Making Democracy Work
By Dana Twilight, Chair, Civics Education Committee

Fling into spring with “Making Democracy Work” on April 1. This isn’t the regular Spring Fling or a regular forum. Is it a Florum? The spring fling has been reinvented in order to celebrate the League of Women Voters’ 90th birthday.

Our distinguished panel will speak on the topic “Making Democracy Work,” and then take questions from the audience. Here are some of the questions they and we will address:

How can we create a better, more democratic society? What issues prevent our moving ahead? What ideas will propel us forward?

How can we as citizens fight cynicism, encourage people who have not been heard to participate, and remove class barriers to participating actively in the democratic process?

Paul Loeb, social and political activist, is the author of The Impossible Will Take a Little While and Soul of a Citizen; a completely revised edition of the latter book will be published March 30. Alice Walker writes, “The voices Loeb finds demonstrate that courage can be another name for love” and Jonathan Kozol comments, “The new edition is magnificent.” Paul will have his new edition of Soul of a Citizen for sale during this event.

Jerry Large is a columnist for the Seattle Times, where he writes about the connections between ordinary people and larger world issues. He has worked for newspapers in four states and has been with the Seattle Times in various roles for twenty-eight years. Jerry says if he weren’t in journalism, he would be either a cultural anthropologist or a psychologist.

You may want to check out Jerry’s column from last fall about Nancy Amidei and her work, reprinted on page 14. In this column he reminded us that “voting shouldn’t be the end of the process, especially in close decisions, in which nearly half the population doesn’t get what it wants.”

Nancy Amidei, emeritus faculty at the University of Washington School of Social Work, currently directs the Civic Engagement Project, providing advocacy training to nonprofit organizations throughout the country. Nancy has influenced policy from inside and outside government since the 1980s. In addition, through her work as a UW faculty member she has educated many students about local, state and federal policymaking so that the next generation can move us forward.

This event will be both a birthday party for the League and an evening promoting civic engagement true to the League’s mission. It will take place at Town Hall Seattle, the location of last month’s successful Women and Climate Change program. Join us to share in the conversation about “Making Democracy Work.”
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Seattle, WA 98122  
Seattle Voter (USPS 052210)
President’s Message

April is here and with it our usual combo of flowers and showers. April is also poetry month, and in honor of our spring fundraiser Dana Twight penned this haiku:

Democracy works
Come learn more at Town Hall
With Seattle League

As I was reviewing past Voters to see what we were doing when the League of Women Voters of the United States adopted Making Democracy Work as a national campaign (anyone remember Money+Politics?), I found the following poem from an anonymous member of the Massachusetts League:

Why Don’t I Just Quit?

It seems to me this year
I’m busier than before
I’m tempted to resign from the League
Instead I take on more!
Now why is that? I ask myself
(For surely there’s a reason)
I’ll have more time, I tell myself,
Right after the rush season.
Besides, League members are my friends
I couldn’t let them down.
Those surface reasons I advance –
(The real one’s farther down)
I think the answer lies somewhere
Deep within myself
I want to see my talents used,
Not rusted on the shelf.
I want America to be
A better place to live.
Just talking won’t improve it –
We also have to give.
I want to find myself among
The workers, not the floaters –
And that is why I am neck-deep
In the League of Women Voters.

Those last lines really remind me that making democracy work takes work, it doesn’t just happen. And even when we work really hard, we don’t always get the result we want. I’m sure none of us would have been happy last year if we had known what the end result of the national healthcare debate would be. Some of us might have given up at that point; fortunately we didn’t. Ten years ago Medicare covered very little preventive care and screenings were not done anywhere near the recommended schedule—now they are. Frustrating as it is at times, we have a starting place—now we just need to keep working.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Mission Statement
The League of Women Voters of Seattle, 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.

The League of Women Voters of Seattle serves the greater Seattle area, including the cities of north King County as well as east King County from Bothell to Bellevue.
### April/May

#### Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday
---|---|---|---|---|---|---

#### APRIL

**“Making Democracy Work”**
- **Thursday, April 1**
  - 7:30 p.m.
  - Town Hall, Seattle

**Board Meeting**
- **Saturday, April 3**
  - 9:00 a.m.
  - League Office

**International Relations Committee**
- **Monday, April 5**
  - 12:45-2:45 p.m.
  - League Office

**May Voter Deadline**
- **Monday, April 5**

**Kirkland Unit Fundraiser**
- **Friday, April 9**
  - 6:00-9:00 p.m.
  - 338 Tenth Avenue, Kirkland

**Social Justice Committee**
- **Saturday, April 10**
  - 1:00-3:00 p.m.
  - League Office

**Transportation Committee**
- **Tuesday, April 20**
  - 10:00 a.m.
  - League Office

**Immigration Committee**
- **Wednesday, April 21**
  - 9:00-11:00 a.m.
  - League Office

**Book Discussion: Outcasts United**
- **Wednesday, April 21**
  - 7:00 p.m.
  - 316 NE 54th St.

**Economics and Taxation Committee**
- **Saturday, April 24**
  - 9:00 a.m.
  - 909 E Newton St. #D9

**Ballard Unit Fundraiser**
- **Saturday, April 24**
  - 2:00 p.m.
  - Theo Chocolate

**Education Committee**
- **Tuesday, April 27**
  - 12:00 p.m.
  - League Office

#### MAY

**Board Meeting**
- **Saturday, May 1**
  - 9:00 a.m.
  - League Office

**Forum: Port of Seattle**
- **Thursday, May 6**
  - 7:30 p.m.
  - Seattle First Baptist Church

**Annual Meeting**
- **Thursday, May 20**
  - 5:00 p.m.
  - Seattle First Baptist Church
League Forums

The League of Women Voters of Seattle (LWVS) presents a public forum each month between September and May, generally on the first Thursday of the month at 7:30 p.m. Most of the forums are held at the Seattle First Baptist Church, although we try to schedule one on the eastside every year. The tentative schedule of upcoming forums for 2009–2010 appears below; check your Voter or the LWVS website, seattlelwv.org, each month for up-to-date information.

Please note that in April, the spring fundraiser for the League of Women Voters of Seattle Education fund will replace our traditional forum. It will be held at Town Hall, Seattle. (See information at right).

We will be back at Seattle First Baptist Church in May for a forum on the Port of Seattle Study.

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March Board Briefs By Brita Butler-Wall, Secretary

The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Seattle (LWVS) met on Saturday morning, April 6. This is a brief summary of their work.

Membership: LWVS currently has 717 members, with 677 of those in good standing. The membership coordinator has sent the others packets urging them to renew.

Units: Units have expressed issues regarding fundraising and leadership for next year. The climate change forum committee will have a resource person at every unit meeting this month.

Program: Feher complimented the International Relations Committee and other organizers on the successful town hall program on women and climate change, which drew approximately 275 attendees. She reported that the Port Study is ready and appointed Luthens to the reading committee. The April unit discussions will focus on civic engagement.

Treasurer: Judy Bevington has been researching banking options.

M/S/C: to change banks for a maturing CD from HomeStreet Bank to Boeing Employees’ Credit Union.


M/S/C: to support the Community Value Statement in total. The board directed the Education chair to take issues discussed back to the coalition organizers.

