

March 2022 Calendar of LWV Events

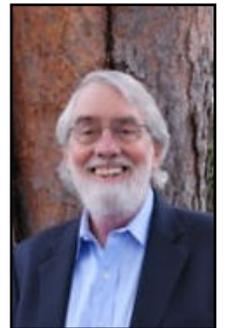
Wed., March 2, 1:30 p.m.—Book Club—*The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson
Virtual meeting. Link will be emailed.
If you are interested in joining Book Club contact Roz Shirack.

Mon. March 7—Oregon legislative session ends

Mon., March 14, 3 p.m.—Board meeting—via Zoom
All members are invited to attend board meetings.
Contact Kathleen West for the link to the Zoom meeting.
Minutes are on the LWVMPC webpage under Board Minutes.

Wed., March 16, 7 p.m.—Video: *Defusing Contentious Conversations*
Video presenter: Dr. Terry Busch, PhD
All-member meeting. Invite guests to watch, too.
The link to the Zoom meeting will be emailed before March 16.
Details on Page 2.

Sat., March 19, 1 p.m.—Great Decisions: Quad Alliance
Virtual meeting. Link will be emailed.
Discussion leader: Jean Sherbeck



Dr. Terry Busch

Making Democracy Work™

Defusing Contentious Conversations

We have all been there. The conversation turns to politics or a contentious issue and gets heated in a hurry. Stereotypes and negative comments proliferate and we grow uncomfortable. If only we could turn this potential train wreck of a conversation in a more positive direction.

There is a way. It requires some bravery on our part, respect for other points of view, some practiced skills, and a desire to find some common ground.

During our March 16 Zoom meeting, Terry Busch, consultant and Braver Angels workshop moderator, will share via video what his experience has taught him to work in defusing heated rhetoric and broadening the perspectives of others. Following his presentation, we will discuss the points he brings up.



Dr. Terry Busch holds a Ph.D. in Political Science from Miami University and was an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Denison University. He served in Germany and Vietnam as an Army Medical Service Corps officer, and then spent 28 years of service as a leadership expert and senior executive with the Central Intelligence Agency. Today, Terry is a management consultant and workshop facilitator for Braver Angels, a national, non-profit organization. He is also a published author, and his most recent book is *What the Best Managers Know and Do*.

The link will be emailed to LWV members a few days before the March 16 meeting. Feel free to forward it to friends who may also be interested in hearing Dr. Busch.

LWVOR Childcare Survey: The interview questionnaires are due March 15. Diana Upton is coordinating LWVMPC members who do our local interviews of childcare providers. Contact Diana at dahliagirl@live.com or 831-595-3171 if you'd like to help with these interviews.



FOCUS

Focus is the newsletter of the League of Women Voters® of Marion and Polk Counties. Members subscribe through their dues, and membership is open to anyone 16 years of age and older.

Voter Service Excitement!

Deanie Anderson, Voter Service Co-chair

This year will be exciting and busy with our amazing election efforts, and I know that you want to be involved in the League's most important community service.

First, many thanks to volunteers

Thank you to Janet Adkins for her consistent and reliable data services regarding election filing dates, candidate information and process. She is our go-to person for Vote411. Please contact her in the fall to assist in inputting information for the General Election.



Thanks to Sally Hollemon for broadcasting our events and requests through the e-blast and newsletter as well as offering her experience.

Thanks to Alice LaViolette for posting voter service information on our website and watching for volunteers and questions.

Thanks to Kathleen West for co-chairing Voter Service and making sure we do outreach.

AND thanks to all of you who responded to the Program Planning survey and attended the Voter Service gathering on Zoom with the ideas and energy to get involved.

Opportunities abound

1. Be LWV's co-leader with AAUW's Public Policy Chair Peggy Shippen to arrange a June function on "Women in Politics." Each year we co-sponsor an event with AAUW, and they are great to work with. Contact me, and I'll connect you to Peggy.

