



January 2026 Newsletter

Calendar Jan-Mar 2026

Jan 16 Observer Corps Orientation

Jan 17 League booth at the Farmers Market

***Jan 29 @ 11:30am – Spring Garden Tour meeting
at Serendipity in Roseburg***

***Feb 5 Forum – Bernie Woodward, Homeless in
Roseburg***

Feb 12 Board Meeting via Zoom

***Feb 14 LWV's Birthday (1920) Oregon's Birthday
(1859)***

Feb 16 Presidents' Day

Mar 10 Tea Social at the Umpqua Valley Arts

Mar 12 Board Meeting via Zoom

OF OUR LAWS AND OUR MORALS

In the debates over the current administration's actions aimed at removing people who have entered our country illegally, those who support those actions make their case on the grounds of legality. But when anti ICE protestors are shouting "Shame!" they are making a moral statement. This makes it difficult for any meaningful discourse because laws and morals are not the same thing. Instead, these are two distinctly different ways for societies to deal with social ills.

One key difference is that morals are simple to understand while laws are often complicated hard knots to untangle. The Golden Rule is a single sentence. The statutes, codes, ordinances and regulations of the federal government, state governments and municipalities that we live under require entire libraries like the one in our county courthouse. HR 1, the One Big Beautiful Bill passed by congress last summer is estimated to have run to somewhere between 870 to 1,000 pages—about as many pages as my copy of the King James Bible.

When the protestors watch videos of the ICE and Border Patrol agents in action and apply the Golden Rule by asking “Is that how I would want to be treated?” The answer comes easily. It doesn’t require a lawyer’s argument or a judge’s ruling to instinctively recoil from scenes of violence. Whether any particular violent act is from law enforcement or from protestors may be debatable, but seeing violence is always shocking and distasteful to anyone with the ability to have empathy for a fellow human.

To rely on laws as a substitute for morals and ethics in your personal life or business dealings would be a narrow-minded and foolish way to live, a good way to risk alienating your family, friends, and neighbors and your customers as well. As Mr. Bumble put it in *Oliver Twist* “...the law is a ass—a idiot.” It is an awkward and clumsy system, one requiring the human wisdom of judges and the reasoned consensus of juries.

At their best, our laws serve to protect us from harm; at their worst they can bring us harm. American History contains many unjust and often cruel laws. The U.S. Supreme Court’s 1857 ruling in *Dred Scott v. Sanford* and the 1896 case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* are both considered unconscionable nowadays but stood in their times as the law of the land. The 1935 racist and antisemitic Nuremberg Laws of Nazi Germany were based, in large part, on America’s Jim Crow Laws, both of which were strictly legal then but were never morally defensible.

There is a saying about the laws which tells us that “There are times when we must do more than what the law requires and times when we must do less than what it allows.” The laws can provide us with guidance, but morals, ethics and common sense must be applied when using them if the goal is to have true justice.

Sociologists call the moral codes of societies the mores. These are generally unspoken rules of behavior which are followed by the overwhelming majority of people. They act as the glue that hold cultures together, keeping us from destroying our society. They are actually more important to promoting “the good of all” than are our laws. As the French philosopher Emile Durkheim put it, “When mores are sufficient, laws are unnecessary; when mores are insufficient, laws are unenforceable.”

The so-called “culture wars” of the twenty-first century are, at heart, differences of moral stances based on differing interpretations, one based on the fear of potential new injustices coming along due to changing societal standards and the other seeking to correct old injustices by adopting changes in how we treat each other. It is sad that we live in such a worrisome time, and sadder still that it is one made worse by those who exploit our fears by fostering distrust.

BIO: Robert Leo Heilman is the author of four books including *While Librarians Wept, A Library System Dies 1997-2017*. He lives in Myrtle Creek and can be contacted via: rlheilman@frontier.com – Robert became a LWVUV member recently.

Let's Find Out What Exactly is Going On!

The way to find out what is going on with local government is to participate with our new **Observer Corps**. This has been a League function from the beginning, but LWVUV has not had an Observer Corp officially for years.

It's time to start it up again!

