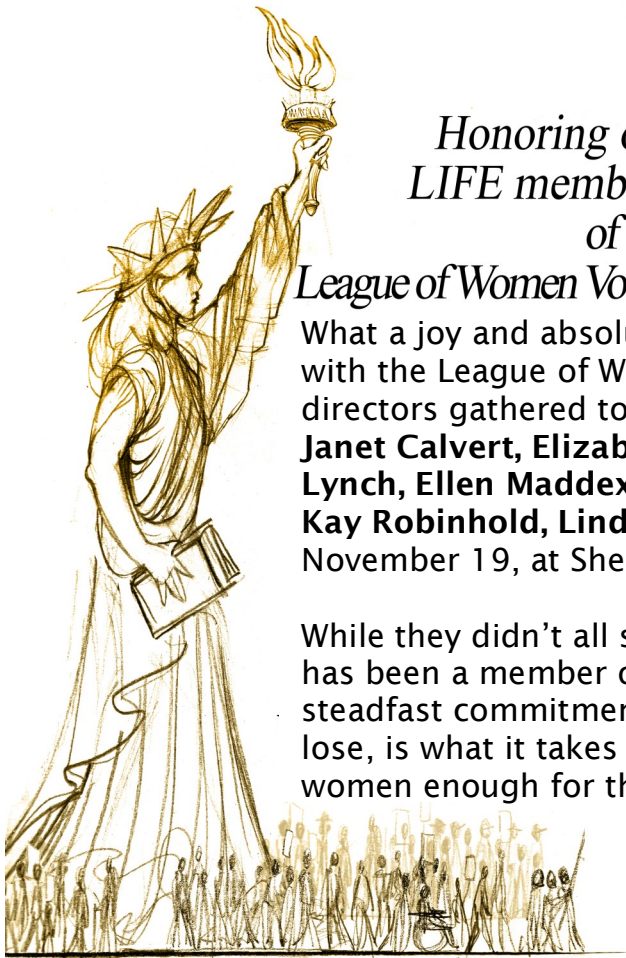




December 2025

Argus

League of Women Voters of Lane County Newsletter



Honoring our LIFE members of the League of Women Voters

What a joy and absolute privilege to celebrate women who have been with the League of Women Voters for more than 50 years! The board of directors gathered to honor **Jeanne Armstrong, Merle Bottge, Janet Calvert, Elizabeth Hall, Carol Hildebrand, Pat Hocken, Linda Lynch, Ellen Maddex, Rita Malmud, Sharon Posner, Camilla Pratt, Kay Robinhold, Linda Roe, and Mary Sherriffs** on Wednesday, November 19, at Shelton McMurphey Johnson House. (See page 4)

While they didn't all start with the Lane County chapter, each of them has been a member of the League for at least the last five decades! That steadfast commitment, day in and day out, when you win and when you lose, is what it takes to defend our democracy. We can't thank these women enough for their unwavering belief in government by the people.

*Julie Kness, Communications Director
Art by Kelle DeForrest*

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LWV of Lane County Board and Off Board Roster 2025-26

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Director at Large

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morganv@lwwlc.org

DECEMBER TOPIC - EVOLVING ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN DEMOCRACY BY MARJ MAXWELL, UNITS DIRECTOR

- October Unit attendance 44 members, 13 guests
- January's unit topic: **Program Planning**
- Units meet, October – April in the 2nd week of the month for up to two hours.
- All are welcome to attend any meeting. It helps with planning if you notify the leader in advance.

Monday, 2pm, December 8 (in person)

Anne Best's home, 3433 Olive St., Eugene,
541-521-9136, anieb49@gmail.com
Discussion Leader: Nancy Mills,
210-685-8253, nmills@trinity.edu

Tuesday, 10am, December 9 (in person)

Coburg Road - The Springs at Greer Gardens,
1282 Goodpasture Island Rd., Eugene
Discussion Leader: Linda Ferdowsian,
541-579-1866, Lferdowsian@yahoo.com

Wednesday, 5:30pm December 10

(zoom only)

Discussion Leader: Terry Parker,
541-344- 5924, president@lwwlc.org
Zoom Operator: Rhonda Livesay
541-228-4373, technologydir@lwwlc.org
Zoom link:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86277149626

Thursday 11am, December 11

(in person and Zoom)

Middlefield Oaks, 1500 Village Dr.,
Cottage Grove
Discussion Leader: Anna Strickland 509-
733-6034, Ledal@middlefieldoaks.com
Zoom operator: Linda Ferdowsian
Request zoom link: office @lwwlc.org

Help Wanted: Use and build your discussion leader skills

The Zoom Evening Discussion Unit
(Wednesdays, 5: 30 to 7:30pm by Zoom)
seeks someone to take over or share this
role once a month from September -
April.