2. Candidate interviewers are needed for March 29, 30, 31, and April 1 for *Your Vote Counts*, a Capital Community Media program on cable TV. The interviews are done on Zoom, and we need 6 - 8 interviewers. The questions to ask the candidates will be provided. Call me for further discussion.



3. Question developers are needed to choose questions appropriate for races of mayor, city council, county commissioners, District Attorney and candidates for the new Congressional District 6. We have a question bank from previous years and the questions LWVOR is putting into Vote411 this year. We could meet on Zoom for a brainstorm session. Let me know if you're available.

4. LWVOR needs people to be ballot measure researchers. This process begins in the summer and the number of researchers needed depends on how many ballot measures are approved for the ballot. LWVMPC has a long history of offering this service to the state LWV. Contact Rebecca Gladstone if you are interested in volunteering or getting more information.

(More opportunities on Page 4)

Opportunities abound (Continued from Page 3)

5. For many years a small committee made up of LWVMPC members has been the LWVOR ballot-measure editing committee, but now LWVOR needs to build a new ballot-measure editing team. The committee will meet two or three times in September to read the explanations of each ballot measure sent by the LWVOR researchers and to clarify language, ensure impartiality, and balance the pro and con statements. To find out more, contact Deanie Anderson or Sally Hollemon. To volunteer, contact Rebecca Gladstone.

6. Contact Bill Burgess, Marion County Clerk, or Val Unger, Polk County Clerk, to volunteer in the election office during the vote-counting process.

7. From your home contact the City of Salem to get a list of contact persons' email addresses for each neighborhood association and send an invitation to them to contribute questions for the candidate interviews.

Additional opportunities to volunteer will appear as the election season continues.

I will collect your names and volunteer wishes from the recent survey and the Voter Service Zoom meeting and may give you a call if you don't call me first!



Help LWV create informed voters!



Program Planning Survey Results

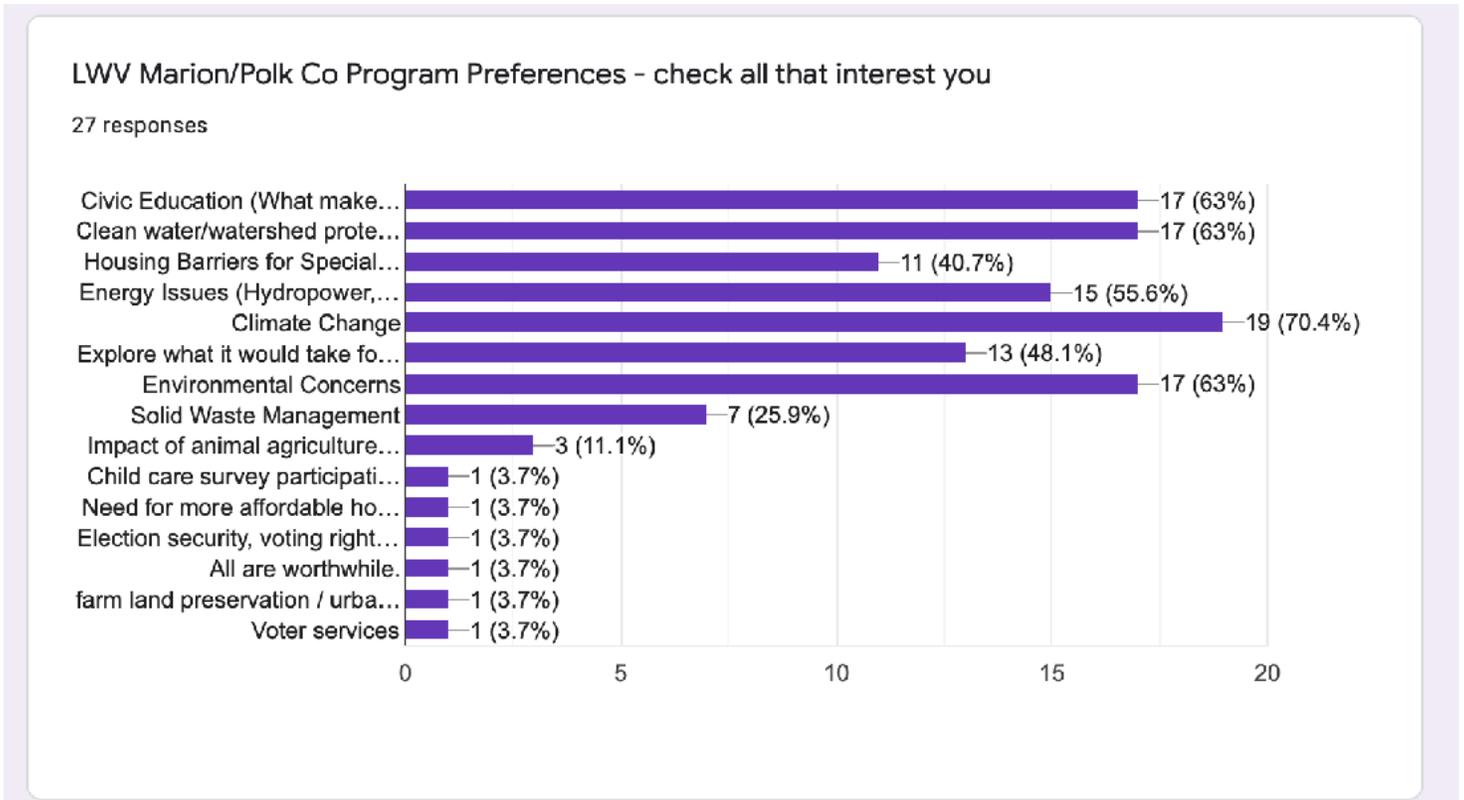
After the January Program Planning meeting on Zoom, a survey was sent to all members, from which we got good feedback.