Fundraising: The Board reviewed the final report of auction chair Victoria Bennett. The 2009 auction event netted $55,002.26. An ad hoc committee (Brita Butler-Wall, Judy Bevington, and Victoria Bennett) presented a fund development plan for 2010 and (continued on page 6)
solicited comments and suggestions from the board. Jean Carlson reported on the current ‘90 for 90’ fundraising campaign, with kickoff on April 1, and credited Ginna Owen. Feher suggested that the fall political party be scheduled for the weekend after the election, based on input from candidates.

Annual Meeting: Butler-Wall outlined the Board’s tasks before the meeting. Feher appointed a committee to develop next year’s budget and present to the membership (Feher and Bevington).

Committees

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
DATE: MONDAY, APRIL 5
TIME: 12:45–2:45 P.M.
PLACE: LEAGUE OFFICE

Anyone interested in participating is welcome! For discussion, everyone is invited to bring one article on an I-R topic which has recently caught your attention. Moreover, we will begin planning a session on Afghanistan. For more information, email Ellen Berg: ellenzberg@msn.com.

SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE
DATE: SATURDAY, APRIL 10
TIME: 1:00 – 3:00 P.M.
PLACE: LEAGUE OFFICE

IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE
DATE: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21
TIME: 9:00–11:00 A.M.
PLACE: LEAGUE OFFICE

We have several proposals for study and action to bring the Immigration Committee out of hibernation. There is a strong push from pro-immigrant advocacy groups to get Congress to tackle Comprehensive Immigration Reform (CIR) this year. The League has strong positions at both the national and local levels that support the most progressive of reform proposals. We are in a good position to join other groups in advocacy.

Our committee has played an important role over the last three years in educating League members and the public on immigration issues. There is still much educating to be done. We need energetic and committed members to make a difference. PLEASE join us!

Barbara Reid (206) 329-4848
Barbara Yasui (206) 329-4848

ECONOMICS AND TAXATION COMMITTEE
DATE: SATURDAY, APRIL 24
TIME: 9:00 A.M.
PLACE: 909 E. NEWTON ST., D-9

For more information, call Nora Leech at (206) 329-4848.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE
DATE: TUESDAY, APRIL 27
TIME: 12:00 P.M.
PLACE: LEAGUE OFFICE

Professor Goldhaber is a Research Professor at the University of Washington (UW) Bothell. He is on the staff of the Center on Reinventing Public Education at the UW Bothell. His work focuses on issues of educational productivity and reform at the K-12 level. One of his projects is the Teachers, Teacher Quality, and Human Capital Project. The project focuses on policies and interventions designed to upgrade the skills and quality of the teaching workforce. This meeting is a continuation of our initial study of teachers and teacher quality. This should be another interesting and educational discussion. All members and friends are invited to the meeting.
HELP WANTED

REQUEST FOR CIS VOLUNTEERS!
Have a little extra time and want to become involved with the League? Come join us on the Citizen Information Service (CIS) desk. If you like to talk on the phone and greet people who come into the office, we have just the right spot for you. We currently need someone who would be willing to commit three hours a week, preferably Wednesday or Friday morning, to answer our phones for us. We will train!

Call Cynthia Howe at (206) 329-4848 or email her at howe.john@comcast.net.

HELP THE LEAGUE REDUCE OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT!
We’d like to provide rides and carpool opportunities to members to forums and other special events. We are looking for a volunteer Transportation Coordinator who enjoys creating efficient systems and solving logistical puzzles. The Transportation Coordinator will start by devising an easy-to-use system for matching riders with drivers. The Transportation Coordinator would then fine-tune the system and roll it out to the general membership. It might mean training other volunteers and overseeing it throughout the year. Please contact Lindsay Cummings or Kelly Powers at the office— (206) 329-4848.

FUN-draiser!!!
Join the Ballard/Magnolia/Queen Anne Day Unit for chocolate samples, a factory tour, and more chocolate samples at

**Theo Chocolate**
3400 Phinney Avenue North, Seattle
Saturday, April 24, 2010
2:00 p.m.

Theo roasts their own Fair Trade cocoa beans and makes delicious organic chocolates! They also provide generous chocolate samples before, during and after the tour.

Cost: $12 per person

THIS WILL SELL OUT FAST--CALL NOW TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT!
Kerry @ (206) 329-4848
(do not call the store directly)

Visit their website at www.theochocolate.com for more information

THANKS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The I-R committee was pleased by the turnout at our March forum, Women and Climate Change, and we want to extend our thanks to all those not on the committee who contributed to the success of this event. Above all, to Toni Potter, from the League of Women Voters of Washington Natural Resources committee, who agreed to co-chair the forum with I-R’s Elizabeth Davis; to League of Women Voters of Seattle (LWVS) President Allison Feher, who encouraged us to go to Town Hall, as well as to make this an action forum; to the full LWVS Board for its support, and to the following members for their creative and energetic efforts: Jean Carlson, Publicity; Maria Brusher, Outreach; and Kelly Powers, Membership. We also appreciate the editorial work done by Beatrice Crane, Allison Feher, and Lindsay Cummings on the materials we assembled for the Voter. We could not have done this project without all of you!

The I-R Forum Sub-committee (Elizabeth Davis, Carol Goldberg, Vicky Downs, Ginny NiCarthy, Ginna Owens, Becky Castilleja, and Ellen Berg).
League of Women Voters of Greater Seattle
Invites you to become a
Founding Member of the

COUNCIL OF 90

Celebrating 90 years of
Research Study Education

$90 for 90
1920 – 2010

Help us continue our 90-year tradition of excellence by joining the Council of 90. Your contributions will support the countless volunteer hours donated to make the mission of the league a reality: informed and active citizens. All Founding Members are invited to a reception in their honor at 6:30 pm, preceding the LWVS event at Town Hall downstairs on April 1, 2010.

Here’s my $90 for 90 pledge*:

_____ $90 for 90 – $1 for every year, 1920-2010

_____ $900 for 90 – $10 for every year

_____ My check, payable to LWVS Education Fund, is enclosed.

_____ I will make payment on-line at www.seattlelwv.org/90

Please return your pledge to LWVS Seattle
1620 18th Ave, Suite 101, Seattle WA 98122

* donations are tax deductible to the degree the law allows.
**IMMIGRATION REFORM RALLY**

Date: Saturday, April 10  
Time: 12 p.m.  
Place: Occidental Park, Seattle  

The Washington Immigration Rights Coalition, an alliance of over forty organizations working for comprehensive immigration reform, will participate in a national day of action with a rally designed to show the state’s Congressional delegation the strength of the local support for reform.

**BOOK DISCUSSION:**  
OUTCASTS UNITED: A REFUGEE TEAM, AN AMERICAN TOWN, BY WARREN ST. JOHN  

Date: Wednesday, April 21  
Time: 7:00 P.M.  
Place: Home of Barbara Reid  
316 NE 54th Street  
(206) 329-4848  

The Immigration Committee has been presenting a series of book discussions, films and field trips related to the immigration experience. This month’s event is a discussion of *Outcasts United*, an account of a small southern town, mostly white, that over the course of a few years becomes home to a very large refugee population from numerous troubled countries in the world. A young, no-nonsense Lebanese woman helps create community for the teenaged refugee population by starting three soccer teams. The native population is alarmed and hostile to the changes in their once quiet, orderly town. The refugee population, scarred by war, famine, or poverty, is merely trying to make adaptations to meet its basic needs.  

