

Wave Lengths

A publication of the League of Women Voters of Lincoln County

January 2008

JANUARY 17 Noon Newport Library

Adoption of a consensus on Immigration Policy in the U. S.—our contribution to the nationwide study. (See pages 3+4 of the newsletter; please review and consider the statements.)

November Presentation by Jorge Hernandez, Director of Centro de Ayuda.

Mr. Hernandez addressed our November general meeting and provided a fascinating local perspective on immigration. Centro de Ayuda is an independent non-profit organization serving the immigrants living in our area, helping them deal with life in our communities, helping them find housing, and working in collaboration with employers and the courts. Senor Hernandez posed and answered the questions: Who are these Hispanic immigrants? What communities do they come from? and Why do they risk crossing our border?

Seventy-five percent of the Hispanic immigrants coming here are leaving small, isolated towns for the first times in their lives. Their homes were often primitive, without electricity or indoor plumbing. About 33% of the Hispanics in Lincoln City speak Spanish as a second language; there are 58 other recognized native languages spoken in Mexico. Their educational level is low. 40% of the Hispanic immigrants in Lincoln City

cannot read or write Spanish.

The vast cultural differences result in culture shock, resulting, for instance, in difficulties with kitchen appliances, and traffic regulations. Culture shock can also lead to behavioral problems in our community, such as domestic violence, DUI, and underage girl friends.

Why are these immigrants coming here? At home, many of them and their families were literally starving. They were poor, and then NAFTA and globalization made them poorer. The privatization prescriptions of the World Bank made a few individuals very wealthy and further impoverished many others.

They come here to work. Food stamps, Oregon Health Plan, and welfare are not available to them. They pick up enough English to function in their jobs. Most are working too many hours to take ESL classes, and many fear that immigration enforcement agents target such classes when searching for “illegals”. These immigrants are part of our community. Employers depend on their labor at restaurants, hotels, and fish-processing plants. Their children born here are U.S. citizens.

New Member Gerry Roelen has recently joined our League, moving here from Southern California where she was one of five women who established the Palm Springs league many years ago, and has been actively involved in the LWV for all those years.

This is sure to be a big change... from Palm Beach to a “little town on the Coast of Oregon”... and we know she will enjoy the contact with the Waldport-Yachats people, some of whom moved here from Alaska! We welcome Gerry to our membership and look forward to sharing our “passions” with her.

Membership

If there is a **Red** Asterisk on your address label, you **have paid** your 2008 Membership Dues, and we thank you! No asterisk is a reminder that your 2008 dues are not paid, and we encourage you to do so. Francis Van Wert, membership chair, will be updating our membership listing with the LWVUS in late January, and hopes to have all renewals paid before that date. Many thanks for your participation.

LWVOR Convention—Portland

“We are really excited; we think it’s just great; You’ll be coming to Portland in two thousand eight!”

With those words the LWVOR invited national Leaguers to convention in Portland, June 13-17, 2008. The same sentiment goes to all state Leaguers. Come as delegates – or come as volunteers – a similar experience at a great price!

If members from Lincoln County want to carpool, we will schedule your volunteer activity for the same day. Just make a note by the date selection on your volunteer form.

Be part of the excitement of

“Reaching New Heights Together.

“Come where the League blooms, and roses await.

We look forward to welcoming you in O-eight.”

Next BOARD MEETING

Monday, February 4, 2008
West Coast Bank Board Room
506 SW Coast Hwy, Newport
All members are welcome to attend.

President	Ruth Kistler	574-8145
Vice President	Charmian Mass	994-3785
Treasurer	Jamie Auburn	265-2145
Secretary	Suzanne Maxson	563-5231

Directors:

LWVOR Liaison	Joan Haffner	547-4736
Membership	Frances VanWert	265-9312
	Dale Harlan	994-5843

Committee Chairs:

Land Use	Janice Gerdemann	547-3544
Newsletter	Sue Krein	765-2212
Nominating	Carol Hall	765-3342
Publicity		
Voters Service	Nancy Jones	563-5800



The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy.

