



Argus

League of Women Voters of Lane County Newsletter

OREGON AIMS TO SHORE UP CIVICS EDUCATION WITH BILL HEADED TO GOVERNOR BROWN - by Rob Manning (OPB)

Senate Bill 513 would require a half-credit civics course for an Oregon diploma, starting with the Class of 2026.

It's a frequent criticism of public schools — kids don't learn civics. With questions in recent years springing up about voting rights and the powers of different branches of government, the calls for improved civics education have only grown louder. Oregon has now taken steps to ensure more teaching of civics and government, with legislators in both chambers approving a bill to make such coursework mandatory for graduation.

The Oregon House approved Senate Bill 513 Monday 60-0, legislating a half-credit course on civics in order to get a diploma. The bill passed the state senate in April, with three "no" votes, and it now goes to Gov. Kate Brown for her signature.

Students' limited knowledge of government was documented recently in civics assessment results published by the National Assessment of Education Progress, or NAEP test. In 2018, only 24% of eighth graders nationwide scored "proficient" on the civics assessment. Four years earlier, it was essentially the same with only 23% of students scoring proficient. And so on.

"There was no significant change in the percentage of students performing at this level compared to 1998, the first assessment year," said a statement on the NAEP website discussing test results.

It's a problem that doesn't get addressed in high school either, judging by data Oregon lawmakers cited in their civics education measure.

The text of Senate Bill 513 cited that the last time high school seniors took the NAEP civics exam for that grade — back in 2010 — just 24% were considered "proficient" at civ-

ics. It also found more than one-third of seniors who took that 2010 exam were in the lowest category, possessing a "below basic" knowledge of government.

The consensus among lawmakers, though, shouldn't be confused with unanimity in the state over why the bill is needed and what it might lead to. Support for the bill came from progressives and conservatives; with both sides noting the polarized political context the civics requirement will enter.

"Recently, we have witnessed the actions of many persons who have been convinced of whack-a-doodle theories and untruths," said Medford constituent Gayle Clason in testimony submitted in support of SB 513. "The attack on the Capitol in Washington D.C. (and state capitols) is proof that some do not value democracy. Voter suppression and violence against minority people is another case where misunderstanding civil rights is a symptom of lack of education in this area."

Others cautioned that the civics requirement should not be an opening to push progressive-leaning curriculum into public schools.

"This is a commonsense bill as long as our liberal leaders do not get ahold of it & shove race, class, & gender into it!" wrote Josie Alexander in testimony submitted in March.

But the nationwide problem that dates back at least two decades will take another half decade to be fully enforced in Oregon.

The civics course will be a graduation requirement starting with students in the Class of 2026 — those students are entering eighth grade this coming fall. In other words, civics won't be required of current high schoolers or incoming freshmen.



Thanks to LWWOR Action for supporting SB 513.

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Director
KATIE LOUGHARY

UNITS

Mary Keating, Chair

JUNE UNIT TOPIC

by Linda Ferdowsian, Program Co-Chair

PESTICIDES AND OTHER BIOCIDES

League of Women Voters of Oregon requests member consensus on how the League should support or oppose policy that will affect the use of biocides and pesticides in Oregon. What policy changes can result in the widespread or exclusive use of best practices?

The study may be downloaded from www.lwvor.org/studies. The consensus questions are included in the June Everymember material. To involve as many members as possible in the consensus, there will be two in-person, as well as Zoom meetings. Meetings will be held at the League office. Members that have received full COVID-19 vaccination may attend. Masks are required in the building. See below the details of the meetings and links.

Monday, June 7, 10 am – Zoom meeting

Contact Nancy Mills: nmills@trinity.edu

Monday, June 7, 2 pm – Zoom meeting and in person, *League office*

Contact Mary Keating: myrnalouise@hotmail.com

Tuesday, June 8, 10 am – Zoom meeting

Contact Linda Ferdowsian: lferdowsian@yahoo.com

Wednesday, June 9, 2 pm – In person meeting, *League office*

Contact Linda Ferdowsian: lferdowsian@yahoo.com

BRIEFING - Virtual and In-Person

Presented by **Paula Grisafi**,
co-chair *Pesticides and Other Biocides* study

Tuesday, June 1, 2 pm

In the League office and

Via Zoom - To receive the link contact myrnalouise@hotmail.com.

All are welcome.