Warren St. John, in focusing on the failures and triumphs of the soccer teams, weaves in the life stories of the refugees and the political workings of the town to give insight into quite understandable friction among the many ethnicities in Clarkston, Georgia.  

Please join us!

**MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK! FUNDRAISER SUPPORTING: THE GREATER SEATTLE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**  

DATE: Friday, April 9  
TIME: 6:00–9:00 p.m.  
PLACE: 338 Tenth Avenue, Kirkland  
RSVP: Liv Grohn  
(206) 329-4848  
livgrohn@verizon.net  

Special Guests (scheduled to speak at 7 p.m.) — Discussing how democracy works in the state legislature and how open government policies improve democracy.  
- State Representative Roger Goodman  
- Former State Representative, President of Washington Coalition for Open Government, Toby Nixon  

Let’s bring together our great minds and perspectives to talk about the challenges facing our democracy and what we can do about them.  
- How can we create a better, more democratic society?  
- What issues prevent our moving ahead?  
- What ideas will propel us forward?  

Make a donation in any amount and you are welcome to join us for dinner-type appetizers, sweets and wine as well as good, nonpartisan conversation about what we as private citizens can do to MAKE DEMOCRACY WORK!

**!! SAVE THE DATE !!**  

Wine and Cheese Party  

Date: Sunday, May 23  
Time: 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
Place: Parkpoint Condominium Clubhouse  
6551 Sandpoint Way N.E. (Corner of N.E. 65th and Sandpoint Way)  

The View Ridge Unit of the League of Women Voters of Seattle will host this event as a unit fundraiser, featuring Knute Berger talking about his recent book, *Pugetopolis.*
Andrew Schmid, the head of public relations for Sound Transit, spoke to the League of Women Voters of Seattle transportation committee in February. He provided more information in his hour with us, and faster, than any speaker I’ve tried to keep up with.

First, and we should not forget it, he told us that the various agencies see the League as a very influential organization because it is perceived to be unbiased and very careful about the information gathered and processed. That means our positions on issues are given important weight.

Sound Transit serves Pierce, Snohomish and King counties, and has elected officials from all municipalities on its board. That means the serious conflicts of interests between these people and their jurisdictions are always in play. Sound Transit’s job, of course, is to design, fund, construct and implement the regional transit projects and services that serve the three counties—the Sounder commuter trains, the Link Light Rail, and the inter-county bus system.

Our speaker provided two lists of milestones, the first being those that have been reached, and the second those in progress. These include new equipment, acquisition of property, maintenance agreements, contracts and construction work. For details, see soundtransit.org/News-and-Events/Milestones.xml.

Sound Transit does NOT receive any funding from state or federal gas tax revenue. All of its funding comes from a regional sales tax, regional Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes and federal funding sources.

Sound Transit’s revenue projections are significantly lower than expected due to the current economy, even though ridership is growing more than ever.
Following the November 5 forum on the state budget, the League of Women Voters of Seattle units met to discuss budget issues. Although there were no consensus questions, there was some uniformity of opinion; for instance, almost all of the units responding found the regressive structure of the current tax code to be a critical problem, and a majority of units felt that an income tax would be a good idea.

Units identified the regressive nature of the current tax structure as its most critical problem. Specific taxes which were criticized included the sales tax, which was faulted for taxing too many necessary items, instability, unfairness, its tendency to exacerbate the ups and downs of the business cycle, and the incentive to shop out of state; the B&O tax, identified as unfair; and the property tax, cited for its limitations and unfairness.

Other issues mentioned included shortfalls in revenue, failure to adapt to population growth and economic changes, the lack of transparency in the structure, the impact of initiatives, inconsistency, limitations, lack of trust in government and the failure to tax religious organizations.

A state income tax was the clear winner as the most desirable option for improving the current structure, though there was little confidence that it could pass. Suggestions included an initiative or petition, combining the proposal with reduction in sales tax or elimination of the B&O tax, and creating a data base of people who favor it.

Other popular suggestions were changing the B&O tax to make it more fair; increasing the scope of sin taxes and other sales taxes to include, for instance, gas-guzzling cars and pollution sources; taxing the wealthy; eliminating some exemptions and subsidies, such as for coal and oil; and user taxes.

To effect change, most units recommended education, with many specific suggestions. These included increased media publicity, using letters to the editor and/or op-ed pieces and advertising; civics education in the schools, with League involvement in providing a curriculum and sending groups to schools to make presentations; forums and town meetings, with publicity to attract the general public; creating and distributing more handouts, including a concise visual; making presentations to interest groups, professional groups, social clubs, etc.; and hosting “Tax Trivia” games.

Some units also proposed studying the issue further, forming focus groups to discover how best to frame the issue, talking to people who receive government funds, and analyzing voting patterns on tax issues; making it possible for taxpayers to designate which state responsibilities their tax dollars go to; person-to-person contacts; and working with other organizations.

Reaction to the question about reaching out to groups was mixed; many members felt that they would need more training in order to speak. People expressed more willingness to bring handouts to organizations or post notices about League events. Some would also be willing to host or participate in small group discussions or focus groups, or to ask organizations to work with the League. One suggestion was to create a video as a talking tool; this would make it easier to recruit speakers. Another was to use personal stories such as case studies in discussions, to increase awareness.

Unit members had various suggestions for improving handouts, including adding color and more visuals, comparisons to other states, a historical summary of the state budget and its shortfalls, with specific dates, information on state money available and the current allocations, and a summary of arguments for tax restructuring.

Members commented that the material that League has posted on Facebook and Twitter is very helpful and makes sense, and that the materials in the Voter were helpful and easy to follow.
THE CENSUS
(NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH CONSENSUS!)
BY JUDY BEVINGTON, TREASURER/UNIT COORDINATOR

While the unit discussions on the census were for information rather than consensus, they were lively and informative. Twelve units, representing 104 people, sent in recordings.

Members recognized the importance of the census for purposes including congressional representation and dispersal of monies at the federal, state and local levels. They pointed out that the census also benefits social services and sociological, historical and planning functions. They acknowledged the new short form.

The discussants thought that there were actions League could take to help ensure a good count. Such activities as putting census information on the website, conducting pre-census outreach such as involvement in coalitions, education of school children and having mini-committees in retirement homes to educate residents could be used to encourage participation. Drop-in boxes and letters to the editor could be helpful. Actually working on the census was mentioned. The return rate should be monitored. More specific information on how money is distributed using census data would be useful.

Members expressed some concerns about the census. Several brought up the emphasis on race in the questions. Some thought this could be addressed by referring to ethnicity instead. While participants acknowledged privacy protections, some still worried about potential breaches of privacy. Some members also expressed concern about the likelihood of undercounting—whether from fear, homelessness, state of expatriation, language barriers, illegal status or even postage.

THE INITIATIVE PROCESS IN WASHINGTON STATE
BY JAN O’CONNOR

The initiative process in Washington State is one of the options that voters have for initiating legislation, in addition to electing and lobbying their legislators. Washington State adopted the initiative (as well as the referendum, by which either proposed or recently passed legislation is referred to the people) in 1912 after a campaign that began in the legislature in 1907. Approximately half of the states, primarily in the western part of the country, have such processes; there is no national initiative or referendum process.

At the state level, voters can directly enact a law. This is known as an Initiative to the People. Or the voters can indirectly propose a new state law through an Initiative to the Legislature. Washington voters are not allowed to initiate constitutional amendments. These must be initiated by the state legislature.

