

LAST CHANCE TO RSVP
Do it NOW. RSVP deadline - Dec. 7th *

Time is running out and **Seating is Limited**
December "Pass-the-Hat Giving Meeting"
Thursday, December 14, 2023 11 AM – 1 PM

This year's Giving Meeting supports:

Ukrainian Families in the Rogue Valley

Speaker: **Scott Bandoroff, Ph.D.**, founder of Uniting for Ukraine Rogue Valley

More about Dr. Bandoroff at: www.peakexperience.org

Our Fundraising suggestions: cash, checks, or gift cards to local department stores, such as Target, Fred Myers, Walmart, or grocery stores.

Tax-deductible donations: If you wish to make a tax-deductible donation to "Uniting for Ukraine Rogue Valley," make your check out to Ashland's **Havurah Shir Hadash**, a 501(c)3 organization. (The Havurah provides safe and secure meeting spaces in addition to handling charitable donations.)

We'll also hear what's happening with the League!

Where: **Elmer's Restaurant South** - 68 E Stewart Avenue, Medford 541- 499-6721

Lunch will be ordered individually off the menu.

*** To RSVP**, or for more event information, contact:

Judith Kurinsky kurinsky26@gmail.com or Debra Har tdrh1@hotmail.com





Related to the History of Ukraine

By Barbara Klein

If you are interested in more background on Ukraine/Soviet relationships, check this out. The film, [Mr. Jones](#), is a historical drama about the tragic conflicts between Ukraine and Russia in the 1930s (just prior to WWII) and long before the present war. This film about the Holodomor famine in Ukraine (from a western point-

of-view) is available free using the Kanopy streaming service via your [Jackson County library](#) card. Check the [Josephine Co. library](#) for resources available there. The movie can also be streamed on Starz.

November 25, 2023 was the 90th anniversary recognition and memorial for the Holodomor.

Voter Service News

By Kathleen Donham

State Voter Service: As you may have heard, we have a new Voter Service Coordinator, **Darci Standefer**, for the LWVOR. Hoorah! So, the new team will include **Abigail Bok** [vote411], **Marianne Germond** [Voters Guide], **Peggy Bengry** [Speakers Bureau], and our beloved new coordinator Darci. So, the League will continue its important work as the last day for candidates to file for the May primary is March 12 and the last day to submit statements of support to the Voters' Pamphlet is March 25.

County Clerk: [On page 5 of this newsletter you will see a letter to the editor](#) which LWVRV sent to the Rogue Valley Times and the gracious reply from Jackson County Clerk Chris Walker. There is also an interesting video from Polk and Marion Counties about the role of county clerks: watch.capitalcommunitymedia.org/CablecastPublicSite/show/22806?site=1

Rogue Valley Plans: A small group of League members gave advice for planning priorities for 2024 elections and voter education. Recommendations included 1) asking for help with Mock Elections from the Youth Outreach group, 2) concentrate education activities toward groups with a history of voting, 3) do forums of pro and con on the Josephine County Charter revision, 4) let advocacy committees handle voter education on Jackson County primary ballot measures, 5) participate in the Speakers Bureau programs, 6) continue partnerships with RCC in Get Out the Vote, GOTV, activities. Thanks to R. Ayers, Jean Buck, and O. Black for their contributions.

Vote411: New data back from the national vote411 reports: "Between January 1 – November 7, 1.9 million voters accessed VOTE411 and that number has already reached over 2 million voters for the calendar year! VOTE411 provided the most candidate content ever in an odd-election cycle with 40k+ candidates listed on the site on November 7th."

The League Supports these Ballot Measures. Do you?

By Barbara Klein

Two statewide campaigns and another in Jackson County are totally supported by positions of the LWVOR or LWVRV.

Signatures are needed for each of these.

The League has a concept of “Think Before You Ink”, so if you haven’t already learned of these measures, please do so.

Information from the advocacy campaigns and links to the League positions which justify our support are listed below.

What you might do?

1. Educate yourself. (Visit the League positions again, or the campaign websites for language of the measures.)
2. If supportive, sign all of these measures at the December 14th meeting (elsewhere in this newsletter).
3. Download a “one signature only” form to send in for yourself.
4. Download a (TWO SIDED) form to collect up to 10 signatures from friends. For more information on about using that form contact: action@lwrvv.org

The 3 Signature-Seeking campaigns

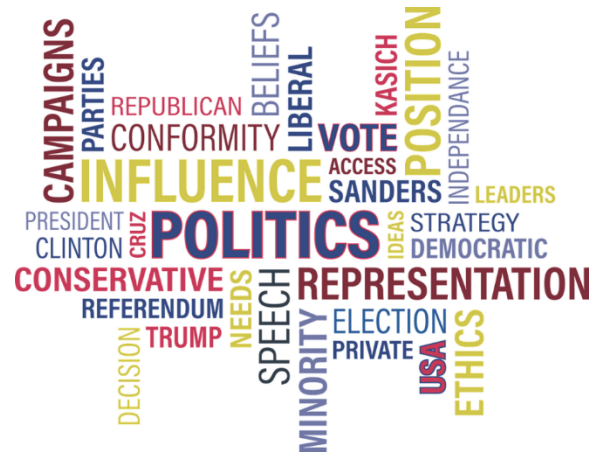
Trio of Measures to Restructure Jackson County Government



www.jacksoncountyforall.org (3 issues)

- a. Changing the county board of commissioners from 3 to 5 commissioners
- b. Changing the election to non-partisan (which in this case the League supports – via our study – to allow Non-affiliated voters to have a greater voice).
- c. Decrease commissioners’ salaries (dividing the current budget among five, which is still in line, or above, all other OR counties)

[Click here to see the full League position on these changes](#) or use the QR code below.