On January 16, 2026, we held our first **Observer Corps Orientation meeting in quite some time**. A number of League members signed up to cover the Douglas County Commissioners weekly meetings, Roseburg City Council that meets twice a month, and the Umpqua Public Transportation District board meetings. Thank you to volunteers Linette Torres, Elaine Brady, Alice Lackey, Dorcas Shaktman, Nancy Livers, Elyse Geffen, and Lorrie Wick.

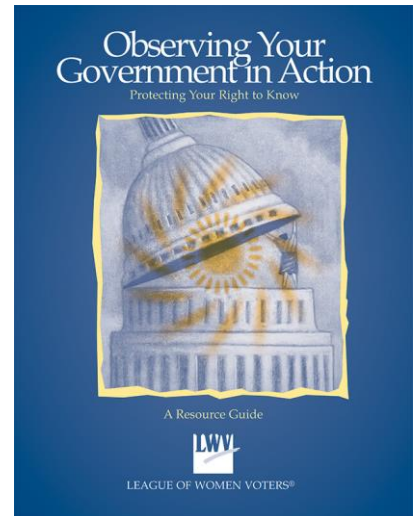
Observers are only present at meetings; they do not participate or even say anything. We only ask that you take notes and then report to the League board. ***We need You!***



If you would like to spend a few hours a week or monthly, this is for You. You can help your League **and** community by signing up to be present at local government meetings and being consistent.

You can still join the Observer Corps by contacting us. Please let us know if you are interested in learning

more – contact us at info@lwwuv.org.



Douglas County Has a New Judge

We welcome new circuit court judge to Douglas County. Governor Tina Kotek appointed Cadence L. Whiteley to the Douglas County Circuit Court. Ms. Whiteley is filling the judicial position created by the passage of [SB 95](#). Her appointment is effective January 1, 2026. Ms. Whiteley is a proud native of Douglas County. She received both her bachelor's degree and juris doctorate from the University of Oregon. *The League welcomes Ms. Whiteley to Douglas County!*

LWVOR Voter Girl!

An Opportunity for an Umpqua Valley League Member!

The state League LWVOR is looking for Girl Scout enthusiasts from each local League. Maybe you are interested? It is such a great project for the League and Girl Scouts all over Oregon.

If you are interested in connecting as a Voter Girl Liaison, let Votergirl@lwvor.org and me know. This will be a pretty easy project as it will be mainly via zoom and email. And it would be a great help to your local League & girls in Douglas County as well.

Thank you!
Robin Wisdom
LWV Umpqua Valley president
541-784-8672



New Storage Unit

Our esteemed Treasurer Sherry Couron secured a storage unit for us with Cascade Self Storage on Diamond Lake Blvd in Roseburg. This is a first for us. We now have enough stuff we needed a storage shed. After board approval and a search for the best and most convenient storage business, we signed an agreement and got a tour of our unit that is 10 ft by 5 ft. We're all setup with automatic billing, insurance, an entrance code, and keys. And we get to drop off some flyers there, too.

Thank you to all of you who contributed funds so we could afford this rather expensive unit. It basically costs about \$1,000 per year.

Douglas County Commissioner Candidate Forum

The board of directors has been working on holding a Douglas County Commissioner Candidates forum before the Primary on May 19, 2026. A forum will be scheduled in April by the time ballots go out starting on 4/29/26. All members should be ready to participate in some fashion. One exciting possibility is partnering with *The News-Review* to host a forum. We are exploring how we might work together to benefit our community. You will hear more about this as we reach decisions. Nothing is firm yet.



Key Postmark Rule Change (Effective Dec. 24, 2025) *Merry Christmas! (#@%!*&^!)*

The new postmark rule may interfere with the mailing and receipt of your ballot beginning this year. We need to let everyone know!

Even if you mail your ballot early, it still may not make it on time to be counted. Starting April 1, 2025, mail from many post offices (over 50 miles from processing centers) sits overnight, adding a day to delivery and postmark dates.

Add a further delay: Postmarks now show when mail is first processed by a machine, not when you drop it off. This can make mail appear late for deadlines (IRS, ballots, legal docs).

Best Ways to Get Your Ballot into the Elections Office ~

- **Go to a Post Office** and request a free, manual postmark for the actual mailing date.
- **Use a Drop Box** – There's a Drop Box in the Courthouse near Room 124, outside the Courthouse, and in the Roseburg Public Library. Other Drop Box locations:
<https://www.douglascountyor.gov/179/Official-Drop-Site-Locations>.