PROGRAM

Discussion Topics for 2021-22

Members were asked to review the recommended program for the next year that was outlined in the *Annual Meeting Workbook 2021*. Members have already volunteered to serve on committees to prepare unit materials for three of the six topics.

They include:

Elementary and Secondary School Facilities
(emphasizing broadband access);

Mental Health Service in Lane County
(emphasizing the Lane County Drug Court and

implementation of Measure 110); and

Natural Resources (emphasizing Wildfire Risk in Lane County).

If you would like to work on any of these three committees, contact Linda Ferdowsian or Sabree Hamel, Program Co-Chairs. Volunteers will also be needed to help with Ballot Measure materials for Units in October.

Linda Ferdowsian

REDISTRICTING HERE, REDISTRICTING THERE

by Paula Grisafi, Voter Service Chair

While data from the last census has been delayed, cities, counties and states are still preparing to move forward with their plans for redistricting. The City of Eugene is soliciting community feedback as part of the survey that will be presented to city council at a work session in June. It will inform council members on what criteria they would like staff to use when creating new ward boundary options. If you live in Eugene, please consider filling out the survey at <https://www.eugene-or.gov/4702/Census-and-Ward-Boundary>



At the same time Lane County commissioners are developing a new ordinance that will shift the process of redistricting to an independent committee. They will be asking for applicants from the county at all levels of experience, all areas in the county, and from all walks of life to reflect the makeup of the county's population. If you believe in fostering the principles of one person/one vote and having everyone's vote count equally, consider applying to join the committee as soon as the application process is opened. Training resources and other materials will be made available to help committee members during the process. The LWVLC will post relevant information on our website as soon as it becomes available.

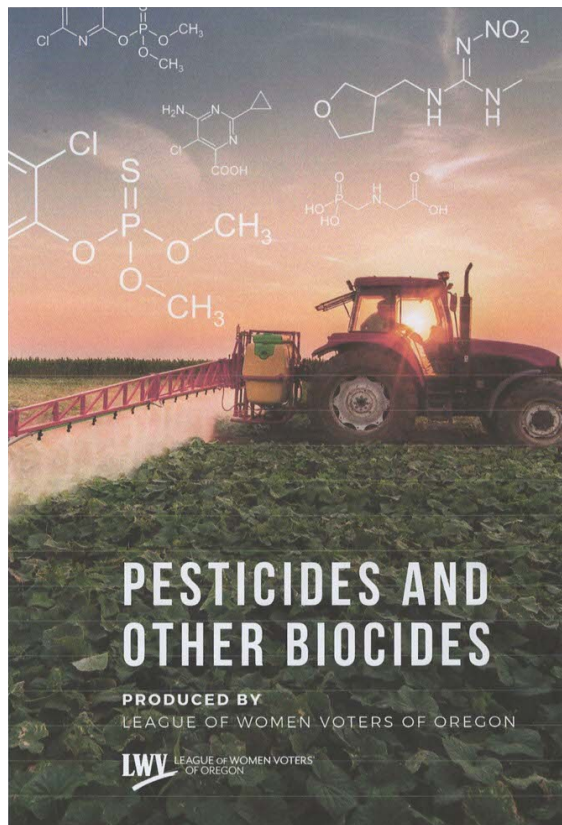
The Oregon legislature has already decided on the process that will be used for its redistricting efforts this cycle, which will be overseen by the legislature itself. However, there is an effort to get an initiative on the ballot moving forward that will call for an independent committee to be responsible for state redistricting in the future.



Voter Service Meeting

June 10, 10 am

In the League office and
Via Zoom - To receive the link
contact voterservice@lwvlc.org.



PESTICIDES AND OTHER BIOCIDES Brief Background

The League of Women Voters of Oregon study on *Pesticides and Other Biocides* is posted on the state website and available for review. The two-year study is a comprehensive look at how pesticides are developed and regulated, and how their use impacts people and the environment for both the better and the worse. It looks at how federal and state regulations and agencies interact and where there are holes in the regulatory system. It looks at why pesticides are used and what alternatives we have to pesticide use. It looks at adverse pesticide events that have occurred around the state and what we can learn from them. Many stake holders were interviewed for the study including researchers, medical professionals, government officials, farmer and farmworker groups, and environmental groups.

