



## VOTER

League of Women Voters of Coos County  
PO Box 1571, Coos Bay, OR 97420  
Volume 61 – Issue 3 – MARCH 2016  
[www.lwvcooscounty.org](http://www.lwvcooscounty.org)

### Coordinated Care Organizations

**Saturday, March 12, 2016**  
**10:30 – 12:00 noon**

For our next LWVCC general meeting we will hear from Tracy Muday, M.D., the medical director from Western Oregon Advanced Health (WOAH), the local coordinated care organization that administers the Medicaid program here in Coos County. Dr. Muday will discuss the advantages here locally of “ObamaCare” and some of the challenges. We may have a second speaker—who is not yet confirmed.

Location: Education Service District (ESD) building at 1350 Teakwood in Coos Bay. Park in back of building and enter through “D” door in lower level.

### Adult Spelling Bee

Don't forget the Coos Bay Public Library Foundation's “Spelling Bee” fundraiser on April 2 at 7:00 p.m. at the Black Market Gourmet in Coos Bay. Purchase \$25 tickets at the Coos Bay Library or from Carol Ventgen. Our League's “Queen Bees” (Mitzi Loftus, Linda Sweatt, and Melanie Bloom) will compete against top local spellers.

### League Literacy

League members met February 20 to hear about the history of League of Women Voters, why and how we do studies, action and advocacy, public forums, and voter registration. See page 2 for “History of the League” presented by Carol Ventgen.

### Job Openings:



#### Action Chair:

Serve as the local League's representative on the state and national Lobby Corps and respond on behalf of the League to Action Alerts (can be done online.) A further option might be to track local government action which the League could influence and recommend appropriate action to the president(s). Alice Carlson will train. Contact her for more information.

**Forum Committee:** Sign up for the committee to plan Primary Election forums. Our first meeting will be on **Saturday, March 12**, from 9:30 to 10:30, just prior to the general meeting. Same location: ESD building. Or contact Forum Chair Judith VanDuzer Uno for more information. This is a great opportunity for both new and long-term members to participate in one of the most valuable projects our League does.

**Newsletter Editor:** Do you like to write? We're looking for a LWVCC volunteer to be editor of the Voter newsletter. It involves collecting information about upcoming League events, typing into a Word document, then converting to PDF for distribution. Call or email Margie to ask about the job.

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. Open to men and women of voting age, it neither supports nor opposes political parties or candidates.

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# History of the League

## The League of Women Voters started after women got the right to vote.

The League grew out of an organization called the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA). Carrie Chapman Catt succeeded 80-year-old activist Susan B. Anthony as president in 1919. In her address to the organization's 50th convention that year, she proposed the creation of a "league of women voters to finish the fight and aid in the reconstruction of the nation."

The next year, on February 14, 1920 - six months before the 19th amendment to the Constitution was ratified - the League was formally organized in Chicago as the national League of Women Voters. The League was designed to help women carry out their new responsibilities as voters after the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment finally passed. Women were to vote nationally for the first time in the 1920 presidential election, but their hard-won suffrage victory was greeted with minimal enthusiasm within the Democratic Party. The Republican Party, for so many years the party that supported suffrage, was still the party that vigorously courted women's votes.

Catt had campaigned for women's suffrage for decades, beginning her career as a political activist began at the age of 27 when she joined the Iowa Woman suffrage Association. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in general science in 1880, the only woman in her class. She was a teacher, principal and superintendent. After the death of her husband in 1885, she made a living by becoming San Francisco's first female newspaper reporter. She was close friends with Eleanor Roosevelt, a fellow League member and women's rights pioneer. She advocated for women's rights around the globe, founding the International Woman Suffrage Alliance.

In 1923, the first Equal Rights Amendment was introduced into Congress, which caused a sharp split in the women's movement that led to the eventual failure of the ERA and reduced the effectiveness of the movement forever. It was "feminist against feminist." The ERA was drafted by Alice Paul, who fought so hard for suffrage, and she became a member of the National Women's Party, which believed that women should be on equal

terms with men in all regards, even if that means sacrificing certain benefits given to women through protective legislation, such as shorter work hours. The League opposed formation of a separate women's party and opposed the ERA, believing that the gender-based benefits protected women and that the loss of such protection would not be worth the supposed gain in equality.