League's Meet & Greet in December was a big success!

LWVUV membership met at Serendipity in Roseburg, 632 SE Jackson, for a holiday treat on Wed., Dec. 3rd. Owners Suzy Van Horn, Shawn Garrett, and Ara Hall were very hospitable and provided a lovely assortment of treats. About 32 members were in attendance, and everyone said they had a great time. Friends of members were also invited, and some joined us at the event. We consider this a big success, and it encourages us to do more social events.



Winchester Dam in the News

As of 12/22/25, a new court ruling says the dam owners must build an official fish ladder on the dam by 2028. A new fish ladder could cost \$70 million.

Some interesting facts about the Dam leading up to this new decision ~

The North Umpqua River is a tributary of the Umpqua River that is inhabited, and historically has been inhabited, by native migratory fish species, including winter steelhead, summer steelhead, fall chinook, spring chinook, coho salmon, cutthroat trout, chum salmon, pink salmon, sockeye salmon, pacific lamprey, Umpqua pikeminnow, tyee sucker, and sturgeon.

Winchester Dam (the Dam) spans the North Umpqua River in Douglas County, Oregon, approximately five miles north of Roseburg, Oregon, and approximately 118 river miles from the Pacific Ocean, to which the waters of the North Umpqua River and Umpqua River ultimately flow.

The Dam was originally constructed in approximately the late nineteenth century and reconstructed in approximately 1905. The Dam was originally constructed as a log crib dam, in which a lattice of horizontal and vertical logs was filled in on the upstream side with natural materials such as rocks, gravel,

and sand, with the bulk of the Dam's volume composed of natural infill material.

And there is much more history on record. You can read it all [here](#) in the Proposed Order. But getting down to the ruling, it was stated that the "Respondent [the dam owners] bore the burden of proving, more likely than not, any facts necessary to support the affirmative defenses it has proposed. The Department met its burden; Respondent did not."

The Conclusions of Law (page 34 of the Proposed Order) stated that the Respondent

executed "construction" on Winchester Dam during the repairs it completed in August and September of 2023, "thereby triggering the fish passage review process set forth in Oregon law and rule, and that it may therefore

require that Respondent install Department-approved fish passage at the Dam."

The Winchester Water Control District may file "exceptions" with the ruling, but it must be in writing and happen in 14 days after the Proposed Order was served (12/18/25). After that and other possible actions, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission will issue a Final Order.

And now we wait for the next step...



Roseburg Farmers Market

We did it! We finally booked a booth at our local Farmers Market. Elaine Brady, LWVUV vice-president, made all of the arrangements and we booked two dates: Saturday Dec. 20 & Jan. 17. We are hoping other League members will also help in this endeavor to let Douglas County residents know more about the League of Women Voters.

It was a chilly date considering the weather, but we had fun talking to those visiting the market. We were welcomed heartily by the manager and others who have booths there. We brought with us all of our stuff: a canopy, chairs, brochures and sign-up sheets. Several signed up to receive more information about us, and they were added to our Mailchimp email list.

We have great hopes for the future with the market. We'd love it if You would join us in the future even for just a few hours. Let us know if you would like to be part of this outreach. We think, we believe, we are good for Douglas County!



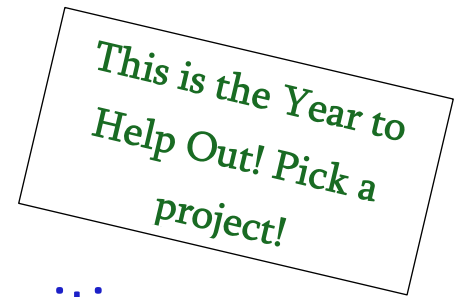
Links to Videos of Past Events this Fall

On Thursday, Sept. 11, 2025, at 6PM, Jim McCarthy of WaterWatch addressed issues around the **Winchester Dam** at the Roseburg Public Library, 1409 NE Diamond Lake Blvd, in the Ford Room. This was a public event, very informative, well attended. **Link to video recording of the meeting:** <https://youtu.be/XZBxV1ICb9A>

On Thursday, Oct. 9, 2025, The News-Review's Managing Editor Drew Winkelmaier spoke about *The News-Review's* relation to the First Amendment and how the paper works. This was a public meeting at the Roseburg Public Library sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Umpqua Valley. **Link to video:** <https://youtu.be/Co7hjXaqnX4>

On Thursday, Nov. 6, 2025, at the Roseburg Public Library, Miguel Ramirez of Ram Technologies Oregon presented a very interesting and important program on Cybersecurity. Be sure to check out this one-hour discussion on how to keep safe online. **Now online here:** <https://youtu.be/8CvFo8Vpb2U>





Volunteer Opportunities

Help Voters register or update registration

Tabling at the U.V. Farmer's Market.