Since initiatives which may appear on the fall ballot are now being prepared, this is an appropriate time to review the requirements for and ramifications of the initiative process.

An Initiative to the People must deal with one issue or subject. This requirement has been the subject of recent court cases.

The proposed initiative must be filed with the Secretary of State. The initiative’s sponsor must be a legal Washington resident and must pay a $5 filing fee. The proposed measure must be submitted to the Public Disclosure Commission, which administers the regulations and monitors and records contributions.

The proposed initiative is then sent to the Code Reviser, who must review the measure for style and any conflicts with existing legislation and return it within seven days to the sponsor. The sponsor has fifteen days to submit the measure with the Code Reviser’s Certificate of Review to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State assigns a serial number to the measure and forwards the measure to the office of the Attorney General for the formulation of the ballot title and summary which are carefully prescribed as follows:
a. A statement of the subject in no more than 10 words.
b. A concise description of the measure in no more than 30 words.
c. A question that defines the intent of the voter in no more than 75 words.

All of the material is to be impartial and non-argumentative in nature, although that goal is not always achieved.

Each year a State Elections Calendar lists the specific deadlines for filing each type of initiative or referendum. The filing period for Initiatives to the People begins in January and ends this year on July 2. Approved petitions with the required number of signatures must be filed with the Secretary of State. The number of approved signatures required is based on the number of voters at the last state general election. A Petition to the People filed this year would require 241,153 valid signatures, based on the number of voters for governor in 2008.

The courts have made several decisions in regard to collecting the required signatures.

In summary, the complete text of the measure must be available to those asked to sign. Signature gatherers may be paid and need not be Washington residents. Several decisions have been made in regard to the freedom signature gatherers have to work in malls, near private businesses, etc. A guide has been prepared for those activities.

After an initiative with collected signatures is submitted to the Secretary of State, the petitions are checked to verify the signatures. Whether signatures are randomly or individually checked depends on the number of signatures required versus the number submitted.

If the measure is certified, another carefully prescribed process for preparing the material for the Voters’ Pamphlet, which includes pro and con arguments, begins.

This year the legislature voted to suspend Initiative 960, which was passed by the voters in 2007. Basically, this initiative requires that any tax increases must be passed by a two-thirds vote of the legislature or be submitted to the voters for approval.

Initiatives have aroused strong emotions since they were established, since they have often been used to propose controversial legislation. For instance, in 1914 prohibition was established in Washington via the initiative. Initiatives passed throughout the years include measures generally regarded as positive, such as the 1956 redistricting initiative sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Washington, permanent voter registration, the authorization of public utility districts, and the establishment of a state civil service system.

Other initiatives have been criticized because they heavily impact the program planning and budgeting process within the state and fail to deal with the impact of budget cuts on state services. Initiative 695, which removed the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax, eliminated the funding for many local services. Initiative 728, which lowered class sizes in the public schools, did not include a source of secure or adequate revenues to carry out its goals.

Those who favor the initiative argue that it represents direct democracy, and that legislators do not represent their constituency because they are hampered by their entrenched points of view and reliance on contributions from pressure groups.

Those who oppose the initiative argue that our government is a representative democracy. Legislators are elected to govern. Initiatives are often funded by special interest groups and often present a biased and simplified approach to a problem. They heavily impact the state budgeting process and the short term advantage to the voter is often in conflict with the public’s long term goals and need for services.
The following column appeared in the Seattle Times on November 5, 2009.

Tuesday we did part of our civic duty, but just part of it.

Voting shouldn’t be the end of the process, especially in close decisions, in which nearly half the population doesn’t get what it wants.

The Seattle mayoral race is like that, and given the way it happened, it’s likely many people didn’t get what they wanted.

I hope we all learned that waiting for an election to send a message to city hall is a poor way to manage a government. Whatever you think about the outcome of Tuesday’s votes, don’t walk away.

Leadership matters, but whoever’s in the hot seat, it’s still our government. We should play a part in shaping it.

Now, stop rolling your eyes.

Somebody’s going to influence all those elected officials, why not you? No time? No money?

No excuse.

I believe that, but I slide into cynicism myself sometimes.

So Tuesday, while I was trying to figure out what the ballot numbers meant, I called Nancy Amidei for a civic-engagement booster shot.

Amidei has worked in government, taught at the University of Washington School of Social Work and been an advocate for social policies that benefit vulnerable populations.

She’s been trying to get other folks involved with government for years.

Amidei said the two biggest obstacles to participation are cynicism about government and ignorance of how it works.

In the absence of an understanding of government, negative chatter takes hold, people believe everyone in government is corrupt or incompetent.

But, she said, elected officials, “are our neighbors, the guy down the street, the person who taught us in second grade.”

They take office “wanting to do good as they see it. They put in killer long hours, put up with heavy demands, then we act like they are all jerks.”

Amidei does 50 to 100 civics training sessions a year and hasn’t slowed down since she retired from the UW last year.

Often she’ll ask audiences when they last had an organized lesson in how a bill becomes a law. For a lot of people its middle school, or even watching “Schoolhouse Rock!” during Saturday morning cartoon time.

“Here we pride ourselves on being such a great democracy and yet we don’t give our own citizens the tools they need to be effective participants in that democracy,” she said.

But if politicians can learn on the job, so can citizens. First lesson, most politicians don’t bite.

“We have an amazingly accessible state Legislature,” Amidei said. “We have City Council members who will sit down with anyone.”

And you might know something they need to hear.

“If we got everybody who did any kind of community services to think about why people need their help and to contact their representatives about whatever they’ve seen, that would be incredibly powerful,” Amidei said.

One of the messages she tries to get across is that you don’t need to make a career of politics to have influence.

There is an advocacy group for just about every issue you can think of, she said. And it’s easy now to add your voice to a cause you care about.

Groups will send you an e-mail alert when issues come up that require some kind of action. You choose when to respond.

The Legislature even has a toll-free line that makes delivering a message nearly effortless (800-562-6000). And if they don’t listen, there’ll always be another election.

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seattletimes.nwsource.com/html/jerrylarge/2010204836_jdl05.html
2010 THEY REPRESENT YOU

Copies of the 2010 edition of the TRY are flying off the shelf. Supplies have been delivered to the libraries in Seattle and King County, local city halls, community organizations and political parties. We receive accolades for this essential League publication daily from elected officials, local government activists and average citizens interested in contacting their representatives. It is uplifting to hear how much this low tech tool for civic engagement is appreciated.

League volunteers donated their time and talents to produce the 2010 TRY. Betty Sullivan spent hours compiling updates and editing information. Betty was assisted by her team, including Susan Sanders, Linde Knighton, Christal Wood and Cyndi Woods, and the Ed Fund board, Kris Bushley, Allison Feher, Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis, Dorothy Y. Sale, Denise Smith and Laura Weese. Office Specialist Lindsay Cummings entered all the data, and graphic designer Yael Pouffary donated the cover design.

Members and donors should have received their copies of the TRY in the mail last month. We could not have produced this publication without the support of our membership and of course our donors. We thank you for your support.

THANK YOU TO TRY SUPPORTERS!

