



CASCADE ECHOES

CALENDAR FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2016

JANUARY

7 FIRST THURSDAY LUNCHEON, Speaker Tristan Reisfar, who has counseled medical marijuana patients and served on local marijuana advisory committees on the topic of marijuana policy (all things relating to cannabis) in Bend in the New Year.

At **Black Bear Diner (1465 NE 3rd Street, Bend)**. 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 pm. See last page for details

14 Board Meeting, 10 a.m. County building, Lyons room

28 Membership Planning Meeting, 10 a.m. at the home of Marie and Pat Gibson

FEBRUARY

4 FIRST THURSDAY LUNCHEON, Affordable Housing, speakers from Kor Community Land Trust. At **Black Bear Diner (1465 NE 3rd Street, Bend)**. 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 pm.

11 Board Meeting, 10a.m. County building, Lyons Room

16 Affordable Housing Forum, 5:30 – 7:30 at Deschutes Public Library, 601 NW Wall St. Refreshments provided



League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization encourages informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy



WEB SITES

Local

www.lwvdeschutes.org/index.htm

State

www.lwvor.org

National

www.lwv.org

Nationwide Election Information

www.VOTE411.org

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THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2015-2016 THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DESCHUTES COUNTY

<i>President</i>	Kim Smith,.....	541-382-2660
<i>Vice President</i>		
<i>Treasurer</i>	Susan Meyer.....	562-818-6280
<i>Secretary</i>	Andrea Blum.....	541-549-6148
<i>ECHOES publisher</i>	Denise Mahoney.....	541-350-8039
<i>Membership</i>	Bonnie Corley.....	541-330-1752
<i>Program (state, nat'l, local)</i>	Marie Gibson.....	541-385-9227
<i>Voters Service</i>	Susie Penhollow.....	541-382-2724
<i>First Thursday</i>	Dave Stranahan.....	541-350-6496
<i>Public Relations</i>	Geri Hauser.....	541-280-2947
<i>Special Events</i>	Eve McFarland,.....	541-389-5682

President's Message

I hope you all had a wonderful Holiday season with family and friends and are ready for an exciting 2016.

Our 'First Thursday' of the year is about **Marijuana** in Deschutes County and the state. Come find out about the new laws governing us concerning this green plant and if a new 'green' store is coming to a neighborhood near you.

We are heading into a very interesting and busy time for the league. Not only is this a Presidential election year, but we will be voting for a new State Governor, Secretary of State, State Treasurer and State Attorney General come November. And in March, there will be a special election for a 5 cent gas tax for our area. A lot of political advertising is about to come your way, like it or not. I am glad I have the league that will give me evenhanded information that is difficult to get elsewhere.

On January 28th, we are having our annual planning meeting at Marie and Pat Gibson's house. We will be discussing what is coming up in the next year and how to improve membership. If you have any suggestions or ideas, please come and share. All ideas and members are welcome and wanted.

The Deschutes League will be co-sponsoring with the Bend Library our first forum of the year, "Affordable Housing in Deschutes County" on February 16th, 5:30 pm at the downtown Bend Library in the Brooks Room.

This forum is part of our focus on Affordable Housing and will support our local leagues "Study on Affordable Housing and SDCs" (System Development Charges). Our 'First Thursday' in February will also have a 'housing' theme when Kor Community Land Trust presents. . I hope you can all make it to this important meeting and help make it a success. We will be providing food and beverages and appreciate anything you can bring.

We will also be celebrating the Leagues 96th birthday with cake!

We are ahead of the game with the consensus meetings on 'Constitutional Amendments' and 'Money in Politics' finished and our results sent in to National. Thank you to everyone that made the meetings interesting and informative. A special thanks goes to Marie Gibson for doing such a great job coordinating, tabulating and sending in our results from these meetings.

We are in need of more members. We still have positions on the Board that need filling and supporting. Talk to friends, neighbors who may or may not be interested in the League. You never know. Our reputation does us a service but we need new members to keep us going.

Please keep on supporting "First Thursdays". We need everyone there to fill the seats. Thank you,

Kim Smith President LWVDC

First Thursday Luncheon Speaker

As the manager of Mothers Against Misuse and Abuse in Bend, Tristan Reisfar has helped hundreds of patients navigate the Oregon Medical Marijuana Program. Tristan serves as an advisor for Oregon State Health Department's Advisory Committee on Medical Marijuana and Bend Marijuana Technical Advisory Committee and has been a member of the Chief's advisory committee for the Bend Police Department since 2000.