Meeting day and time: Wednesday afternoons and evenings were preferred; the latter would accommodate members who are employed. So we will continue to meet on Wednesdays.

Zoom: A majority of members like Zoom meetings. If appropriate, we can have break-out sessions on Zoom meetings.

(Continued on Page 5)

Program Topic Preferences:



Suggestions for speakers you'd like to hear or topics you'd like to know about:

- Update on what City of Salem is working on re Climate Change
- Bee City status for Salem and other towns in our two counties
- Issues facing election officials/staff around the country
- Mistrust of media and government entities
- Future of democracy for U.S.
- Constitutionality of Executive Orders
- School Choice
- Ideas for meaningful assistance to alleviate homelessness
- Recycling and waste reduction
- Prof. Joe Bowersox, Willamette University, on environmental policy issues
- Other college professors from Willamette, Chemeketa, WOU (or more distant colleges if meeting is on Zoom) to discuss issues identified above



If you have other suggestions, send to Sally Hollemon, as she is currently acting as secretary.

Observer Reports

Marion County Board of Commissioners— 1/12/2022

Amy Vandegrift

Main Points/Issues Discussed

Report on the efforts of the county to assist the citizens who lost their homes in the September 2021 fire. A public hearing was held on rezoning a property near Enchanted Way. The commissioners also dealt with contracts for work on fiber optic cable.

Decisions Made/Actions Taken

The commissioners voted to return the rezoning issue to have additional study.



Marion County Board of Commissioners – 2/09/2022

Amy Vandegrift

Main Points/Issues Discussed

Wildfire Recovery Staff report: To date 59% of the former property owners have septic system permits and 45% have been issued building permits. There are funds available for recovery from both public and private groups. An economic outcome of 10 houses rebuilding in Detroit shows a marked increase in assessed valuation of replacement homes. Marion County Planning Director Brandon Reich spoke about zoning codes for Middle Housing in the East Salem area and announced a March 3 hearing for public comment. The commissioners appointed Dave Kinney to the Marion County Budget Committee and gave the Public Works Director decision authority in the event of a conflict of interest between planning and zoning.