Observer Corps

Attend County Commission, City Council, or School Board Meetings.
Take notes and inform the LWVUV Board.

Youth Outreach

Visit high schools to encourage voter registration and civic involvement.

Vote411 data collection

Gather candidate contact information for this online voter information website, prior to an election.

Candidate Forums

Help conduct these public forums to let voters meet, and pose questions to, their candidates, prior to an election.

Spring Garden Tour 2026

Help organize a self-guided tour of local gardens as a springtime fundraiser for LWVUV.

Newsletter Editor Needed!

A newsletter editor is very needed for our local League. If you have a few spare hours and enjoy helping your League to put together up a worthy newsletter only 3 times a year in September, January, and April, this is a fairly easy task that you could do. The articles, graphics and photos will be emailed to you, so all you have to do is put them together in a pleasing fashion. Then email the finished document to the president to be emailed out to membership and other Leagues.

This would be a fabulous contribution to your League! Think about it! And then respond with a resounding YES!

Thank you in Advance!!

Election Dates & Links

Secretary of State - <https://www.sos.state.or.us/elections/>

Douglas County Elections – <https://www.douglascountyor.gov/178/Elections>

Vote411.org - <https://www.vote411.org/oregon>

LWV Umpqua Valley's website – <https://lwvuv.org>

Location of Ballot Drop Boxes: <https://www.douglascountyor.gov/179/Official-Drop-Site-Locations>

Last day to register to vote or change party affiliation: April 28, 2026

First ballots to be mailed out: April 29, 2026

May 19, 2026

Primary Election Day. County Clerk's offices open 7 am - 8 pm. Official drop sites open until 8 pm.

Last day for voter to return ballot. Ballots that are mailed must be postmarked by election day.

Ballots deposited in an official drop box must be received by 8pm.

June 25, 2026 – Final election results certified.

LWV – <https://www.lwv.org/>

LWVOR – <https://www.lwvor.org/>

2nd Annual Tea Social!

Tues., March 10, 2026

2PM



Soon you will receive an invitation in your postal mail to join us for the second annual Tea Social. It promises to be another grand occasion! Elaine Brady, our Vice-President, is organizing this catered event. Bring a friend and wear your best or favorite hat! & Please RSVP! ***Save the Date!***



Links to Important Places

How to find different parts of LWVUS:

<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/policies-guidance/guide-lwvus-services-leagues#contact>

LWV – The national League LWVUV – Membership portal (where you pay your annual dues) – <https://portal.lwv.org/>

LWVOR – the state League: <https://www.lwvor.org/>

Legislative Reports – <https://www.lwvor.org/legislative-report>

Oregon State Legislature – <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/>

LWVOR's voter information site: <https://www.vote411.org/oregon>



Your Board of Directors

- President – Robin Wisdom – 541-784-8672
- Vice-President – Elaine Brady – 916-769-8636
- Secretary – Julee Wright
- Treasurer – Sherry Couron
- Voter Service Chair – Jenny Carloni
- Garden Tour Committee Chair – Nancy Farris
- Member at Large – Connie Page

Contact Us!

Email: info@lwvuv.org

Website: <https://lwvuv.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LWVUV>

YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3yiitzQ>

Flickr: https://www.blickr.com/groups/lwv_umpqua_valley/

***Important Note About Dues**

When paying your dues via the [League portal](#), you can choose almost any amount. The basic amount is \$75 per person, although you can choose a greater or smaller amount.

If you want to donate to our League, please write a separate check made out to LWVUV and mail it to LWVUV, PO Box 2434, Roseburg 97470. Or you can donate online at <https://lwvuv.org/donate/>