Looking forward to February

On February 16, 2016 the League, along with the Deschutes Public Library, will be sponsoring a forum on Affordable Housing. The speakers will be: Andy High, Central Oregon Builders Assoc., Tom Kemper, Executive Director, Housing Works, Jillian Ockner, Senior Policy Analyst, and Brian Rankin, Bend City Planner.

The Forum will begin at 5:30p.m. at the main library. There will be time for questions. Please be thinking about what you would like to ask.

Contact information: Dolores Ellis, cdellis2@msn.com

Anita Elliott, youngelliotts@hotmail.com

PROGRAM PLANNING:

This year we will be focusing on both **Local** and **National** program planning. We look forward to your participation when we meet on **Thursday, January 28th from 10 am to noon.**

Join us at the home of Marie and Pat Gibson, directions below.

Directions to Gibson's home at 19530 Mammoth Drive, Bend [phone 541-385-9227] From the Century Dr.; Reed Market/Mt. Washington roundabout head out Century Dr. (south to the mountain). You'll pass an entrance to Mt Bachelor Village on your left. The next left turn is Mammoth Drive. Follow Mammoth as it winds through the Sunrise Village gate. (The gate will open as you pull up to it although it may already be open.) Continue straight on Mammoth up the hill. Go straight through the intersection with Sunshine Way at the top of the hill, and after about 1/2 mi from the gate you will come to our cul-de-sac on the right. You will have passed the intersection with Sunshine Way and then the tennis courts on your right. Our house is in the next cul-de-sac after the tennis courts. There is a small post with the addresses of the four homes in the cul-de-sac. Our home is in the left rear of the long driveway. There is parking on the street, and just a few in our driveway.

PROGRAM PLANNING: In the coming months the boards of state and local Leagues across the nation will have the opportunity to offer input for the League's program for the 2016-2018 biennium. The program planning process is one of the important ways through which the League focuses its grassroots work to align each part of the organization with the others and with the League's mission. National Program planning will culminate with adoption of a program of education and action at LWVUS Convention, June 2016 in Washington, DC.

Program planning is a valuable League tool for identifying issues for focus and for insuring that League resources are engaged where they have the most impact. This process is appropriate for all three levels of League. State Leagues also undertake program planning in alternate years before state conventions where a program of education and advocacy for the state League is adopted for the following biennium. Local Leagues do program planning before their annual meetings where local program is adopted for the following year.

LOCAL PROGRAM: Each member should have a copy of the blue covered booklet that details our current local program. There will be a few copies available at the meeting if you don't have one. Our current program topics are: Affordable Housing for Low Income Families; Corrections Facilities; County Charter Government; Local Education; Hazard Materials Transportation; Land Use; and Transportation. We also have a more informal ongoing Civics 101 that is addressed by many of our First Thursday Luncheons.

An update of the Affordable Housing position is in progress, primarily focusing on the impact of System Development Charges and other factors on the availability of affordable housing.

See the separate brief article in this Echoes, informing us of the planned Public Forum on this issue coming up in February.

We will decide for each current program item whether to retain, update, or drop it.

NATIONAL: When looking at our positions as a whole, it is clear that a main goal for which we are striving is to *make democracy work*. Voting rights, voter protection and service, and election reform are crucial elements in achieving the goal, and the League is particularly noted for action in these areas. Currently, as part of the three-part Key Structures of Democracy program adopted at the 2014 Convention, Leagues nationwide are: engaging in the Money in Politics Review and Update of LWV's campaign finance position, studying the process of amending the U.S. Constitution; and reviewing the redistricting process for U.S. Congress, through the existing Redistricting Task Force, for the purpose of developing action steps.

We are ready to more fully engage in these issues to further our efforts in a campaign: ***Making Democracy Work***. The LWVUS Board asks you to consider seizing the opportunity for Leagues nationwide to meet this critical challenge.

To free up resources and unite Leagues across the country, we must focus. It is suggested that, during our program planning efforts, we strongly consider the need to act versus adding new studies or reviews to the agenda for the 2016-2018 biennium. **Let's focus on taking action.**

Our National Accomplishments Since 2014

Key Structures of Democracy was the focus of the program adopted at the 2014 Convention for the 2014-2016 biennium. In addition to ongoing work to protect the vote and reform elections, this comprehensive program consists of

1. A study of the process of amending the United States Constitution;
2. A review and update of the League position on campaign finance in light of forty years of change since the Watergate reforms; and
3. A review of the redistricting process for the United States Congress for the purpose of developing action steps.