Responsibilities:

Guide discussion, collect the attendance
sheet, and assure discussion notes are
returned to the Unit Chair.

Resources provided:

A Zoom operator, a resource person who
helped compile the study can lead the
discussion, and members receive the
study and questions in advance.
Briefing provides a preview of the study
and can be accessed in person or by
Zoom.

Thursday 2pm, December 11 (in person)

Harlow Neighborhood, Barbara French's
home, 394 Cherry Dr. Eugene
Discussion Leader: Barbara French,
541-510-7919, babsfr44@gmail.com

Friday, 10am, December 12 (in person)

First United Methodist Church,
1376 Olive St., Eugene
Discussion Leader, Diana Grandberry,
541-342-8402, 76music79@comcast.net

Friday, 1pm, December 19 (in person)

Temporary date change

Cascade Manor, 65 W 30th Ave, Eugene,
in the Solarium
Discussion Leader: Merle Bottge,
541-434-4191
Alternate Discussion Leader:
Carol Hildebrand, 541-434-4254,
carodane1943@gmail.com

Briefing for Unit leaders or Alternates

December 2, 2pm, League office
175 W. B Street, Ste E-2, Springfield
Zoom link: office@lwwlc.org

Contact Marj Maxwell at
marjmaxwell@gmail.com if you plan to
attend briefing or have questions.

Terry Parker is the interim discussion
leader of this group.

February and March, Unit topics are switching places

February will be *Unit Choice*, when each
unit plans its own program, according to
the group's preference. These opportuni-
ties will be shared in the *Argus* so you
can choose which ones to attend.

March units will focus on *The State of
Health Care in Lane County*.

April's discussion will remain *The Issues
and Challenges in Rural Lane County*.

Marj Maxwell, Units Director

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS BY RUTH SEEGER, MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Motto of the Month

If our hopes of building a better and safer world are to become more than wishful thinking, we will need the engagement of volunteers more than ever.

Kofi Annan - Former Secretary General of the United Nations and 2001 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize

Please welcome our newest members

Cathy McGrath, Hai Nguyen, Lisa Raleigh, Anna Strickland, Tricia Tate, Evan Tucker, Candice Vader, and Gary Wolfe.

We currently have 246 members spread across Lane County, the second largest chapter in Oregon. Thank you, League members, for continuing to engage your family, friends, and neighbors in this important work.

When you put your hand to the plow, you can't put it down until you get to the end of the row.

Alice Paul - American women's rights activist

Speaker Series Updates

Many thanks to the two teams that are doing the planning and coordinating needed to offer these monthly educational events for our League members and guests. The 2026 Speaker Series dates are January 27, February 24, March 24 and April 28. The teams have exciting speakers and important topics lined up. It will be all home runs in 2026. Mark your calendars.

Speaker Team

Callee Ackland, Peggy Dame, Kitty Piercy, and Michele Postal

Planning & Logistics Team

Judy Abel, Susan Ban, and Beth Gerot.

Your League has a deep bench of terrific members. Thank you all for helping and volunteering in whatever ways work for you.

Membership Committee

A shout-out to new member **Margaret Conover** as she joins in this committee's busy workload! As always, any one that has a question about your membership, dues, renewal dates, etc., please don't hesitate to reach out to us at membership@lwvlc.org or call the League office at 541-343-7917.

Directory on the Way

If you are a new member and your name does not appear in the printed directory, please accept our apology. There was a gap between cut-off to begin assembly and printing the directory and date of your membership. Your name will appear on an Errata sheet to accompany an *Argus* in the following year.

We had 77 new members join as of 1/1/2025 to date. The current membership count is 246.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday December 9, 2-3:30pm
at the League office. All are welcome.
For the Zoom link, contact membership@lwvlc.org

DECEMBER PROGRAM - ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

BY SHARON AMASHA AND LORI BARKER, CO-CHAIRS

Humans were always far better at inventing tools than using them wisely.

