



The Voter

A Publication of the League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County

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Local and State Hospital Mergers

by Cynthia Stewart, Co-Chair, LWVWA Hospital Mergers Committee

Provision of health care services has been rapidly changing as a result of various factors. One of the effects has been a significant consolidation of hospital and clinic services. As of February 2014, the Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action (PSARA) noted that these changes have resulted in 30% to 37% of all hospital admissions in Washington and Oregon are into Catholic hospitals. In King, Pierce and Spokane Counties, 50% to 99% of the hospitals are religiously affiliated. Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, Stevens, Cowlitz, Franklin, Kitsap and Walla Walla Counties have no non-religious-affiliated hospitals available to their residents.¹

The prevalence of faith-based medical services has generated concerns. One is whether people whose only access is to a religiously-affiliated hospital are able to receive regular or emergency care that is forbidden by the Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services (ERDS). For example, Washington's Death with Dignity Act (2008) "permits terminally ill, competent adult Washington residents medically predicted to die within six months to request and self-administer lethal medication prescribed by a physician." But physicians bound by ERDS directives cannot honor a patient's request if their private office is in a building owned by a religiously-affiliated hospital.² Another concern is that faith-based hospitals may not allow abortions or certain reproductive services, since there may be no other facilities in

the community in which to receive those services.

Further, some of these recently-affiliated or merged hospitals are public hospitals that receive considerable public funding. In addition to the tax breaks to which all nonprofit institutions are entitled, these hospitals also receive taxpayer dollars via public insurance programs like Medicare and Medicaid, as well as myriad federal programs that provide subsidies for services like indigent care and medical research. Some may receive direct state funding through a university system. The question of to what extent public funds may support an entity whose policies are faith-based, i.e., the extent to which there is not a separation of church and state, has emerged.

The issues associated with "hospital mergers" are morphing continuously as a result of the interaction between health care providers and activists. The League of Women Voters has become involved in the issue of hospital mergers

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SAVE THE DATE!

Join us on April 18 for an evening of wine, hors d'oeuvres, museum tours and fun!

6:00 p.m. at the Wing Luke Museum

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Connecting with the Leadership

Spring Event

As previously announced, we are excited about our spring FUNdraising event on Saturday, April 18 at the Wing Luke Museum. We are working on sponsor levels and rewards, including event sponsorship opportunities to other groups at various levels, incentives such as a program listing, event tickets, special mention during our awards ceremony, inclusion in event emails and more. Further information will be available soon--look for it! In the meantime, if you can think of potential sponsors, whether people, businesses you frequent, or other organizations with interests similar to ours or that support our mission, we would appreciate hearing all.

Development Committee

We are looking for people to serve on an ongoing development committee.

Work would include donor and sponsor development as well as membership and partnership development. This is very necessary work so we will be able to remain a viable organization into the future. We need to plan ahead and think about how we will continue and expand our influence. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please let me know.

Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting will be on May 21. Start thinking now about how you want to participate in League in the upcoming year. You probably have a talent or skills that we would be grateful to have, and in return we can help you explore your passion while helping League. We are looking for volunteers to help in the office, voter services, endorsements, fund raising, membership development, action and advocacy, and more! Take a moment to think about what you would like to accomplish in 2015 and let's work together to help you achieve it!

Endorsements

The board and some Education Committee

members had a discussion on endorsements at our January board meeting. We wanted to hear feedback about our endorsement process and get suggestions for better utilizing our committees during the process.

Several good suggestions were made, including changing the number of votes necessary to make a decision and better communication with the relevant committees. We consider the Board's endorsement procedure a work in progress; Janet Winans, our 2nd Vice President, is working on it and we welcome suggestions for improvement.

Lobbying

The sun is out as I write this, the daffodils and crocuses are peeking out already...the days are getting longer... that must mean that spring is near! I always enjoy this time of year and expect

most of you do as well. The Legislative session has begun and 2015 is full of possibilities and creative solutions to long-term problems. It is possible that the Legislature will figure out a way to fully fund basic education, and also possible that it will impose some new, more equitable taxes or eliminate some exemptions. Finally, it is possible that this is the year our elected officials get serious about climate change. I look forward to it and hope you do too. Be sure to sign up for legislative updates from the State League to keep informed on what is happening in the Legislature and so you can contact your representative to give your views on proposed measures. If you are interested in being a contact person for the representatives from your Legislative District, please contact Pat Griffith, Action Co-Chair, pgseattle@q.com and let her know.