The League member opinions that will come out of this report can impact state pesticide use legislation, some of which is before the state legislature even as this article is being written. Please read it and make your views known by answering the consensus questions. Knowledge is power!

Paula Grisafi

TAKE ACTION... UPDATES

by Terry Parker, Action Committee Chair

Redistricting - The LWVOR reports (as of May 18) that:

- The People Not Politicians (PNP) coalition has begun calling for a public hearing on [HJR 7](https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Measures/Overview/HJR7), <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Measures/Overview/HJR7>, a constitutional amendment referral to establish an independent redistricting commission. Although PNP did not ask for HJR 7 to be filed in the legislature, PNP thinks that it could be the basis for negotiations within the legislature. Please write House Rules Committee members <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Committees/HRULES/Overview> and your legislators now.
- Locally, the City of Eugene is encouraging us to visit their *Census and Ward Boundary* project on the city's website. (See Redistricting article on page 3.) The next city council Work Session for this project will be **Wednesday, June 16, 2021**.

Transportation - Springfield City Council's work session on the *Main Street Safety Project* has now been posted. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=meR62IPfhAQ>.

Land Use - Thousand Friends of Oregon has this mid-session legislative update. <https://friends.org/news/2021-mid-session-update>

Climate - Everything EV! Transitioning to electric vehicles will reduce local air pollution, significantly lower emissions of carbon dioxide, and often save money for local residents.

- The Emerald Valley Electric Vehicle Association, a local chapter of the Electric Auto Association (whose members are excited about the future of electric vehicles), will have their next workshop **Thursday, June 17 at 7pm via Zoom**. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rev-up-registration-151547834653>
- The June workshop has an extra benefit as participants will qualify for discounts at several local auto dealerships! Qualify for discounts of \$200-\$1,000 off a new EV from Kendall Chevrolet, Guaranty Chevrolet, Lithia Nissan, or Sheppard Motors (which includes Hyundai, VW, and Volvo brands).
- Lane County - The public outreach portion of the Lane County climate action planning process is coming soon. Over the summer, the county will be hosting several virtual meetings and a virtual open house. Please watch [Lane County's Climate Action Plan](#) for more information in the near future.

Action Committee Meeting
June 2, 10 am
 In the League office and
 Via Zoom - To receive the link
 contact action@lwvlc.org.

**The undertaking of a new
 action brings new strength.**

Richard L. Evans

READY FOR A PLASTICS CHALLENGE? GETTING TO PLASTICS NEUTRAL

LWVLC held a "sharing and caring" session on solutions to plastic pollution that brought a group of us together to learn more about and rely less on plastics. We know that the plastics problem is gargantuan. Figuring out what to do about it is, well, hard. Thanks to the pooling of our everyday efforts, we have these ideas for you:

Start here to get the BIG picture watch using the link or type the title into your browser.

[The Story of Plastic - Story of Stuff](#)

Here is the beginning of our own LWVLC resource guide on plastics. Feel free to add your own comments and suggestions directly into this shared document:

[LWVLC "Plastics Recycling in Lane County" "Resource List](#)

Follow Oregon's efforts to improve recycling through LWVOR updates on natural resources or the Oregon Legisla-

tive Information System (OLIS):

SB 581A removes the prohibition of deceptive labeling of recyclability and replaces it with a task force to study the issue and report to the 2022 Legislature.

SB 582 A directs the Department of Environmental Quality to approve and oversee producer responsibility organizations and initiate studies of many aspects of the recycling system. The fiscal impact is estimated to be \$1.8 million in 2021-23 and \$10.8 million in 2023-25 but it would be funded through the producer fee system once fully running. If SB 582-9 is ultimately passed, SB 581-1 becomes unnecessary as the truth in labeling task force is included in both.

AND, take the Plastics Free July Challenge at: <https://www.plasticfreejuly.org/>

Terry Parker

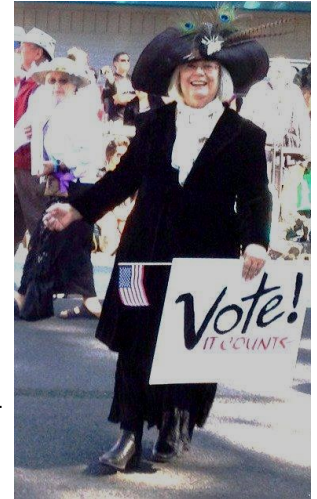
LOOKING BACK AND AHEAD

by Charlcie Kaylor, President

The year has been challenging, frustrating, interesting, and rewarding – sort of like raising kids.