Decisions Made/Actions Taken

1. Marion County Health will provide \$500,000 for their contract provider, PacificSource Community Solutions, to purchase property for a His Place residential facility program.
2. Approved funds for financing community mental health services for non-Medicaid eligible people.
3. Allow department heads to authorize telecommuting for employees.
4. Begin the process of updating Marion County Code Chapters 16 & 17 to comply with state laws. A public hearing was held on amending the Annual Action plan that needs to be submitted to HUD.

Marion County Board of Commissioners – 2/15/2022

Amy Vandegrift

Main Points/Items Discussed

Commissioner Cameron was not in attendance, so the other two commissioners discussed the work done by the Commissioners related to approving contract services for the county.

(Continued on Page 7)

Marion County Board of Commissioners (Continued from Page 6)

Many of their projects are done by independent contractors with the various county departments. The County is the governmental pass-through for many projects.

Action Taken/Decisions Made

Commissioners approved the following:

- *Solid Waste Management*: Julie Jackson of Republic Services was reappointed to the Solid Waste Management Advisory Council that is made up of 16 members, 8 of whom are citizens at large and the others are businesses and solid waste hauling companies.
- *Health and Human Services*: Two contracts to help the county with its vaccination administration and events work were approved. The companies are Interface Network and Woodburn Ambulance Service.
- *Juvenile Department*: A contract with Justice Benefits to track and provide documentation services of Title IV-E for troubled youth and families was approved.
- *Public Works*, in their work to update the Marion County Radio Communications project for all area first responders: Contract with ADCOMM Engineering LLC to complete Phase 1 and begin Phase 2 of the project. Commissioners wanted to make sure that the very small fire districts were represented on the task force and able to access communications where broadband is not reliable.
- *Sheriff's Office* requested to replace their 1987 boat with the purchase of a replacement watercraft. The written quote was provided by Oregon State Marine Board.

Salem Area Mass Transit District Board – 1/27/2022

Janet Adkins

Main Points/Issues Discussed

1. National and local recognition and support for staff with mental health issues stemming from pandemic, stress, fatigue.
2. Strategic Plan process outline through summer—board and public involvement
3. Federal and state legislative and funding priorities
4. Substantial increased federal funding from Covid relief bills and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to be used for transit grants, infrastructure, and local governments. The funds are welcome after cuts to transit starting in 2012.
5. Cheriots success in the past few grant cycles for CNG (Condensed Natural Gas) and electric buses



Decisions Made/Actions Taken

1. Appointed Citizen members to Budget Committee
2. Specified Board priorities: increased transit funding, pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure, environmental justice, maintenance of existing infrastructure
3. Adopted the proposed federal agenda including funding requests for 5 ADA Paratransit Bus replacements (\$461 K), Kuebler Link Job Center mobility project (\$510 K),

(Continued on Page 8)

Salem Area Mass Transit District Board (Continued from Page 7)

South Salem Transit Facility (\$9.5 M), and policy priorities of Affordable Housing Access (in Build Back Better Bill), and making the Alternative Fuels Tax Credit permanent.

4. Adopted the proposed state legislative agenda including: maintain transit investments, increase zero-emission vehicles, monitor transit impacts of Covid response, increase investment in bike and footpaths, monitor I-5 Columbia River Bridge replacement discussions and Uber/Lyft regulation.
5. Authorized contract amendment for project management and technical services software
6. Authorized contract for purchase of seven CNG buses for ADA services up to \$796,512.

Salem City Council—2/14/2022

Alice LaViolette

Main Points/Issues Discussed:

City Manager report – Citizens should contact Arches or Northwest Human Services if they are aware of a homeless person needing assistance.

City Council will have a business meeting on February 22 to discuss recruitment process for new City Manager. Public input will be accepted at that time.