Ellen Barton
President

February/March

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--|---------|-----------|---|--------|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Forum: Hospital Mergers 7:00 p.m. | 6 | 7 Board Meeting 9:00 a.m. |
| 8 | 9 <i>The Voter Deadline</i> | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14  |
| 15 | 16 PRESIDENTS' DAY (office closed) | 17 | 18 | 19 Climate Change & Transportation Comm. 9:00 a.m. | 20 | 21 |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 Education Comm. 10:00 a.m. | 27 | 28 Econ & Tax Comm. 11:30 a.m.* |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 Forum: Human Trafficking 7:00 p.m. | 6 | 7 Board Meeting 9:00 a.m. |
| 8 | 9 <i>The Voter Deadline</i> | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |

Units meet during shaded period

FEBRUARY

Forum: Hospital Mergers
Thursday, February 5
7:00 p.m.
Seattle First Baptist Church

Board Meeting
Saturday, February 7
9:00 a.m.
League Office

The Voter Deadline
Monday, February 9

Transportation Committee
Thursday, February 19
special day and time
9:00 a.m.
League Office

Climate Change Committee
Thursday, February 19
9:00 a.m. - **earlier time**
League Office

Education Committee
Thursday, February 26
10:00 a.m.
League Office

Econ. & Tax. Committee
Saturday, February 28
11:30 a.m.*
909 E. Newton #D-9, Seattle

*Revised from print edition

MARCH

Forum: Human Trafficking
Thursday, March 5
7:00 p.m.
Seattle First Baptist Church

