordable housing, where do people go?

Homeless Youth

Adopted 2007

To read what LWVOR did to implement these positions see page 4.

Parents are legally responsible for their children. When parents are unable to fulfill that responsibility, the League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that communities and governments at all levels have a responsibility to provide programs and services to meet the needs of runaway and homeless youth.

In order to help families stay together, prevent youth homelessness, and reduce the need for more expensive future services, the LWVOR supports providing services such as family crisis counseling, child care, parenting education, mental health and addiction treatment, low-cost housing, and health care.

When youth are separated from their families, the LWVOR supports providing services to these youth, such as shelter, food, education, health care, mental health and addiction treatment, plus outreach to encourage youth to use services. Older youth need additional services, such as assistance with independent living skills and with finding employment and more permanent housing.

These services may be provided by government or by private organizations that receive government and/or private funding. Coordination of these services is necessary to avoid duplication and service gaps. Youth should be served regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.

All levels of government should have funding responsibility for preventive and supportive services to families and homeless youth. Private organizations are encouraged to provide funding and services. Government funds should be adequate and allocated according to demonstrated need. Agencies must show that their programs are effective.

Position Implementation - Homeless Youth - LWVOR

2007. LWVOR supported the Oregon Commission on Children and Families (OCCF) request for funds to initiate a Homeless Youth program, which resulted in a \$1 million allocation for the biennium. This amount is only a start to subsidize programs and will not meet the needs throughout the state.

2009. The \$1 million for Runaway and Homeless Youth was not continued for this biennium. A lesser amount will backfill the current funded programs at a lower grant level. See **Children at Risk** or the Legislative Reports for more detail.

2010. The Oregon Commission on Children and Families awarded grants to existing Runaway and Homeless Youth programs at a lower level due to fund cuts.

2011. HB 3260 transfers the responsibility for Runaway and Homeless Youth programs to the Department of Human Services. DHS was required to integrate this program into its continuum of care for children 0 through 18. Total funds of \$986,574 were allocated for the program, which may continue with the eight county sites. The League testified in support of this transfer and prevention programs.

2013. The funding for 8 shelter care projects within the state was continued under the Department of Human Services. These programs accept youth who are not in the custody of the state. Young adults 18-21 became eligible for youth shelter programs and residential transition programs funded by the federal government.

LWVCC Takes Action On Repeal of Inclusionary Zoning

Responding to a LWVOR action alert, Curry League President Lucie La Bonté left a message for Representative Wayne Krieger to support SB 1533, repeal of the prohibition on local communities' ability to use inclusionary zoning as a tool for requiring affordable housing in development projects.

BACKGROUND: In 1999, a statewide plan was enacted that prohibits local governments from using inclusionary zoning, a planning tool that enables jurisdictions to use their zoning codes to influence the type and affordability of housing units within a development. In states other than Oregon and Texas, the tool is used to require developers to set aside a percentage of units for rental or sale to young families with low incomes, elderly couples wanting to age in place, or the workers that keep our economies running. This policy can be used to harness the energy of the private market to help create affordable homes and enable economic integration and social inclusion.

TALKING POINTS:

- * Current law is a barrier to local efforts to address the housing affordability crisis felt throughout Oregon.
- * Local governments should have a choice of tools available to them to implement their vision of their own future.
- * Cities throughout the U.S. have used this tool for a number of years. Oregon municipalities choosing to employ inclusionary zoning will benefit from the lessons learned elsewhere.
- * Housing located near employment means workers do not have to travel long distances to work, leaving them more time to spend with their families and reducing the burden of transportation expenses.
- * There is increasing recognition that living in high opportunity areas close to excellent schools, transportation options, and good jobs contributes to a child's and family's success. This planning tool increases housing options for lower income families in high opportunity areas.
- * Traffic congestion, pollution, and commute times are reduced when affordable housing options are available close to jobs.

Special thanks to Georgia Nowlin for an email alert regarding this issue!

Spring Candidate Forums

Voter's Service Chair Charlie Alexander will need members to volunteer to help at all three candidate forums. Spring candidate forums will be held in Gold Beach on Tuesday, April 19th at City Hall, Wednesday, April 20th in Port Orford at the City Hall and Thursday, April 21st in Brookings at the Chetco Library. All Forums are from 7 to 9 pm.

Moderators will be Georgia Nowlin - Brookings, Alyssa Babin - Gold Beach, and Lucie La Bonté - Port Orford. Phil Dickson is training for moderating the fall forums and if anyone else is interested in moderating at future forums we could use your help. If you would like to assist at any of the Forums or participate in helping coordinate the letter writing, confirmations or setting up please contact Charlie Alexander, Voter Service Chair, 541-332-0386. Those of you that signed up at the Annual Meeting to participate in these vitally important informational candidates forums will be called.

League of Women Voters of Curry County Calendar 2016

Month	Day	Events	Place	Time
March	1	Study Proposals Due		
	4	Board Meeting	Gold Beach Fire Hall	10 AM
	8	Unit Meeting- Homeless Resources	Port Orford Library	1:00 PM
	15	Unit Meeting- Homeless Resources	SWOCC Brookings Campus	5:30 PM
	24	Unit Meeting- Homeless Resources	Gold Beach City Hall	5:30 PM
April	1	Board Meeting	Gold Beach City Hall	10:00 AM
	19	Candidate Forum	Gold Beach City Hall	7:00 - 9PM
	20	Candidate Forum	Port Orford City Hall	7:00 - 9PM
	21	Candidate Forum	Brookings - Chetco Library	7:00 - 9PM
May	21	LWVCC Annual Meeting	Event Center on the Beach / Fairgrounds -Oceanview Room	10AM-
	21	LWVCC Old Board/New Board		12PM 1:00 PM
June	3-5 16-19	LWVOR Council LWVUS Convention	Vancouver Hilton Hotel, WA	