Staff report and council discussion on Council Policy Agenda for 2022. Items on Policy Agenda:

- Responding to sheltering crisis
- Planning for the future
- Engaging the community
- Sustaining infrastructure and services



Discussed the Planning Commission's recommendation that City Council consider adopting a new City flag.

Decisions Made/Actions Taken

- Voted on and appointed Kaley Fought and Ron Eachus as two new members to the Salem Planning Commission
- Declared City Council Ward 8 position vacant as Councilor Jim Lewis has resigned. City Attorney explained process for new appointment to serve the remainder of the term. New boundaries for Ward 8 will be used. March 8 is the deadline for application. Council will appoint position on March 21. Mayor Bennett stated that Micki Varney (who has already filed to run for the seat) may apply.
- Approved proposed policy/guidelines regarding what types of groups will be considered for fee waivers when renting city meeting rooms and facilities
- Approved motion by Councilor Phillips to accept the report from the Climate Action Taskforce and appoint a council/staff sub-committee to recommend implementations from the report

(Continued on Page 9)

Salem City Council (Continued from Page 8)

- Approved Councilor Stapleton’s motion directing city staff to create a plan to implement the “20 is Plenty” speed limit for residential streets
- Approved Fire Management compensation increases
- Authorized the City Manager to submit applications for federal transportation funding for projects on Commercial Street SE and McGilchrist Street SE and two joint projects with Marion County on State Street and Center Street NE

Salem-Keizer School Board – 1/11/2022

Kathleen West

Main Points/Issues Discussed

Salem Keizer Schools Superintendent Christy Perry gave a report to the Board / Community about the challenges faced by the District to keep schools open. Staff works hard every day to support teachers and all school employees. Absenteeism, illness and need for more planning time is making all these jobs harder to keep filled with qualified staff.



Christy Perry

The Superintendent communicated with the community through on-line seminars on

- 1: School Safety and Emergency
2. Social Media's impact on Student's mental health

In addition, the School Board facilitated a Public Meeting Celebrating Black History Month with stories from Oregon.

Examples of the challenges during the Covid pandemic:



From Sept.—Dec. 2021 the district needed 540 subs; these jobs were hard to fill. During the first two weeks of January 2022 the district had over 800 staff absences without subs to fill them all. Early Childhood is also suffering staff shortages. They had to close for a week to regroup and plan lessons.

FYI: pre-Covid there were 4.5% employee absences vs. 10% during Covid.

School Bus routes have often been consolidated due to absenteeism of drivers. This puts burdens on families and students.

The guidance for contact tracing changes often, LPNs are hard to find for special needs students who need this help to attend school in person.

Spectator allotments for Sports and Music/Drama participants can be see on the Salem Keizer website. This is a moving target (i.e., Middle School allows 2 Spectators per participant, 4 for High School. For performance arts: 50% capacity in auditoriums to allow more spacing).

(Continued on Page 10)

Salem-Keizer School Board – 2/08/20

Kathleen West

Main Points/Issues Discussed

Superintendent Christy Perry Spotlighted three positive programs:



- Program encouraging bias equity in High Schools
- Op Art Adventures helped with grants from Assistance League which offered \$500 to \$1,000 (Example: Grant Elementary got sculpture program)
- Maps Credit Union partnered with our schools by offering \$350 to \$1,000 to grant winners (Chavez elementary received ukuleles).

Counselor Dwight Roberson talked about mental health supports at South Salem High School.

The superintendent and counselor also talked about the decision to expand Dual Language Expansion. They are partnering with Dual Language in New Mexico. Goals: Bilingualism and Biliteracy, High Academic performance in both languages and cross-cultural competency.