Board Meeting
Saturday, March 7
9:00 a.m.
League Office

The Voter Deadline
Monday, March 9

Forum Schedule

Feb 5 - Hospital Mergers
Mar 5 - Human Trafficking
Apr 2 - Reauthorization of the Columbia
 River Treaty
May 21 - Annual Meeting
 ~~~~~  
**Sept 3** - TBD  
**Oct 1** - General Election Issues

The League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County (LWVS-KC) presents a public forum most months between September and May, generally on the first Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. Most forums are held at the Seattle First Baptist Church, but occasionally they are scheduled at other locations and times. The tentative schedule of forums for 2015 appears at left; check *The Voter* each month or the LWVS-KC website, [seattlelwv.org](http://seattlelwv.org), for up-to-date information.

## Board Briefs

by Amanda Clark, Secretary

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*The League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County and Education Fund Boards met on January 10, 2015. This is a summary of their work.*

The Board has jumped feet first into the new year with event planning, legislative action and gearing up for the next election cycle.

The first big event of the year will be the April 18 fundraiser at the Wing Luke Museum. This will be a party, having fun visiting the Bruce Lee exhibit and the historic rooms of the immigrant hotel and old store now integrated into the museum, as well as other exhibits in the museum with food and drink served. We encourage all members and friends to attend what is sure to be a great evening!

With the new Legislative session beginning, it's important for League members to contact their legislators about issues important to League. Pat Griffith, Action Committee Co-Chair and lobby liaison, would like to have members in each King County legislative district sign up to follow through on Legislative Alerts, letting their legislators know that League supports or does not support various bills. Our positions and lob-

bying efforts can make a big difference. If you would like to be one of the members on call to contact legislators, let Pat know.

Voter Services is quiet right now, but that doesn't mean nothing is happening. Come fall, there will be a big need for moderators for forums and election monitors, especially now that Seattle will have district elections for City Council. If enough people are interested, formal training sessions will be scheduled (can be daytime or evening) for education and confidence-building. This is a great way to learn, gain a new skill or skills, and to meet interesting people. If you're interested, contact the office.

The Board met with some members of the Education Committee regarding League's endorsement process, committee roles, and communication. The Board is engaged in ongoing work on our endorsement policies, with the goal that they are clear to all.

### *Happy 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday, League!*

On February 14, 1920, six months prior to the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, Carrie Chapman Catt founded the National League of Women Voters during the National American Woman Suffrage Association's annual convention. After an exhaustive 72-year struggle, when this Amendment was ratified, American women at long last had the right to vote.



This is something to celebrate! From the beginning, the League has encouraged women to use their votes to shape public policy, offering a vital and non-partisan educational approach to issues faced by voters as women – and men - consider their ballots.

As our national League website states, “The League is proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public. The League has a long, rich history that continues with each passing year.” It is the hard work of many League members’ hands and brains that have made it work for nearly 100 years!

As we start a new Legislative session here in Washington state, let’s each of us pick a role, large or small, to help further the illustrious reputation of the League. Check out the other pages in this Voter to find an opportunity that appeals to you and become involved. Getting involved and making a difference is a cherished League tradition, after all.

#### **Mission Statement**

The League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County, 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.

# Committees

## Climate Change Committee

DATE: Thursday, February 19

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

PLACE: League Office

Charles Knutson, Senior Policy Advisor for Transportation and Environment in the Governor's Office to discuss the Governor's proposed legislation in support of his carbon pricing/revenue creating plans.

## Economics and Taxation Committee

DATE: Saturday, February 28

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

PLACE: 909 E. Newton #D-9, Seattle

## Education Committee

DATE: Thursday, February 26

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

PLACE: League Office

## International Relations Committee

No Meeting This Month.

A subcommittee is working to prepare next month's forum on human trafficking.

## Transportation Committee

DATE: Thursday, February 19

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

PLACE: League Office

Meeting jointly with the Climate Change Committee. See above.

*Dates and times may change - if you are not a regular attendee, please reach out to the committee contact listed on the inside back cover to confirm!*

We encourage participation in our committees by all interested members. It's a great opportunity to meet and talk to community leaders, stakeholder organizations, and experts where you can have direct input on local issues that affect you.

Don't see a committee that covers your issue? Call the office and let us know. Sometimes people are working more informally without regularly scheduled meetings. If so, we may be able to help connect you with them or help you start your own.

To learn more about what happens at committee meetings, read the committee reports in the Features section on pages 14-15.

## Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County (LWVS-KC), 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-KC recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making. LWVS-KC 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-KC affirms its commitment to reflecting the diversity of Americans in its membership, board, staff and programs.

## King County Connects — Announcements

### It's Time For Great Decisions 2015!

While the executive branch of government officially formulates the United States foreign policy, citizens provide the parameters for those policies. Please join fellow Leaguers in a Great Decisions Discussion Group exploring eight of the current most pressing foreign policy issues.

Participants need to order the Great Decisions briefing book from the Foreign Policy Association online at [greatdecisions.org](http://greatdecisions.org) or by phone at 800-477-5836.

League members hosting discussion groups:

Seattle: Vicky Downs, 206-328-3926 or [downsvdowns@aol.com](mailto:downsvdowns@aol.com). Starts February 3 at 7:00 p.m. and continues on alternating Tuesdays.

South King County: Mary Ehlers, 253-941-1930 or [maryehlers@comcast.net](mailto:maryehlers@comcast.net). Starts February 11, on second and fourth Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m.

Mercer Island: Lael Braymer, 206-275-1452 or [lbraymer@comcast.net](mailto:lbraymer@comcast.net)

Redmond: Corky Irvin, 425-868-1848 or [corky@windermere.com](mailto:corky@windermere.com)

TOPICS:

- Russia and the Near Abroad
- Privacy in the Digital Age
- Sectarianism in the Middle East
- India Changes Course
- U.S. Policy Toward Africa
- Syria's Refugee Crisis
- Human Trafficking in the 21st Century
- Brazil's Metamorphosis

Take the Bremerton Ferry and visit with our sister League in Kitsap:

**Saturday Brunch with Author Stephanie Coontz**  
February 21 in Bremerton

What a wonderful opportunity!!! Stephanie Coontz has authored some great books about gender equality and marriage and many things concerning women and families, so mark your calendars, buy your ticket, arrange for a ride, do whatever is needed to get yourself to this event!! It will be great! Invite a friend and perhaps they'll be inspired to join the League!!

Tickets are \$28.50. Mail check made out to LWV-K to:

LWV Kitsap

9797 SE Driftwood Cove

Port Orchard, WA 98367

(Mark on your check if you want the vegetarian or vegan brunch.) Or you can buy your ticket online at: [www.lwvk-coontz.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.lwvk-coontz.brownpapertickets.com).

Tickets must be bought by February 14. Seats are limited so buy your ticket now!!

### CIS VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

Do you want to be part of the action in League? Want to know firsthand what is going on and get acquainted with the people who are involved? Join the Citizen Information Service team.

We provide information over the phone to members and the community while serving a three-hour shift once a week. It's fun and educational and we'll train you! If you can't commit to a regular weekly shift, we welcome substitutes who can be called as needed. *Right now we need help on Thursdays.*

If you are interested, please contact Cynthia Howe: call 206-236-0593 or email [howe.john@comcast.net](mailto:howe.john@comcast.net).

## Updates from our State and National Leagues

*All members of the LWV of Seattle-King County are also automatically members of the LWV of Washington and the LWV of the United States, whose work focuses on issues of state and national concern, respectively. Be sure to sign up for weekly email newsletters and/or visit their websites: [www.lwvwa.org](http://www.lwvwa.org) and [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) for the latest information.*

### Olympia and Our Washington

The Legislative Session is the primary focus for LWVWA right now, and our Lobby Team is hard at work. You should have received at least three legislative newsletters by now\* and we hope you appreciated their streamlined presentation. They make it easy to find and focus on the highest priority items for League and/or the topic area that you are most passionate about.

While responding to the action alerts is a great way to support our advocacy efforts, nothing beats a face-to-face conversation. Why not shadow one of our lobby team members as they go on visits to legislators? It's fun and informative and helps our message really get through. Call the office and we will see who we can match you up with.

\* These are sent via email, usually on Sundays. Please make sure we have an email address for you, it's how we get information out in a timely manner to a group this large. If email and reading online isn't an option but you'd like to participate, please call the office to see if we can help.

### National News

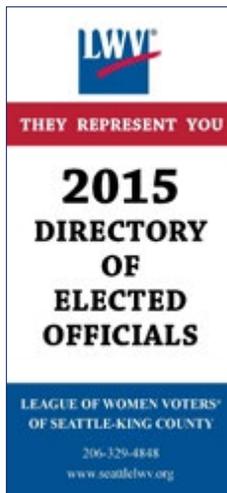
National continues to act to protect our elections. Around the country, we combined to submit close to 30,000 comments to the Federal Elections Commission in support of stricter disclosure regulations as well as tightening the definition of "coordination between candidates and outside groups." In addition, LWV has joined an amicus brief on a Supreme Court case regarding campaign solicitation rules for judicial races. And while election season may be a little ways off, the Vote411.org website is already being updated with the election calendars around the country, providing important information for voters year-round.

Climate Change is also a high priority at all levels of League. National has sent a letter to the U.S. Senate urging Senators to defend our vital natural resources and protect public health against pollution. The Lobby Corps will be following up during their visits to the Hill.

To help our advocacy at the local level, the national Climate Change Toolkit has been updated with new resources; you can find it on the [lwv.org](http://lwv.org) website.

Another great resource has also been updated: the High School Voter Registration Training Manual. We have some schools that have reached out to us recently to provide assistance with ongoing voter registration programs. These are fun and energizing projects to be part of. Let us know if you'd like to join us - just call or email the office.