Yuval Noah Harari - Israeli medievalist and military historian

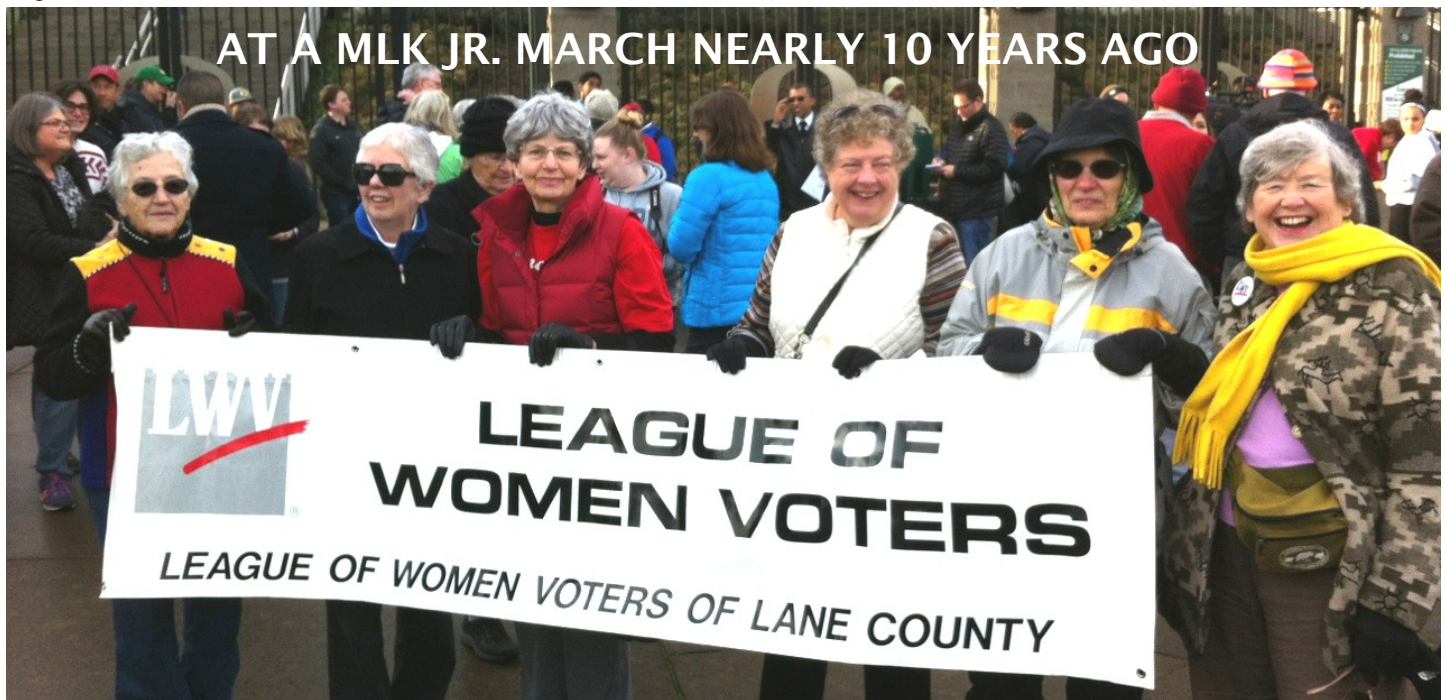
The use of artificial intelligence (AI) has become ubiquitous and affects almost every aspect of our lives. We see AI-generated responses in response to google searches and use AI with our virtual assistants like Siri or Alexa. In addition to impacting our individual lives, AI also impacts our democracy. On the positive side, AI can improve voter awareness by providing information about candidates, policies, and voting procedures. AI can help elections officials optimize polling place locations, identify irregularities in ballot processing, and detect attacks on voter registration databases, election websites, or voting machines.

On the negative side, AI is being increasingly used to spread misinformation and disinformation, creating uncertainty and causing us to question not only false information but also accurate information. AI can be used to impact election outcomes and to erode trust in public and private institutions. Biased AI systems can result in government decisions that impact some groups of people unfairly.

The study *The Evolving Role of Artificial Intelligence in Democracy* will be discussed at December's unit meetings. The paper outlines what AI is, its history, and how it can impact democracy both beneficially and detrimentally.

The study team included

Sharon Amasha, Lori Barker, Karen Bankston, Rhonda Livesay, and Morgan Vierheller.