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INTRODUCTION TO THE WORK OF THE LWVUS ARMS CONTROL TASK FORCE

By Ellen Z. Berg and Ralph Kuiper

On December 5, 2009, the bilateral Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, one of the cornerstone treaties intended to reduce and control the use of nuclear weapons, will expire. The Treaty entered into force in 1994 after being negotiated for much of the 1980s. The options for the signatories – the United States and Russia – are to allow the Treaty to expire, to extend it for five years so negotiations can continue or to adopt a new agreement this year. Preliminary negotiations have already begun, with new reduction targets set by Presidents Obama and Medvedev this past summer.

The world order has changed considerably since the Treaty was negotiated. In this changed world, there are more nuclear nations, and acts of terrorism have raised fears that nuclear bombs and other weapons of mass destruction will fall into the hands of non-state actors. Concerns about weapons proliferation, mishandling of fissile materials and the wide distribution of conventional arms have raised concerns about global security.

In response, the Obama administration has adopted the view put forward by the bipartisan quartet of George Schultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger and Sam Nunn, and is committed to pursuing a world free of nuclear weapons. First steps include submitting the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty to the Senate for ratification this winter, as a precursor to playing a strong leadership role in the Non-Proliferation Treaty discussions in May of 2010.

With this backdrop the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) decided it was appropriate to form a task force to review its 1983 Position on Arms Control for “relevance, usefulness, and practical application.” Despite all that has happened in the last 26 years, the Task Force finds the principles and language of the Position to be broadly applicable today. However, it anticipates suggesting some revisions once its deliberations are complete.

The LWVUS Arms Control Task Force is comprised of six at-large members: Ellen Z. Berg (Seattle, WA), Ralph Kuiper (Los Alamos, CA), Ann Lakhdhir (Westport, CT), Lois Requist (Benicia, CA), W. Michael Slattery (Maribel, WI) and Donald J. Turner (Norcross, GA). The Task Force is advised by three LWVUS Board Members: Stephanie Johnson (chair, Arkansas), Judy Duffy (Minnesota), and Elisabeth MacNamara (Georgia). The Task Force has collaborated and discussed issues through a series of teleconferences and emails.

The Task Force identified and reviewed a number of issues and has written information papers that can inform the members and the Board to help in arriving at potential updates to the Position. The articles will be posted on the LWVUS website to inform and engage the members on arms control. The following is an initial list of articles that may be augmented or updated over the next few months:

1. The Arms Control Backstory and the LWVUS Position,
2. Geopolitical Factors Relevant to the Position,
3. Summary of the Relevant Treaties and the Need for Urgency,
4. Disarmament and the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons,
5. Weapons Proliferation to States and Non-State Actors,
6. Missile Defense Systems,
8. Chemical and Biological Weapons

Presently, deliberations of the Task Force have identified areas of concern for relevance, usefulness and practical application that are explored in more depth in the articles. These areas of concern include:
1. What is the appropriate U.S. leadership role in multilateral agreements, diplomacy and verification?

2. How are international policy statements, agreements and negotiations involving two or more countries, which are being constructed, address constraints or compliance issues?

3. What is the situation regarding states, which hold or are developing nuclear weapons outside of international law? Such states include India, Pakistan, Israel, North Korea and Iran.

4. What is the situation of non-state actors or terrorist organizations regarding the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction?

5. What is the status of international collaboration between stakeholders, intelligence agencies, embassies, UN organizations and others seeking to stem the proliferation of weapons to non-state actors?

6. What is the status of detection and verification technology designed to monitor the development and testing of weapons of mass destruction?

7. What is the status of accountability measures for nuclear weapons and fissile materials; for biological and chemical weapons?

8. What is the status of missile defense systems in U.S. defenses?

9. What are the economic and social conditions concerning the proliferation of conventional weapons and the resulting violence?

Ultimately, it is felt that the time is ripe for the United States and the world to be free of nuclear weapons and move forward with safeguards against their proliferation. Also, it is hoped that the information developed by the Task Force can help individual members be better informed citizens on this important subject and be well prepared to contribute to the public discourse that is certain to become more intense over the coming months.

League members Ellen Z. Berg (Seattle, WA) and Ralph Kuiper (Los Altos, CA) are members of the LWVUS Arms Control Task Force.

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Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of Seattle (LWVS), in both its values and practices, affirms its beliefs and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the League on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

LWVS recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making. LWVS subscribes to the belief that diversity and pluralism are fundamental to the values it upholds and that this inclusiveness enhances the organization’s ability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs.

LWVS affirms its commitment to reflecting the diversity of Americans in its membership, board, staff and programs.
Membership Report by Kelly Powers, Membership Chair

Happy spring to all and thank you for turning out an impressive crowd at the Women and Climate Change March Forum. Wasn’t it fantastic? A friend said she keeps thinking about Phil Borges’ photographs and the thought provoking information presented by the speakers.

It takes many volunteers to pull off an event like this. We really appreciate your efforts:

Callers: Thanks to CIS Desk volunteers for calling the entire membership!

Greeting & Registration: Betty Sullivan, Laura Weese, Linda Katz, and Brigitte Ashley.

Question Cards: Belinda Berg, Cynthia Howe, Lily Reid, Maria Brusher.

Timer: Becky Castilleja.

LWV info table: Anita Warmflash and Kris Bushley.

If you can help with the April Ed Fund fundraiser, please call the office: (206) 329-4848 and leave a message for Maria Brusher or Kelly Powers.

The March Forum is now available on the Seattle Channel—including a link so that you can view it on your computer or forward a link to friends who couldn’t attend. This is a great way to share the League experience with someone who might be interested in the League; go to: http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos/video.asp?ID=5211020.

Hoping you all join me in celebrating the League’s 90th birthday by becoming a 90 foundation member.

DONORS

A very warm thank you to our members who have made a contribution in addition to their regular dues payment to the to the League of Women Voters. Their additional contributions help to support the work of the League, including making membership possible for others at lower fees.

Nancy Alvord, Jeannine Anderson, Nancy Baynham, Edward Boone, Jr., Ann Brand, Lael Braymer, Marcia Brown, Naomie Bulloch, Margaret Ceis, Mary Coltrane, Carmen Cook, Lucy Copass, Fred Cox, Dorothy Cyra, Edna Dam, Betsy Darrah, Patricia Davis, Jo Dawson, Nancy DeBastie, Barbara Denis, Wendy DiPeso, Vicky Downs, Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis, Mary Lee Gowell, Betsy Greene, Virginia Gunby, Carol Hannum, Verda Hansberry, Ellen Hansen, Linnea Hirst, Dorothy Hopper, Catherine Iles, Luanna Iverson, Cris Kantor, Helen Karr, Kristin Kennell, Gunbjorg Ladstein, Lois Laughlin, Eleanor Laxdall, Virginia Leland, Jocelyn Marchisio, Charlene McKenzie, Michele Meith, Nancy Miller, Pamela Mitchell, Catherine Moody, Margaret Morrow, Harriett Morton, Barbara O’Steen, Sue Papcun, Cheryl Perazzoli, Joan Peterson, Connie Reed, Ruthe Ridder, Peggy Saari, Roger Sale, Nancy Smith, Nick Smith, Stan Sorscher, Lucy Steers, Lorna Stern, Barbara Stevens, Jane Stevens, Rainer Storb, Betty Sullivan, Ellyn Swanson, Peggy Tlapak, Tjitske van der Meulen, Ms. Lee Van Divort, Margaret Vance, Patricia Villemain, Joan Waldo, Jaclyn Wall, JoAnne Way, Mary Wechsler, Estelle Wertheimer, Helen West, Bobbie Westfall, Karla Wight, Peg Williams, Gail Winberg, Boots Winterstein, and Melinda Young.
BOOK REVIEW by Vicky Downs

The Reluctant Fundamentalist by Mohsin Hamid

My friend Joyce grew up in India, and for the past thirty years, we have enjoyed discussing novels with an intercultural view. She strongly recommended The Reluctant Fundamentalist, calling it a “must read”. I found this finalist for the 2007 Booker/Mann Award much more interesting and intriguing than the actual winner, Anne Enright’s The Gathering. In spite of the title, Hamid’s short novel is not about religion, but about how culture, people and events can change us.