It is likely we will be having face-to-face Third Thursdays in the fall.
Did I just hear a cheer?

While some are exhausted with internet meetings, there are positives like joining an event from afar – be that Oakridge or a sailboat. Whether via a desktop, laptop, tablet, or smart phone, we can connect. Our first in-person board meeting in May was held in the office after more than a year of online meetings. The gathering was a hybrid because some attended via Zoom. There were very few problems - mostly involving sound - that we hope will be remedied with microphones and/or speakers. We're thinking that even Third Thursday luncheons can be hybrid. Stay tuned.



A bonus to virtual meetings is that they are recorded, and if you miss one you can watch it on YouTube. Some are so amazingly informational you might have to watch them more than once. The Third Thursday speakers were particularly good.

- **Dr. Patrick Luedtke** was in the vanguard of those explaining COVID-19 and how to prevent its spread.
- **Senator James Manning, Jr. and Representative Nancy Nathanson** outlined their goals for the 2021 Oregon legislature.
- **Tod Schneider**, Community Supported Shelters, gave hope that homelessness is being addressed.
- **Sarah Medary**, Eugene City Manager, talked about the problematic negotiations with North West Natural among her other difficult work.
- **Lori Erickson**, Curator at Oregon Historical Society, presented her work on the OHS exhibit *Nevertheless, They Persisted: Women's Voting Rights and the 19th Amendment*.
- **Cheryl Betschart**, Lane County Clerk, spoke to possible changes to come. We already knew how secure Lane County elections are.
- The video *We Are Neighbors*, an original play telling the true stories of courage, hopefulness and resilience of immigrants living in Lane County was brought to us by member **Therese Picado**.
- The May Third Thursday speaker was **Cydney Vandercar**, 4J's interim superintendent and definitely worth watching or re-watching. The scope of her work is Herculean and heart wrenching. Asked what keeps her awake at night she replied it was worry for the well being of the children who don't show up.

When asked how civics could be brought to the classrooms, Vandercar said, "Go to the school board and ask." The Oregon legislature passed a bill requiring civics instruction beginning with the class of 2026. (See page 1.) Hoorah! However, students entering the ninth through twelfth grade won't be subject to the requirement. Is there a way to get civics into the curriculum sooner?

Below is the roster of the new and continuing officers, directors and nominating committee:

OFFICERS

Charlcie Kaylor - President
Terry Parker - Vice-President
Gary Harmon - Treasurer
Jeanne Taylor - Secretary

DIRECTORS

Linda Berg
Linda Ferdowsian
Paula Grisafi
Sabree Hamel
Katie Loughary
Kathy Madison
Freddi Weishahn

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Betty-Coe de Broekert, Chair
Dorothy Cruickshank
Sharon Posner

Onward to this year of new challenges, new frustration, new interests and new rewards.

"We just keep on keeping on." Curtis Mayfield



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

CALENDAR

JUNE

- 1 - 2 pm, Unit Briefing (page 2)
- 2 - 10 am, Action Committee (page 4)
- 7 thru 9 - Unit meetings (page 2)
- 10 - 10 am, Voter Service Committee (page 4)
- 15 - 2 pm, Membership Committee
- 16 - 1:30 pm, Board meeting
- 19 - Midnight, *Argus* deadline

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

At time of printing it had not been decided whether to offer both in-person and online meetings. **Please check with the chair to confirm.**

*Thanks to our
2020-21 Directory
Advertisers*

- Lane Forest Products*
- Baker Bay Bead Company*
- Christine Dambach
Farmers Insurance*
- The Eugene Hotel
Retirement Community*
- Lohring Miller, DMD PC*
- Plank Town Brewing Co.*
- Sundance Natural Foods/
Wine Cellars*
- Unique Properties*
- Aayres Appliance Repair*
- Ambrosia*
- Bel Ami*
- Dot Dotson's*
- Eugene's Flower Home*
- Folkways*
- Long's Meat Market*

MISSED A THIRD THURSDAY?
<https://lwvlc.org/third-thursday-audio-presentations/>
BRIEFINGS VIDEOS
<https://lwvlc.org/publications/everymember-details/>



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