AT A MLK JR. MARCH NEARLY 10 YEARS AGO

Photo by John Hocken



50 YEAR HONOREES

Photo by Colin Kness

Above - left to right:
Veronika Walton,
Carol Hildenbrand,
Janet Calvert, Linda Lynch,
Pat Hocken, and Flo Alvergue.

Left - front row:
Mary Sherriffs and Janet Calvert.
Back row: **Lynda Lynch, Carol Hildenbrand, Merle Bottge, Jeanne Armstrong, Pat Hocken, and Sharon Posner.**

THE FROG CAME TO OAKRIDGE BY LESLIE HEATON, MEMBER

The FROG made a notable visit to our small town to participate in the October **No Kings** protest held in Oakridge. Over 100 people gathered in our community to express their views with a variety of signs and flags. It reflected the diversity of opinions within the group.

The enthusiasm at the protest demonstrated that we are determined not to be coerced into accepting anything other than a democratic society. We will stand up for what we believe.



“WE'RE GOING TO DEFEND OUR RIGHTS AND WE WON'T BACK DOWN ON THAT FRONT”

TOBIAS READ
Oregon Secretary of State

The LWVLC Speaker Series kicks off 2026
with the

Honorable Tobias Read

on January 27.

Save the date!

See the January *Argus* for details.

by Michele Postal, Member



LANE LEAGUE ON WATCH ADVOCACY 2025

Thursday, December 18 - 5:30 to 7pm
South Sister Room
The Springs at Greer Gardens
1282 Goodpasture Island Road, Eugene

VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, December 11, 1:30pm at the League office
For Zoom link: nmills@trinity.edu

FRUIT AND NUT SALE

BY LAURA ENGLAND FLANIGAN, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Thank you to our League members for participating in the
2025 Fruit & Nut Sale this last month.

Pick up orders at the St. Thomas Episcopal Church,
1465 Coburg Road, Eugene on
December 6 from 9am - 3pm.

We're still compiling statistics, which will be available in the January issue of the *Argus*.

If you are looking to make a tax-deductible donation before year-end, please consider supporting League of Women Voters of Lane County, which is a 501-C-3 organization. We are always amazed by the generosity of our membership and greater community members who support LWVLC.

THANK YOU

Lookout

EUGENE-SPRINGFIELD

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR November 14

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO RESPONDED TO LANE COUNTY ICE ACTIVITY

The League of Women Voters of Lane County extends our appreciation for the Rural Organizing Project, Cottage Grove Friends of Democracy and those elected officials that signed onto a statement about reported actions carried out by U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents last week in Lane County.

We want to give a special shoutout to every individual that showed up in any of a multitude of ways, and to local media that covered what occurred. This is democracy in action here at home.

No matter how you feel about people being in this country without authorization, people have rights under our Constitution. Intimidation, violence and hiding behind masks is intolerable. Detainment without due process is illegal. The Fifth and 14th amendments' due process clauses protect every person

within U.S. borders, regardless of immigration status. "Immigration policies should promote the reunification of immediate families, meet economic, business, and employment needs, and be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises" is the stance of the LWVUS.

Apparently it is just too much to ask that Congress take immediate action to pass common-sense, fair immigration policies that end the crisis at our border, stop the separation of families and provide a path to citizenship.

Thank you for stepping up and out.

Terry Parker

Board President, League of Women Voters of Lane County

WHISTLE ACTIVISM - A MOMENT OF HOPE AND INSPIRATION

BY M. B. BARLOW, MEMBER

In the face of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) invasion and potentially illegal activities, Chicago neighbors have, characteristically, taken things into their own hands. They blow whistles when ICE is in their area:

- three short tweets mean **They are in the area**, and
- three long blasts mean **They are here - come out in solidarity to protect and support our neighbors.**

Some call this Operation Blowback.

The movement has exploded, inspiring the sale and use of thousands of whistles in the Chicago area, and is now spreading to other cities. The AP Morning Wire featured an article, "Immigration Crackdown Inspires Uniquely Chicago Pushback That Is Now a Model for Other Cities," [NBC Chicago ICE Pushback Nov. 17](#)

Neighbors looking out for neighbors.



NOT ALL NEWS IS BAD: CELEBRATING LOCAL CLIMATE & WASTE PREVENTION WINS

By Angie Marzano

Lane County Waste Reduction Program Manager

As we have written about in this newsletter before, it's important to celebrate "wins" when they happen. Fortunately, our state notched a string of climate wins this year—proof that hard work and practical policy can add up to real-world change.