Changez, a Pakistani man, tells his story to a nervous, unknown American, while dining at a small restaurant in Lahore. He describes his unexceptional upbringing in Pakistan, how he had been encouraged to win a scholarship to Princeton, to graduate with high honors and to join an elite company. All of this is seemingly done to demonstrate to himself and to his family that a Pakistani is as good and as valuable as an American.

At the top of his game, with a happy life complete with girl friend, he seems to be living an immigrant’s dream. Then, suddenly, he sees the twin towers falling on TV, and is astonished to realize he smiled at the awful sight. He can’t figure out why he reacted as he did. After all, he loved Americans and America itself. At this point, the story deepens, and we realize there is suspicion growing between Changez and the American to whom he is telling his tale.

He explains that in New York, people started to look at him and snarl “Arab” after 9/11. He felt impelled to question his identity and wonders if there are parallels between America and the Muslim countries on the one hand, and his own relationship with employees of the failing companies he has been hired to evaluate, on the other. Many of the workers he interviews clearly do not like him and understand that his assessment of their company will lead only to its downfall and sale.

A minor character describes the Janissaries, Christian slaves who were taken as children by the Ottomans and turned into feared warriors against their own people. Changez wonders, could he be acting in a similar scenario without having realized it?

Changez returns to Pakistan and teaches at a University. He seems to live a balanced life, but as he tells his tale to the American, we wonder if he has darker plans for the Westerner, or perhaps he himself will be harmed? By the end, it is as though a screw I had hardly been aware of was about to make its final turn!

This is a thriller, but not a mystery with a tidy, happy end. Life is full of ambiguities and the author invites us to make our own judgment about Changez’s life. In so doing we are forced to see the world with its complications and unexpected nuances. I found this the most intelligently written and thought provoking book I’ve read in years.

The opinions in this review are personal and do not represent those of the LWV.
BOOK REVIEW by Vicky Downs

Super Freakonomics: Global Cooling, Patriotic Prostitutes and
Why Suicide Bombers Should Buy Life Insurance

by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner

Freakonomics, written by Levitt (an economist) and Dubner (a journalist), fascinated me. It seemed amazing that Levitt could look at crime statistics of the 1990s and see how they related to the legalization of abortion twenty years earlier. The authors showed how unwanted children are much more likely to turn to crime, so with legal abortion and fewer unwanted children becoming criminals, the number of crimes went down about twenty years later. The argument became persuasive for me when they showed that crime in the states that had legalized abortion five years earlier than the rest of the nation also had lower crime rates appearing five years earlier!

The sequel, Super Freakonomics, was published in 2009. This time, it seems that Dubner, the journalist, wrote more of the book, as it seems less closely related to economics. The result is every bit as interesting and often quite thought provoking. I learned that walking drunk is more dangerous than driving while drunk. “A drunk driver is thirteen times more likely to cause an accident than a sober one,” and drunk drivers cover about 21 billion miles each year. On a per-mile basis, “a drunk walking is about eight times more likely to get killed than a drunk driver.” The point is to understand that Americans tend not to walk much at all, so the ratio is extreme.

I don’t often read about prostitutes, but Levitt and Dubner provide some intriguing information. For example, Saturday night is the most profitable, while Friday nights are the busiest. What makes the difference? The kind of “trick” the prostitute is asked to perform! For some reason, on Saturday, customers want more expensive services. I was relieved the author did not go into detail! They did show why very high priced workers in this field are really more like “trophy wives” than anything else. Such women are not just beautiful, but well educated and able to keep up a sophisticated conversation…and they never talk about their own problems with their clients.

Do car seats really save lives for children over two years of age? Statistically speaking, the answer is “no,” because ordinary seat belts seem to do as good a job.

What is one of the simplest and most cost effective ways to make your carbon footprint smaller? Shifting away from red meat to chicken, fish or vegetables means fewer “cows, sheep and other ruminants” will be grown. We learn that such animals are “wicked polluters” because their belching and manure emit methane. Methane is twenty five times more potent than carbon as a greenhouse gas. “The world’s ruminants are responsible for about 50% more greenhouse gas than the entire transportation sector.”

A large section of the book deals with global warming, and I was pleased to learn that Intellectual Ventures, an invention company, is in Bellevue, Washington. The authors describe some of the work the company does, which could have a huge impact on the destructiveness of hurricanes and climate warming as well as a host of other things.

This book is fun to read. It is also clear that with all the choices we make each day, we should beware of simplistic thinking. The world is fascinatingly complex, and our choices do make a difference.

The opinions in this review are personal and do not represent those of the LWV.
April Program: Making Democracy Work

Making Democracy Work: Unit Discussions for April

The goal of unit discussions this month is to consider some of the main issues addressed by our three speakers at the April 1 forum, “Making Democracy Work.”

The big questions are:
1. How can we create a better, more democratic society?
2. What issues prevent our moving ahead?
3. What ideas will propel us forward?

Some units have invited elected officials to the April unit meetings. All our meetings will be focused on dialogue and advocacy around issues League cares about.

The following questions were suggested by the scheduled speakers for our April 1 event. They are not consensus questions, but are intended to guide our discussions and help us consider how we might move ahead. Please ask a unit member to record any important points from your discussion.

Suggested by Nancy Amidei:
(Nancy Amidei directs the Civic Engagement Project, which works with nonprofit organizations throughout the country offering advocacy training.)

1. How can we help ordinary citizens learn how the legislative process works? Three examples follow, the first two from recent town hall meetings in legislative districts:

   a. A gentleman asked his state legislators a question about an issue facing the King County Council. The legislators pointed out that this was another jurisdiction. As he left the microphone, the man was heard to mutter, “These politicians never answer your questions.”

   b. A young woman berated the legislators for not responding to her email. She mentioned that she had worked in a congressional office and knew that constituent services were very important there. One of the legislators responded that congressional offices have large staffs just for dealing with letters/calls/emails. By contract, he and his colleagues have only one aide. They try to respond, but during the legislative session he gets about 1000 messages a week.

   c. A church congregation in South King County requested training so that they might be able to influence this year’s state budget. The date of their proposed meeting was March 3.

2. What can the League of Women Voters do to counter the cynicism felt by so many voters?
3. The Seattle LWV has a civics education committee which has been active for several years. What have they accomplished? What future tasks should they take on?

**Suggested by Jerry Large:**
(Jerry Large is a columnist for the *Seattle Times.*

1. The number of issues a person can focus on at any given time is limited. What two or three issues should the League try hardest to keep on the public’s mind for the next year or two?

2. What role do working-class and poor people play in our democracy? If you believe their voices are underrepresented, how would you change that?

**Suggested by Paul Loeb:**
(Paul Loeb is the author of *The Impossible Will Take a Little While* and *Soul of a Citizen: Living with Conviction in a Challenging Time.*

1. How do we get people who have given up on politics to recognize that it affects their lives and that their voices can matter?