Decisions Made/Actions Taken: None

Salem Public Library Advisory Board – 02/09/2022

Barbara Sellers-Young

Main Points/Issues Discussed

1. Teen program is continuing with activities held on Zoom and includes:
 - Bucket of Words Teen Writing Group on the 2nd Saturday of each month
 - Teen Social Justice Book Club on the 3rd Saturday of each month
 - Special Teen Activity on the 3rd Thursday of each month
 - Teen Art Night on the 4th Tuesday of each month
2. Status quo budget due to a challenging upcoming budget season
3. February events associated with Salem Reads that focus on *A Tale for the Time Being* by Ruth Ozeki
4. Salem History Project 2.0, a collaboration between the Salem Public Library and the Willamette Heritage Center, is continuing.
5. Position posted for new librarian. Initial screening process in March. Begin interviews at the end of March.
6. Discussion of the role of fines in the library



(Continued on Page 11)

Decisions Made/Actions Taken

Contact *Statesman Journal*, *Salem Reporter* and other media outlets to inform people about the library bus stop.

Highlights of Journalist Julia Shumway's presentation

Julia Shumway of the online *Oregon Capital Chronicle* spoke on February 16 at a Zoom meeting attended by 23 people, including several guests.

Ms. Shumway worked in Arizona in 2020-2021 and covered the partisan recount of ballots by a small Florida cybersecurity firm, Cyber Ninjas, with unqualified election workers. They were trying to prove that Martha McSally and Donald Trump had actually won the races for U.S. Senator and President over Mark Kelly and Joe Biden. They actually counted more votes for Biden than the official tally.



Julia Shumway

Ms. Shumway explained that Republicans have won elections in Arizona for many years, so they assumed there must be something wrong when they lost their statewide races but won their local races. Republicans asserted the elections were fair and only the top two offices had been stolen. The “recount” was funded by the Trump campaign or people close to it. Some of them are being investigated by the federal government—by criminal investigations or the U.S. House committee.

Election workers across the nation have reported harassment and threats. What's the situation in Oregon?

Ms. Shumway interviewed many Oregon county clerks, and they reported having been harassed or threatened; workers in their offices have also been threatened. Many election workers and volunteers have resigned and others are considering doing so.

Her article from a November *Oregon Capital Chronicle* titled "A Year After the 2020 Election, Oregon County Clerks Still Fighting Back Fraud Allegations: Several legislators have added their voices to the chorus calling to investigate the 2020 election" includes comments by Polk County Clerk Val Unger. Here is a link to the article:

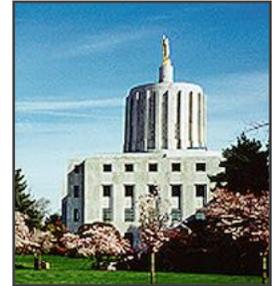
<https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/2021/11/09/a-year-after-the-2020-election-oregon-county-clerks-still-fighting-back-fraud-allegations/>

Cindy Burgess was asked if her husband Bill, who is Marion County Clerk, has experienced threats or harassment. She said that Bill has had requests to see contracts that his legal advisers say could include proprietary information. Bill has invited people who question the accuracy of the vote count to come in to see how the office operates. At a League meeting last fall, Bill explained ballot security measures. To hear his presentation click on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DrSDiL35pxw>.

(Continued on Page 12)

Highlights of Journalist Julia Shumway's presentation (Continued from Page 11)

There is a bill before the Oregon Legislature—HB 4144—to exempt election workers from having their home addresses be part of the public record. Ms. Shumway said it looks like that will pass the Oregon House and probably the Senate, too. The bill also includes a provision that would make harassing election workers a felony. (There is also a bill to make assaulting people who work in hospitals a felony.) However, there is hesitation in the Legislature about making an addition to the criminal code.



Ms. Shumway said most of the discussion during this legislative session is how to spend the extra money available from increased tax revenue and federal Covid relief funds. Proposals include spending it on job training, climate change, more housing, rainy day fund, tax cuts, thinning forests.