From the beginning, the League has been an activist, grassroots organization whose leaders believe that citizens should play a critical role in advocacy. It was then, and is now, a nonpartisan organization. League founders believed that maintaining a nonpartisan stance would protect the fledgling organization from becoming mired in the party politics of the day. The intention was to support those candidates, regardless of party, who promoted reforms the League wanted. However, League members were encouraged to be political themselves, by educating citizens about, and lobbying for, government and social reform. This holds true today for the 800 Leagues around the country. The League neither supports nor opposes candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always works on vital issues of concern to members and the public.

From the very beginning, it was apparent that the legislative goals of the League were not exclusively focused on women's issues and that citizen education aimed at all of the electorate was in order. Since its inception, the League has helped millions of women and men become informed participants in government. In fact, the first league convention voted 69 separate items as statements of principle and recommendations for legislation. Among them were protection for women and children, right of working women, food supply and demand, social hygiene, the legal status of women, and American citizenship, including independent citizenship for married women. The League's first major national legislative success was the passage of the Sheppard-Towner Act providing federal aid for maternal and child care programs.

In 1928 the League sponsored "Meet the Candidates," the first national radio broadcast of a candidate forum, laying the foundation for today's program of candidate forums. In the 1930's, League members worked successfully for enactment of the Social Security and Food and Drug Acts. Due at least in part to League efforts, legislation passed in 1938 and 1940 removed hundreds of federal jobs from the spoils system and placed them under Civil Service. The depression of the 1930s and onset of WWII brought far-reaching change to the League. Gas rationing led members to start meeting in small groups to discuss fundamental issues. Grassroots activity thus was firmly institutionalized as a way of addressing concerns, studying, and taking action.

During the postwar period, the League helped lead the effort to establish the [United Nations](#) and to ensure U.S. Participation. The League was one of the first organizations in the country officially recognized by the United Nations as a non-governmental organization; it still maintains official observer status today.

The witch hunt period of the 1950s inspired the League to undertake a two-year community education program about the individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution. Dating back to a 1920 study of the Tennessee Valley Authority, the League's concern about depletion and contamination was rekindled in the mid-1950s with a study of water resources. The League's

deep interest in the environment became stronger, focusing still on water, air, and waste management, land use and energy.

In response to the growing civil rights crisis of the 1960s, the League directed its energies to equality of opportunity and support for equal access to education, employment and housing.

The League was in the forefront of the struggle to pass the Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1982, and worked to renew it in 2002. It underwrote some 150 debates in the 80s focused on national security issues among congressional candidates. It sponsored presidential debates in 1980 and 1984, and again in 1992. Also in the 90s, the League adopted positions on gun control and health care, and won passage of the "Motor Voter" act in 1993.

In 1954 the women of Coos County formed a local organization of the League of Women Voters. Bernice Haliski of Coos Bay served as one of the first presidents. Some of the early active members were Valerie Taylor, Charlotte Baer, Betsy McClure, Marg Grob, Flora Burch, Billie Youngblood, and Margaret Law. According to the minutes of these early meetings, there were two unit meetings a month, with general meetings held in June, August, November and February. The annual meeting was conducted in March and dues were \$3.00. By 1956 the League had grown to include 41 members. Our historical files contain a copy of their first local study - the characteristics of the city of Coos Bay and its governance. Over the years, studies of land use issues have dominated (Utsy, Ten Mile Lake algae, South Slough Reserve). Positions: county library service.



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**Please Renew Your Membership!**

**Or Join Us If You Would Like to be a  
Member of League of Women Voters**

Use the membership form below for mailing in your dues check – or pay online with PayPal at:

[cooscounty.or.lwvnet.org/join\\_form.html](http://cooscounty.or.lwvnet.org/join_form.html)

**Membership Coupon: League of Women Voters of Coos County**

**PO Box 1571, Coos Bay OR 97420: Phone: 751-9848 or 756-5835**

**Email: lwvcoos@gmail.com**

*Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to all women and men 18 years of age and older and includes subscriptions to local, state and national League publications. Your local League newsletter will be emailed unless you specify otherwise.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I would like to join or renew League membership. I am enclosing:

\$ 62.00 Individual Membership

\$ 90.00 Household Membership (two people who share address pay 1-1/2 dues.)

\$ 30.00 Student Membership (must be attending accredited college at least half time.)

*Dues to the League of Women Voters are not tax-deductible.*

*Send checks for above, payable to LWVCC, to PO Box 1571, Coos Bay, OR 97420*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Contribution to LWVOR Education Fund (tax-deductible; requires separate check.)

For further membership information, contact Kathy Metzger (751-9848) or  
Susan Anderson (756-5835).