2. How do we find ways to listen to the concerns of those who have withdrawn from the political process?
LEAGUE PRINCIPLES

The League of Women Voters believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States.

The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon informed and active participation in government and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.

The League of Women Voters believes that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education that provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic or administrative discrimination.

The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government.

The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; that government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems that affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems.

The League of Women Voters believes that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems and that development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Founded by the activists who secured voting rights for women, the League has always worked to promote the values and processes of representative government. Protecting and enhancing voting rights for all Americans, assuring opportunities for citizen participation, working for open, accountable, representative and responsive government at every level—all reflect the deeply held convictions of the League of Women Voters.

The League worked courageously to protect fundamental citizen rights and individual liberties against the threats of the McCarthy era. In the 1960s, attention turned to securing “one person, one vote” through apportionment of legislative districts based substantially on population. In the 1970s, members worked to reform the legislative process and open it to citizen scrutiny, and to balance congressional and presidential powers. The League also sought to reform the campaign finance system to reduce the dominance of special interests, affirmed support for the direct election of the President and fought for full voting rights in Congress for the citizens of the District of Columbia.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the League worked to break down the barriers to voting, first through reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act and then through a campaign for passage and implementation of the landmark National Voter Registration Act. Campaign finance reform, with a focus on public financing and on
closing loopholes, again was a major activity at the federal and state levels, with the goal of enhancing the role of citizens in the election and legislative processes. The fight for DC voting rights was reinvigorated in the late 1990s.

Also in the 1980s and 1990s, the League worked to ensure the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices and opposed term limits for legislative offices.

The League’s “Making Democracy Work” campaign, launched in 1996, focused on five key indicators of a healthy democracy: voter participation, campaign finance reform, diversity of representation, civic education and knowledge, and civic participation. The 1998 Convention added “full congressional voting representation for the District of Columbia” as a component of the campaign. State and local Leagues measured the health of democracy in their communities, reported the results and worked with other groups to seek change. The LWVUS report, “Charting the Health of American Democracy,” took a nationwide measure and made recommendations for change.

At Convention 2002, the League decided to update its position on the Selection of the President, focusing not only on the electoral process but also on the other factors that affect the race for the President – e.g. money, parties, and the media. The position was expanded and formally approved at Convention 2004. The League’s five-year fight for campaign finance reform paid off in March 2002 when the President signed the historic Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act into law. The League was instrumental in developing this legislation and pushing it to final enactment, and remains vigilant in ensuring the law is enforced and properly interpreted in the courts. Today the League is pushing for legislation to reinvigorate the public financing system for president and to institute congressional public financing as well.

In 2000, when the elections exposed the many problems facing our election administration system, the League leaped into action. Bringing our coalition allies together, the League worked to ensure that key reforms were part of the congressional debate. In October 2002, the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) was signed into law. This major piece of legislation authorizes funds for each state to improve the operation of elections according to federal requirements.

Throughout the next biennium, the League fought to ensure that the requirements of HAVA were implemented in ways to assure voter access. The League created a public awareness campaign in 2004 called 5 Things You Need To Know on Election Day designed to educate voters about the new requirements and the steps each voter could take to protect access. The campaign received major publicity throughout the election season. This project was continued in Election Season 2006.

At Convention 2004, the League revised its stand on voting systems to assure that they would be secure, accurate, recountable and accessible, and that technological innovation would be allowed. At Convention 2006, this position was further revised by a resolution calling for all election systems to have a voter verifiable paper ballot or record that could be randomly audited. Throughout this period, the League continued to monitor all federal legislation on ballot systems and other election administration issues, and in 2006 launched a highly successful Public Advocacy for Voter Protection (PAVP) project in which the League president visited six key states to promote issues of voter protection and education.

The PAVP project continued through 2007-2008 and into 2009 as the League engaged in targeted state-based advocacy. The LWVUS collaborated with state Leagues to enhance their public education and advocacy efforts to push back against the assault on voters’ rights. These efforts were expanded from nine
to fourteen states in 2008 to provide more in-depth support and assistance to fight onerous barriers to
voter participation and ensure election laws and processes are applied in a uniform and non-discriminatory
manner.

Throughout 2008, the PAVP project helped to remove or mitigate barriers to voting by underserved
populations, and to advance the capacity of state Leagues to become even more effective advocates in five
focus areas identified by the League as essential to protecting the votes of all citizens and improving election
administration overall. The areas are: 1) Opposing ID and documentary proof-of-citizenship requirements;
2) Improving the administration of statewide voter registration databases and guarding against wrongful
or incorrect purging; 3) Guarding against unnecessary restrictions on voter registration; 4) Improving poll
worker recruitment, training and supervision; and 5) Improving polling place management and ballot
design.

The League’s overriding goals were to protect eligible voters from potential barriers and to promote pro-
voter reforms so that voting processes work for all citizens. League work included advocating for compliance
with existing laws and regulations, such as the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, and advocating for
key reforms through education and advocacy, and litigation when necessary. League action was directed
toward legislators, state/local elections officials, other policy makers, the media and concerned citizens, as
appropriate.

The League president traveled to nine states and 17 cities in the two months prior to the 2008 presidential
election, meeting with state and local elections officials; key community members and leaders; and members
of the press, including the Editorial Boards of major newspapers. She addressed numerous election related
issues including: the voter registration process, provisional balloting, voter registration list management
and purging, polling place management, poll worker management and others.

One of the most urgent and widespread threats tackled through the PAVP project was onerous voter ID
requirements. As many as 21 million Americans do not have government issued photo identification, with
minorities and the poor disproportionately less likely to have photo ID showing a current address. The
LWVUS worked with Leagues to oppose or mitigate the impacts of these requirements. For example,
in 2008 and 2009 the LWVUS and the LWV of Missouri joined forces to fight a restrictive voter ID
constitutional amendment, which narrowly defined the type of photo IDs voters must provide, thereby
discriminating against people of color, the elderly, disabled people and the poor. Also, in 2006 – 2008, the
League supported legislation to reform the lobbying process and to rebuild public confidence in Congress.
New ethics rules, disclosure requirements for campaign contributions “bundled” by lobbyists, and a new
ethics enforcement process were the results.

*From the League of Women Voters of the United States website, lwv.org.*
Here’s a little history of civics education requirements in Washington schools. In 2004 the Legislature passed HB 2195, which mandated Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs) in Social Studies, the Arts, and Health and Fitness (done because there was no WASL for these subjects). In 2006 the Legislature passed HB 2579, which mandated separate Civics CBAs in the 4th or 5th grade, the 7th or 8th grade, and the 11th or 12th grade. At the 2007 League of Women Voters of Washington (LWVWA) State Convention, we passed a resolution making funding for teacher training in the teaching and testing of civics a priority for the Lobby Team. Although several groups said they supported this funding, LWVWA was the only group that testified and lobbied for adding money to the 2008 supplemental budget for professional development for teachers of civics. However, the funding was not included in the budget.

During this time period the State Board of Education came up with a list of additional required high school graduation requirements—what is called Core 24. The list included an additional .5 of a credit (semester) of Social Studies without specifying what it should be. Core 24 will not be implemented until funding is provided by the Legislature. During our Lobby Team retreat in the fall of 2008, we decided that one of our priorities would be to pass a bill requiring that .5 credit to be a civics class.

