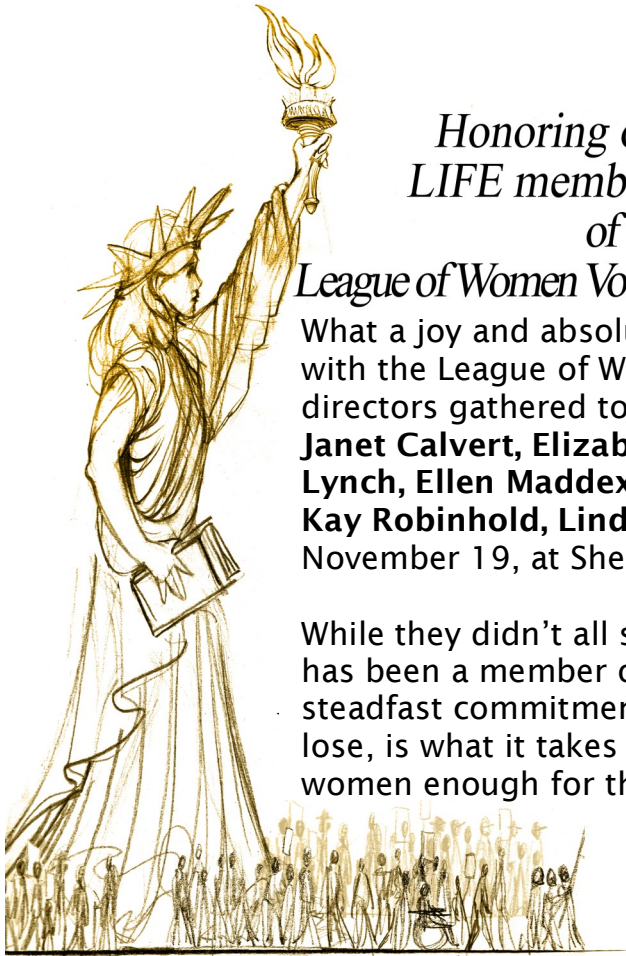




December 2025

# 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*

### WHAT'S INSIDE

- Unit information & December's Discussion Topic (pg. 2)
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## LWV of Lane County Board and Off Board Roster 2025-26

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president@lwwlc.org

### Co - Vice Presidents

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### Program Co-chairs

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### Director at Large

**MORGAN VIERHELLER**  
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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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/89117056306>

### 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 30<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:office@lwwlc.org)

Contact Marj Maxwell at  
[marjmaxwell@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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.**



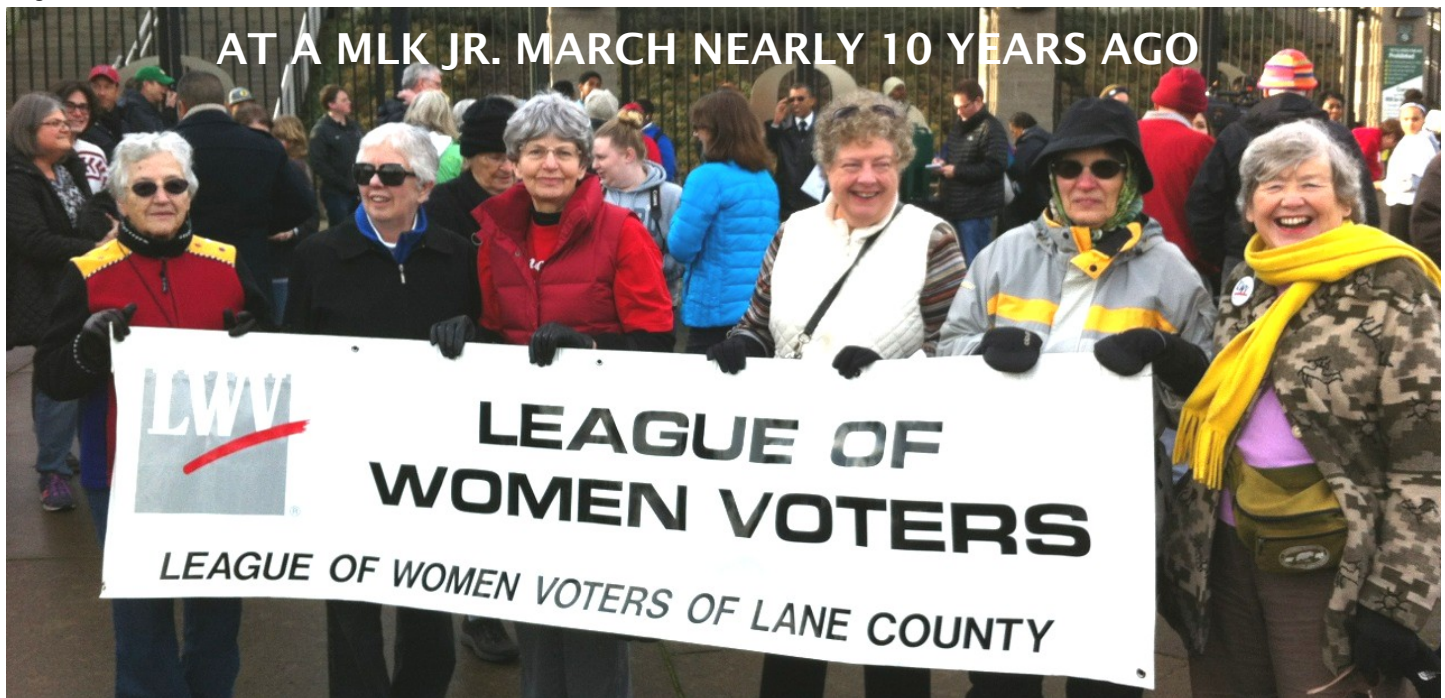


Photo by John Hocken



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.*



175 West B Street, E2, Springfield, OR 97477  
541-343-7917

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

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Bel Ami  
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**

**DONATE NOW**

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

### **MISSED A LEAGUE SPEAKER SERIES?**

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