Among other bills that she mentioned was a bill to allow people in prison for felonies to vote; she said it probably won't pass. A bill to protect school superintendents from being fired for following state law (regarding masks) is opposed by Republicans but will probably pass. The bill to require paying overtime to farm workers is very controversial. Although it is likely to pass, Republicans who represent rural areas are opposed, so they may walk out of the Capitol. The House fines those who walk out, but that doesn't seem to have changed behavior and Republicans are again requiring bills to be read in their entirety (by robots). Gun violence bills are not moving; legislators appear to be waiting to see how the initiatives turn out. Campaign finance is being talked about since the petitions sponsored by LWVOR, etc., were stopped, but it's questionable whether anything will pass.

Ms. Shumway was asked how to respond to people who believe crazy things. She said that many people will continue to believe lies, but they may trust their neighbor. You have to treat people with respect. Use the Socratic Method and ask them questions about what they believe. She had many conversations by phone with one woman who eventually came to realize that she had been duped.



Recently the *Oregon Capital Chronicle* interviewed a number of voters to find out what they want to know about candidates before elections and learned that voters are mostly interested in comparisons of candidates and their plans. Voters are less interested in where a candidate's campaign funds come from unless one person contributes a huge amount.

The *Oregon Capital Chronicle* is an online professional news outlet that is part of a nonprofit group of online news outlets with national funding from thousands of individuals. (See the list of funders at statesnewsroom.com/support/.) Since many fewer journalists are watching legislatures and state government, these funders are trying to rectify that with online news sources. The news is free to readers and to other newspapers as long as they credit the *Oregon Capital Chronicle*.

The website states its purpose: *Oregon Capital Chronicle focuses on deep and useful reporting on Oregon state government, politics and policy. We help readers understand how those in government are using their power, what's happening to taxpayer dollars, and how citizens can take a bigger role in big decisions.*

Individuals can receive the *Oregon Capital Chronicle* by email by signing up at <https://oregoncapitalchronicle.com/subscribe/>.

League of Women Voters of Marion and Polk Counties
Membership through September 30, 2022

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to all women and men 16 years of age and older. Membership includes subscriptions to local, state, and national League publications, many of which are sent by e-mail and all of which are supported by your local dues.

Name(s) _____ Date _____

Renewing members, please add below any information that is different from what's in the newest directory. If you've mislaid your directory, contact Elsa Struble at gstruble@willamette.edu, 364-3929.

New members, please complete the following contact information.

Phone (H) _____ (Cell) _____

E-mail _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Yes, I want to join the League: _____ as a *new* member. _____ as a renewing member

I am enclosing:

___ \$ 65 for Individual Membership

___ \$ 30 for each additional Household Member, Student or Limited Income Member

(Those with limited income may also contact Amy Vandegrift or Elsa Struble about scholarships)

___ \$ 90 for a single Supporting Member

___ **\$15 extra to receive printed newsletters through the mail**

\$ _____ Contribution to LWVMPC budget (not tax deductible)

\$ _____ **TOTAL to LWVMPC** (not tax deductible)

\$ _____ Contributions to LWV of Oregon are now tax deductible. Write a separate check payable to LWVOR and *send it to* Treasurer Elsa Struble; she will forward it to the state League and the amount will be held for us to use for our educational projects or per-member payments owed the state League. (Checks sent to the LWVOR office will not benefit our local League but directly benefit the state League, another good cause.)

Mail check(s) & form to Treasurer Elsa Struble, 210 18th St. NE, Salem, OR 97301

For further member information, contact Amy Vandegrift at 503-364-0492, vandebloom@gmail.com
or Elsa Struble at 503-364-3929, gstruble@willamette.edu

Join online [HERE](#).



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
of Marion and Polk Counties**

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Making Democracy Work™



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.

March 2022

Calendar.....	1
<i>Defusing Contentious Conversations.....</i>	<i>2</i>
Highlights of Julia Shumway’s presentation.....	11
Membership.....	4
Dues form.....	13
Observer Reports.....	6
Program Planning survey results.....	4
Voter Service Excitement!.....	3