We got Rep. Dave Quall to sponsor a bill, HB 2132, which passed the legislature unanimously and was signed by the Governor in 2009. The bill basically says: If the State Board of Education increases the number of Social Studies credits required for high school graduation, at least one-half credit must be coursework in civics. The content of the civics requirement must include: federal, state, and local government organization and procedures; rights and responsibilities of citizens addressed in the state and federal constitutions; current issues addressed at each level of government; and electoral issues, including elections, ballot measures, initiatives, and referenda.

As John Dewey said, “Democracy needs to be reborn in every generation, and education is its midwife.”
# Unit Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monday, April 5</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Southend</strong> - Sam Scharff</td>
<td></td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
<td>Lila Bulen 3716 Cascadia Ave. S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:webcats@speakeasy.net">webcats@speakeasy.net</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Issaquah Evening</strong> - Ann Thornton</td>
<td></td>
<td>6:30 pm</td>
<td>King County Library System Service Center, 960 Newport Way NW, Iss.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:anninissaquah@gmail.com">anninissaquah@gmail.com</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday, April 8</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Issaquah Day</strong> - Margaret Austin</td>
<td></td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>Issaquah City Hall &amp; Police 130 E. Sunset Way, Coho Room (upstairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:barrie.austin@comcast.net">barrie.austin@comcast.net</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mercer Island</strong> - Lucy Copass/Cynthia Howe</td>
<td></td>
<td>9:15 am</td>
<td>Mercer Island Presbyterian Church 3605 84th Ave. SE, Mercer Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:lucyco@speakeasy.org">lucyco@speakeasy.org</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:howe.john@comcast.net">howe.john@comcast.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>North Central</strong> - Jan Orlando</td>
<td></td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
<td>Gail Shurgot 6536 31st Ave NE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:orlanre@aol.com">orlanre@aol.com</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shoreline</strong> - Juliet Beard</td>
<td></td>
<td>4:30 pm</td>
<td>Richmond Beach Congregational Church, NW 195th St. and 15th Ave. NW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:juliet@windermere.com">juliet@windermere.com</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>University House - Wallingford</strong> - Barbara Denis/ Judy Coskey</td>
<td></td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>University House 4400 Stone Way N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:bdenis340@comcast.net">bdenis340@comcast.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:tjcoskey@msn.com">tjcoskey@msn.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Friday, April 9</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Kirkland/Redmond</strong> - Sheila Hoff</td>
<td></td>
<td>6-9:00 pm</td>
<td>Liv Grohn 338 10th Ave., Kirkland Call for directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:srhoff123@yahoo.com">srhoff123@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Monday, April 12</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>First Hill</strong> - Jeannette Kahlenberg</td>
<td></td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>Mary Margaret Pruitt Horizon House, 900 University St. Sky Lounge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:kahlenb@gmail.com">kahlenb@gmail.com</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Capitol Hill/Montlake</strong> - Jan O’Connor</td>
<td></td>
<td>7:15 pm</td>
<td>Sue Gregory 2713 2nd Ave N</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:oconnor.js@gmail.com">oconnor.js@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, April 13</td>
<td>Bellevue - Bonnie Rimawi</td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>Bellevue Regional Library, Rm. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:bonnierim@aol.com">bonnierim@aol.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>1111 110th Ave. NE, Bellevue</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>West Seattle Day - Ethel Williams/Ann Bowden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:etheljw1@q.com">etheljw1@q.com</a></td>
<td>12:30 pm</td>
<td>Ann Bowden</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Kenney, 7125 Fauntleroy Way SW</td>
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<td></td>
<td>West Seattle Eve - Barbara O’Steen</td>
<td>7:00 pm</td>
<td>Eleanor Laxdall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:barbarajosteen@yahoo.com">barbarajosteen@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>3525 SW Secola Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, April 14</td>
<td>North End Afternoon - Jo Dawson</td>
<td>12:30 pm</td>
<td>Nancy Rust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:warrenandjo@comcast.net">warrenandjo@comcast.net</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>18747 Ridgefield Road NW</td>
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<td>Shoreline</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Magnolia/Queen Anne/Ballard/Fremont Eve - Bettina Hosler</td>
<td>7:30 pm</td>
<td>Eileen Bleeker</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:glencoe1985@aol.com">glencoe1985@aol.com</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>7317 Mary Ave. NW</td>
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<td>View Ridge - Gail Winberg</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:winbergeng@comcast.net">winbergeng@comcast.net</a></td>
<td>12:45 pm</td>
<td>Gail Winberg</td>
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<td>6004 NE 60th St.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, April 17</td>
<td>Ballard/Queen Anne/Magnolia Day - Kim Peterson</td>
<td>10:00 am</td>
<td>Joan Peterson</td>
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<td>6537 Dibble Ave NW</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, April 21</td>
<td>North King County - Rejean Idzerda</td>
<td>9:30 am</td>
<td>Lake Forest Park Third Place Books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:idzerda@comcast.net">idzerda@comcast.net</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>17171 NE Bothell Way</td>
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# Board & Committee Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>President</td>
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<td>2008–2010</td>
<td>1st V.P. Outreach</td>
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<td>2008–2010</td>
<td>2nd V.P. Program</td>
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<td>2008–2010</td>
<td>3rd V.P.</td>
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<td>2009-2011</td>
<td>4th V.P. Voter Editor</td>
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<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
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<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Treasurer/Unit Coordinator</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Directors</th>
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<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Membership</td>
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<td>Director</td>
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<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Public Relations</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Co-President</td>
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<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Co-President</td>
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<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009–2011</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008-2010</td>
<td>Officer</td>
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## Off-Board Positions

- **CIS Coordinator**
  - Cynthia Howe
  - howe.john@comcast.net

## Committees

- **Civics Education**
  - Dana Twight
  - dctwight@u.washington.edu

- **Economics & Taxation**
  - Nora Leech
  - nleech2002@yahoo.com

- **Education**
  - Lucy Gaskill-Gaddis
  - terrylucy2u@comcast.net

- **Social Justice Committee**
  - Jayne Freitag-Koontz
  - jfkoontz@comcast.net
  - Kathleen Randall
  - kathleen.randall@overtakehospital.org

- **Immigration**
  - Barbara Reid
  - barbereid@yahoo.com

- **International Relations**
  - Ellen Berg
  - ellenberg@msn.com

- **Land Use**
  - Karen Kane
  - kanek@iopener.net

- **Transportation**
  - Janet Winans
  - janetwinans@earthlink.net

- **Port Study**
  - Linda Brown
  - brownlj@comcast.net

- **Privatization Study**
  - Nora Leech
  - nleech2002@yahoo.com
Town Hall (downstairs)
Seneca and 8th Ave.
Thursday, April 1
7:30  Panel Discussion
6:30  VIP Reception - Council of 90 - $90
       General Admission  - $25
       Students            - $10

Register online at www.seattlelwv.org
All forums are open to the public.

Panelists include
➢ Nancy Amidei, Emeritus faculty at the University of Washington School of Social Work, directs the Civic Engagement Project, providing advocacy training to nonprofit organizations through the country.
➢ Jerry Large, a columnist for the Seattle Times, where he writes about the connections between ordinary people and larger world issues.
➢ Paul Loeb, the author of The Impossible Will Take A Little While and Soul of a Citizen, which will be published in a completely new, revised edition on March 30.