Progress on these topics:

The LWVUS Redistricting Task Force has researched the League's history regarding redistricting and has compiled the 40 existing state League redistricting positions. Based on these positions, the LWVUS Board is recommending a concurrence with a broad, general statement at Convention 2016. The goal is to enable states without positions to take action and states with positions to continue to work for the reforms that their study process demonstrated works best for their voters.

Voter Protection and Service

Since Convention 2014, in the area of voter protection and across the organization, we have

1. Delayed or defeated over 40 state laws aimed at suppressing the vote;
2. Supported at least 20 state laws intended to reform our elections;
3. Participated in 10 lawsuits involving voting rights;
4. Sent 60,457 messages to Congress regarding the Voting Rights Act Amendment;
5. Sent 27,705 messages to the FEC/IRS regarding regulations restricting money in politics;
6. Compiled a list of 40 state positions on redistricting to inform a possible national position.

While direct advocacy is critical to these core democracy issues, the work the League does every year in the area of voter service constitutes the front line of voter protection especially since the Supreme Court of the United States decision in *Shelby County v. Holder*. Nationwide, since 2014 the League has

1. Registered well over 75,000 new voters in hundreds of communities;
2. Successfully focused registration activities at high-yield venues such as naturalization ceremonies and high schools;
3. Participated every year in National Voter Registration Day increasing the number of League partners to 260 in 2015 and registering more than 18,000 voters in 2014 and 2015 combined;
4. Held over 650 candidate forums;
5. Distributed over 500 different voters' guides through VOTE411.org and other methods, providing nearly 2 million people with comprehensive election information, including candidate statements via VOTE411.

Looking Ahead to 2016 and Beyond

Overview of a Possible Program Focus: Making Democracy Work

- **Voting Rights and Voter Protection**

In Congress, we must continue to push for restoration of the Voting Rights Act by supporting the bipartisan Voting Rights Advancement Act (VRAA).

- **Money in Politics**

Congress can take action to reform money in politics. Including the Stop Super PAC-Candidate Coordination Act in the House, there is legislation on each of the three pillars of our work on campaign finance: disclosure, stopping Super PACs, and public financing of congressional and presidential elections. There is also an anti-bundling bill. In addition, Congress can and must ensure meaningful enforcement of existing and future laws. The Federal Election Commission can't fix itself, but Congress surely can. These reforms can be made despite recent decisions of the Supreme Court.

- **Supporting Voting Rights and Voter Protection in the States**

In the states the fight continues in statehouses and courthouses to prevent legislation that suppresses the vote. Support also continues for reforms like on-line voter registration and expansion of early voting. **Supporting Voting Rights and Voter Protection in Local Communities**

In recent years local League voter service has joined the front lines of voter protection. The 2016 election will be the first presidential election in 50 years in which voters cannot rely on the protections of the Voting Rights Act to ensure free and fair access to the polls. Never has a local presence--real people in real communities--been a greater asset for the League.

- **Voting Rights and Voter Protection Following Election 2016**

The past five years have shown that elections have important consequences for both candidates and voters. Long lines at the polls in 2012 prompted the president to appoint the Presidential Commission on Election Administration to examine best election practices from the perspective of voter experience. Election 2016 will be the most expensive in our history. The issue of money in politics does not end the day after an election, nor is it confined to federal elections or the federal government. Leagues are working hard to update our campaign finance reform position, and it is incumbent on all of us to work at every level of government to ensure that power is in the hands of the many and not the few.

Response Form

1. **Do you support the proposed program focus, *Making Democracy Work*, for the 2016-2018 biennium? (Yes/No)**
2. **Would you like to recommend another program item, in addition to or instead of *Making Democracy Work*? (Yes/No)**
Please provide a statement (300 words or less) describing the scope of your proposal, including a description of the issue area, its importance in advancing the League's mission and resources that would be required.
3. **What LWVUS positions does your League use to take action at the state and local level?**

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF DESCHUTES COUNTY

FIRST THURSDAY LUNCHEON

January 7, 2016

*Speaker, Tristan Reisfar, medical
marijuana counselor, board policy
advisor*

On the topic of MARIJUANA

11:00 a.m. to 1:00 pm

at **Black Bear Diner**, on the corner of 3rd and Olney Streets in Bend.

There is a separate dining room for our use.

There is no cost to hear the speakers; however those wanting
lunch should arrive about 11:00 a.m. and order off the menu.

The speakers will begin at noon and allow time for questions from
the audience.

No reservations are needed. This event is open to the
general public.