People Not Politicians (PNP)

[People Not Politicians \(peoplenotpoliticiansoregon.com\)](http://peoplenotpoliticiansoregon.com)

According to this group, they “are a growing, diverse coalition of Oregonians from all parties and all walks of life, who believe that politicians are letting us down.” They say that “Your signature will help put Initiative Petition 14 on the November 2024 ballot, so Oregonians can stop partisan gerrymandering once and for all.” The ballot measure would create a statewide Independent Redistricting commission. It has STRONG League support and some of the leadership is from the League.



Honest Elections: Fight Political Corruption and Require Disclosure and Transparency

[Petition 9 - Honest Elections Oregon \(honest-elections.com\)](http://honest-elections.com)

The campaign states that the Oregonian Editorial Board says the Oregon Legislature has not acted to curb the massive donations. "Voters should be ready to make their voices known, again, and support efforts to adopt limits by initiative in the 2024 ballot."

The measure has STRONG League support and shares some leadership with the League.

[For details of our support on the above issues click here to go to the LWVOR Policy and Position Statements web page](#), or use the QR code below to go to the web page.

People Not Politicians (IP 14) - see under “**Redistricting**”

Honest Elections (IP 9) - see under “**Campaign Finance Reform**”

Ranked Choice Voting - see under “**Election Methods**” (already on the ballot)



This letter from the LWV Rogue Valley was published in the [Rogue Valley Times on November 25, 2023](#):

Embattled election officers deserve our support

Ever think your vote doesn't matter? Or that your vote doesn't count? What if our democracy faced a problem of votes literally being difficult to count? Many of our local election offices face such an uphill battle.

The League of Women Voters of the Rogue Valley would like to acknowledge ever-increasing difficulties the Jackson County Clerk's Office faces, along with most in Oregon. A Nov. 7 report from Reed College reveals a whopping third of election officers in Oregon have left their jobs.

Clerks' offices are understaffed and underfunded; Jackson County is down 2 full-time employees. Reports of election workers being threatened and harassed have increased statewide.

Finances are an additional hurdle. The Jackson County department is primarily funded by revenues generated through fees collected in the Recording Program, which are dependent on mortgage rates and economic activity at banks or title companies, and HAVA grants.

Does this make sense as a way to protect our vote?

Despite these setbacks, County Clerk Chris Walker has been nominated to the Government Coordinating Council by the Department of Homeland Security to represent the elections-specific sector on cybersecurity. There are few election professionals on the Council, and it is an honor and privilege for the County Clerk to represent Oregon and Jackson County.

The League is proud to congratulate the Jackson County Clerk's office on its public service. Further, in a situation of adversity, we commend them for once again overseeing the 2023 November election with efficiency and the trust of its citizens.

Kathleen Donham / Medford & Barbara Klein / Ashland

[Response]

Greetings,

Just wanted to reach out and thank you for the support now and always. I am so grateful and humbled to work for our citizens as the County Clerk and wanted to let you know the kind words are very appreciated by myself and my amazing staff!

Have a wonderful day,

Christine (Chris) Walker



School Board Meeting I Attended

By Sally Smith

I had never attended a school board meeting, here or in any town, ever. But a teacher friend of mine mentioned that the teachers were going to attend the upcoming Medford School Board meeting *en masse* to make their presence known. She said the teachers had been working without a contract for months and there loomed the possibility of a strike. It interested me enough that I decided to attend and hopefully find out what their issues were.

I did a bit of research first on the make-up of the Board. There are 7 members, all elected and all volunteer - no pay. They serve for 4 years. There are 5 females on the Board and 2 males.

When I arrived at the meeting, held at Oakdale Middle School, there were many teachers rallying outside, holding signs advocating for smaller class sizes, more district support, and supporting concepts like "Teachers Shape Our Futures." Inside, the meeting started with the Pledge of Allegiance and a few business items, then was opened to public comment, with each person's comments limited to 3 minutes. Many teachers and some parents spoke over the next 50 minutes, stating their concerns about student safety and discipline, class sizes, and support for special education. I was dismayed to hear of so many incidents of physical violence happening in classrooms - desks and chairs being thrown, teachers being kicked and bitten, the safety of the other students being in jeopardy. And with class sizes of 30 plus students and one teacher, it has to be overwhelming. Never once was a pay issue raised.

In summary, attending that school board meeting was an eye opener. I learned a lot about what's happening in Medford's classrooms and the concerns of the teachers. I plan on attending more meetings - the board meets monthly on the third Thursday of the month. The meetings are also available to attend on zoom.

Interested in becoming a League Observer at meetings? Contact Sally Smith at 623-229-9555.



LWVRV Calendar

December

- Thursday 14 Giving Meeting, 11:00-1:00, Elmer's South, Medford
- Wednesday 27 Newsletter articles due

January 2024!

- Saturday 27 Newsletter articles due

- The League of Women Voters Rogue Valley welcomes submissions to our newsletter, *The Voters' Voice*. Editor Jim Buck can be reached at newsletter@lwwroguevalley.org and 541-830-0602.
- LWVRV
P.O. Box 8555
Medford, OR 97501
- Contact the webmaster: webadmin@lwwroguevalley.org
- Website: lwwrv.org
- Facebook page: www.facebook.com/lwwrv/
- Email: pres@lwwroguevalley.org
- If you must have a paper copy of this newsletter mailed to you, please call Jim at 541-830-0602 or email newsletter@lwwroguevalley.org
- LWV members should also be receiving newsletters by email from State and National LWV.
- **To join LWVRV or renew your membership** online using check or debit card, or to download a membership application form and mail it to us, [click here to go to our website](#)
- **To donate to the Rogue Valley Chapter of LWV**, [click here to go to the donation page on our website](#)