President’s Message

Ruth Kistler

Our January general meeting will be devoted to taking Consensus on Immigration policy. Consensus is the process the League uses to reach member agreement on study issues. Consensus is neither a simple majority nor unanimity; instead, it is an overall sense of the group. The questions we will discuss and answer are included on pages 3 & 4 in this newsletter.

This Immigration Study formally began two years ago when the LWVUS Convention approved this two-year study. Study committee members researched the issues, produced excellent background papers and made them available to the rest of us on the LWVUS web-site. Members throughout the country are studying and discussing the issue using these and other background materials as well as local resources.

We will send our Consensus report to the national League by the February 1 deadline. The national Immigration Study committee will analyze and combine Consensus reports from local leagues all over the country and, based on the consensus, draft a League position on Immigration. In June of this year, delegates to the LWVUS convention (to be held in Portland, Oregon) will vote on this position. If a position is adopted it will allow the League to act to affect Immigration policy for years to come.

Please read and think about the Immigration Consensus questions. Come to the January 17 meeting and take part in the Consensus discussions. Share the perspective that your knowledge and values brings to these questions. Be part of (and thereby strengthen) your League’s process of reaching grassroots agreement on positions.

Grapefruit Fundraiser A Success

Our annual grapefruit sale is complete. (Hooray!) We sold 162 boxes of grapefruit which gave us a profit of \$972. Our fundraiser also brought forth an additional \$249 in donations. Most of these funds will go towards printing/distributing Voters’ Guides.

Corvallis thanked us for providing the extra sales that allow both leagues to get a \$.50 per box discount; we thank Corvallis for coordinating the sale. “Thank you” to all our donors, buyers, sellers, and deliverers, and to all those who kept the confusion to a minimum and those who corrected the mistakes. Let us all enjoy the fruit of our labors.

LWVUS Immigration Study Discussion Questions

Please rate each of the following “High Priority” = **H** “Lower Priority” = **L** “Disagree” = **D**

1a. Federal immigration laws should take into consideration criteria such as the following (no priority intended in the sequence):

- a. ___ Ethnic and Cultural Diversity
- b. ___ Economic, Business and Service Employment Needs
- c. ___ Environmental Impact/Sustainability
- d. ___ Family reunification of Authorized Immigrants and Citizens with Spouses and Minor Children
- e. ___ History of Criminal Activity
- f. ___ Humanitarian Crises / Political Persecution in Home Countries
- g. ___ Immigrant Characteristics (health and age)
- h. ___ Rights of All Workers to Safe Working conditions and Liveable Wage
- i. ___ Rights of Families to Remain Together
- j. ___ Rights of all Individuals in U.S. to Fair Treatment Under the Law (Fair Hearing, Right to Counsel, Right of Appeal, and Humane Treatment)
- k. ___ Education and Training

Part 1b. Among the above criteria that you rated "High Priority", which 3 are most important (a. thru k.)?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

2. Unauthorized immigrants currently in the U.S. should be treated as follows: (rate each one)

- a. ___ Deport Unauthorized Immigrants
- b. ___ Some Deported/Some Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status Based on Length of Residence in U.S.
- c. ___ Some Deported/Some Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status Based on Needs of U.S. Employers.
- d. ___ All Allowed to Earn Legal Adjustment of Status by Doing Things Such as paying Taxes, Learning English, Studying Civics, Etc.
- e. ___ If Deported, Assess Fines Before Possible Re-Entry
- f. ___ Assess Fines Before Allowed To Earn Legal Adjustment of Status

Immigration Discussion Questions (Cont.)

3. Federal immigration law should provide an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry into the U.S. for immigrants who are: (rate each one)

- a. ___ Immediate Family Members Joining Member Already Admitted for Legal Permanent Residence in the U.S.
- b. ___ Entering the U.S. to Meet Labor Needs
- c. ___ Entering the U.S. as Students
- d. ___ Entering the U.S. because of Persecution in Home Country.

4a: In order to deal more effectively with unauthorized immigrants, Federal immigration law should include:

___ Social Security Card or Other National Identification Card with Secure Identifiers for *All* Persons Residing in the U.S.