First, the state began implementing SB 582, the Recycling Modernization Act. After years of planning, Oregon launched a packaging producer-funded system that expands access, upgrades local infrastructure, and standardizes what can be recycled statewide. Key program elements began rolling out in July 2025, shifting costs away from residents and onto companies that put packaging on the market.

Lawmakers also moved to curb plastic pollution by closing Oregon's "thick bag" loophole. SB 551, signed in 2025, phases out all plastic film checkout bags—even the heavier ones often labeled "reusable"—and will go into effect in 2027. It builds on the 2019 bag ban law and will cut litter and contamination while simplifying choices for shoppers and retailers.

Oregon also took an important step in climate literacy. HB 3365 passed in June 2025, directing updates to K-12 academic standards so students learn the causes, effects, and solutions to climate change—equipping the next generation to lead.

Additionally, the state signed SB 1596 into law. [The law](#) requires manufacturers of electronic devices and home appliances to provide consumers and independent repair shops with the necessary parts, tools, and documentation at a fair cost, enabling the repair of these products.

Oregon also became the fourth state to implement mattress recycling. The law establishes an industry-funded program that allows residents to drop off their soiled mattresses free of charge at Glenwood and select St. Vincent de Paul retail locations.

Another almost-win was HB 2062, the lithium battery producer responsibility bill, which Lane County spearheaded in partnership with Portland-Metro. The bill cleared committee but died in Ways & Means due to the timing around adjournment. The policy would require battery makers (producers) to finance convenient take-back and safe recycling, which is vital for preventing fires and recovering critical minerals. Expect this one back in the 2026 Short Session.

Closer to home, Lane County Waste Management

translated policy into on-the-ground progress through four awarded grants totaling nearly \$2.6 million that strengthen local resilience and reduce emissions: a U.S. Department of Energy award—about \$1.9 million—to expand consumer battery collection and processing; a USDA \$400,000 grant to launch free community compost distribution countywide; FEMA funding (\$190,000) to install backup generators at Glenwood and Florence transfer stations, essential to providing services during outages; and an Oregon DEQ grant (\$78,000) to support and grow our Sustainable Event Services program, which provides durable dishware at large-scale events. Together, these investments make our system safer, cleaner, and more climate-ready.

We also partnered with NextStep Recycling to offer free drop-off of unused, broken, unwanted, or obsolete electronics at schools during the annual Electronics Recycling Competition. This year, 48 schools across Lane County participated, recovering 41,491 pounds of electronic waste that will be recycled and/or repaired.

Lane County brought household item repair events to Cottage Grove, Florence, and Oakridge through "Fix-It-Booths," which offer a consistent location for residents to fix, mend, and repair a variety of consumer products. The booths ran over several months during the summer and early fall.

Our team also worked with internal Lane County divisions to establish employee "green teams" at our 10 largest facilities, aiming to improve operational sustainability and advance our climate goals for Lane County.

From smarter recycling to plastic reduction, climate education, and resilient local infrastructure, Oregon is showing how policy and hard work can deliver practical, measurable climate progress—right here in Lane County.

Local climate wins help me sleep better at night and know that the work we're doing makes a difference.

From the November 2025 blog of Waste Wise Lane County, a part of the Lane County Waste Management Division, empowers residents, schools and businesses with education and resources to reduce waste and live sustainably. Follow Waste Wise Lane County on Facebook and Instagram @WasteWiseLaneCounty.



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541-343-7917

For the latest information visit our website <http://lwvlc.org/>

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Cornucopia Restaurants
Dot Dotson's
Eugene's Flower Home
Folkways
Shelton McMurphy Johnson
House Museum*

CALENDAR

DECEMBER

2 - 2pm, Unit Briefing (pg. 2)
6 - 9am to 3pm, Fruit and Nut pickup (pg. 5)
8 -19 - Unit Meetings Week (pg. 2)
9 - 2 to 3:30pm, Membership Committee meeting (pg. 3)
11 - 1:30pm, Voter Service Committee meeting
16 - 1pm, Board meeting at League office
18 - 5:30 to 7pm, Advocacy Watch (pg.3)
19 - **Midnight**, *Argus* deadline

LWVLC Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
(except holidays)
11 am - 1:30 pm

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<http://lwvlc.org/get-involved/donate/>

MISSED A LEAGUE SPEAKER SERIES?

<https://lwvlc.org/audio-visual-recordings-archives/>