4b. Federal immigration law dealing with unauthorized immigrants should be enforced by including:

- i. ___ Physical Barriers (such as Fences) and Surveillance at Borders.
- ii. ___ Increased Personnel at Land, Air and Sea Entry Points
- iii. ___ More Effective Tracking of Persons with Non-Immigrant Visas Until They Leave the country.
- iv. ___ Verification Documents, such as Green Cards and Work Permits with Secure Identifiers.
- v. ___ Improved Technology to Facilitate Employer Verification of Employee Visa Status
- vi. ___ Improved Technology for Sharing Information Among Federal Agencies
- vii. ___ A Program to Allow Immigrant Workers to Go In and Out of the U.S. to Meet Seasonal and Sporadic Labor Needs
- viii. ___ Significant Fines Proportionate to Revenue for Employers Who Fail to Take Adequate Steps to Verify Work Authorization of Employees

For questions 5 and 6, do you agree or disagree (Rate "A" or "D")

- 5. ___ **Federal immigration law should address and balance the long-term financial benefit from immigrants with the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.**
- 6. ___ **Federal immigration law should be coordinated with U.S. foreign policy to pro-actively help improve economies, education and job opportunities, and living conditions of nations with large emigrating populations.**

LWV ALERTS VOTERS ON SIGNING PETITIONS—"THINK BEFORE YOU INK"

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is encouraging its members and the public to be cautious during this period of circulation of initiative petitions.

Voters will be asked to sign a variety of initiative petitions "just to get it on the ballot so people can vote on it." The League is telling voters, "**Your signature is valuable**, more valuable than your vote, considering that far fewer signatures are required to qualify a petition for the ballot than votes to pass it on the ballot. Only sign an initiative petition that you believe belongs on the ballot."

LWVOR lists six questions voters can ask themselves to help them determine whether or not to sign an initiative petition:

- **Is it complex?** Some issues can be decided by a simple yes or no vote. Complex issues may need to be thoroughly examined and debated in a legislative arena.

- **Is it confusing?** Some initiatives are not well written or contain conflicts that may require court resolution or interpretation.

- **Does it belong in the Constitution?** If an initiative amends the Constitution, consider whether it really belongs there. Is it a fundamental law that should be protected from change? Correcting a constitutional amendment later would require amending the constitution,

a long, cumbersome and costly process, requiring another vote of the people. **How will it be funded?** Is it an "unfunded mandate" that would require the Legislature to take funds from other essential programs? Consider the effect on the overall flexibility of a government budget with already limited revenue. An

- **Who is behind it?** You can find out who are the real sponsors and opponents of a petition. Contribution and expenditure reports are available through the Election Division at 503-986-1518 and are also online in ORESTAR at <http://www.sos.state.or.us/elections/>.

Before you sign, ask to see identification of the signature gatherer. Paid signature gatherers are now required to carry and display a picture ID issued by the Secretary of State. Numerous instances of fraud have occurred that could have been avoided by insisting on seeing identification. And if a case of fraud is found, you will have information that could assist authorities.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government. More information can be found at, www.lwvor.org.

THANKS TO ALL WHO CAME TO THE DEC. 13th LUNCHEON MEETING

The December meeting was a great success. Excerpts from the film "Iron Jawed Angels" regarding the final battles to get women's right to vote was moving and made us feel proud to carry on.

Special thanks go to the generous members and guests who made the donations of toiletries for SAMARITAN HOUSE. As you may remember, one of our guest speakers on homeless youth issues suggested that this was a need seldom met. We delivered the Christmas bagged toiletries to SAMARITAN HOUSE staff right after the potluck. It took several trips to unload them! Staff at Samaritan were really pleased at this thoughtfulness, and delighted at the volume. Well Done Everyone!

We joined in some satirical, topical songs, *AWESOME AUNTIES SONGS*, written by league member Rose Lewis, of Marion/Polk County League for last year's LWVOR convention, on current political issues with familiar music like:

These are a Few of My Favorite Things. (first verse):

Clear-cut the forest and kill all the fishes,
Denude the hillsides against all our wishes, etc...
Every one sang with gusto -- it was great fun. — See you on the 17th!

Suzanne Maxson