## Voter Service



### TRY 2015 HAS ARRIVED!

The new print edition is here and is ready for distribution. Thank you to our hard working Citizen Information Service desk volunteers who made calls to verify all the listings and continue to handle all the requests for copies that come in: Mary Barton, Ruthie Dornfeld, Carol Goldenberg, Cynthia Howe, Lois Laughlin, Vivian Montoya, Dianne Ramsey, Betty Sullivan, and Amelia Woolley. A special thank you to Julie Anne Kempf for assistance with all manner of technical questions about content. We also want to thank all the donors who support this project and all our voter service activities.

Members will automatically receive a copy in the mail but feel free to call or come by the office if you'd like additional copies.

A bulk delivery is made to the central services for both the Seattle and King County public libraries and from there they are distributed to the branches. You can help us by going to your local branch and looking for it. If you don't see it out, show a copy to the librarians and let them know how valuable a resource it can be and that they can request additional copies from the main branch (the Quick Information Desk for SPL). Note: please wait until later in the month to give them time to arrive.

You can also help us get TRY into the hands of people who can use it by taking copies to your neighborhood meetings, book clubs, council hearings, community organizations. And please let us know who you're sharing it with - it helps us plan for future editions.

Every year the new edition is eagerly anticipated; calls start coming in to request it in November! Here's what some of our customers have to say about TRY:

*Thank you so much! It is wonderful publication. Thank you for all of your hard work.*

I'd like to give a copy to my 90 year old father who loves reading about current events, wants to discuss politics and enjoys writing letters to elected officials. With the latest TRY booklet, he'll have all the necessary addresses handy. (And may we all be so with it and interested at the age of 90!)

*We use these pamphlets all the time in advocacy writing.*

May I request or purchase your pamphlet of "Elected Officials"? It would be a godsend, as I seem perpetually unsure of just who represents what and where, given everything, when some urgent matter comes up and I want to "contact my representative". I would dearly love such a booklet.

*I saw one on my co-worker's desk and just had to have a copy!*

I know the information can also be obtained on the Internet - and I was happy to see the TRY online; however, the hardcopy publication is very handy in that I can quickly grab it and access the information. The best part is that instead of accessing various websites for the information, TRY is packed with all the information I need - at a glance.

## Join the League!

Take part in informed discussions of the issues facing our communities. Members automatically receive the VOTER, either in print or electronically, for the latest updates on current studies and action, monthly forums, committee activities, voter registration, and other volunteer opportunities. In addition, members receive action alerts about legislation in Olympia and Washington, D.C., as well as publications from the state League.

League membership is open to men and women.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Dues and contributions:

- \$60 one year individual membership
- \$90 one year household membership
- \$25 student
- Enclosed is a contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to LWVS-KC and return with this form or go online to [www.seattlelwv.org/membership](http://www.seattlelwv.org/membership).

Membership dues and contributions are not tax deductible; however, eligible tax deductible contributions may be made to the LWVS-KC Education Fund.

This is a gift membership from: \_\_\_\_\_

## Thank you for supporting the work of the LWV!

Please return this form to:  
League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County  
1620 18th Avenue, Suite 100  
Seattle, WA 98122-7007



**Celebrating 95 years of educating voters, improving elections, and making democracy work!**

## Getting Connected Membership News

### Membership: Meet the Mercer Island Unit

The unit can trace its existence at least as far back as the 1950's, with as many as four units on the six square-mile island. That was the era when many college-educated women were home with children and wanted an intellectual outlet.

Members performed studies of local island issues, ran for office, and forged long-term friendships. Unit studies were done on Island ravines and watercourses, zoning, and the central business district plan. Members served on a Tree Task Force, an Open Space Conservancy Trust Board, a Schools Advisory Committee, and members testified before the City Council on matters such as Luther Burbank Park and the Forward Thrust Pool. Among League members who served the City of Mercer Island were Beth Bland as Mayor and Lissa Wells on the City Council.

In the 1970's when many women went to work, the four units consolidated into one. Dorothy Swarts, longtime member and descendant of Mercer Island pioneers, brought her children to meetings, often tucking them in a corner with toys (League still has a child care reimbursement fund that dates from this era.)

A passion of the unit was and still is sponsoring candidate forums, with co-sponsorship provided by the local paper. These events have been very popular, and have had as many as 300 attendees!

Several unit members have served the Seattle and State Leagues as well. One is Lucy Copass, who served on the State League Board for many years as well as on the Seattle Waterfront Committee. She brought League online in the early internet days as well as serving as unit chair. Lucy has now moved to Port Angeles but is still considered a unit member.

Myra Lupton, a retired teacher, is our community watchdog, serving on the Schools Advisory Committee, attending Youth and Family Ser-

vices fundraisers, and local Rotary. She knows every city employee and Council member by their first names, and single-handedly persuaded the city to form a sailing center for youth lessons. As she said, "How can you live on an island and not know how to get out on the water in a boat?" She was awarded Mercer Island Citizen of the Year and received the League's Carrie Chapman Catt Award.

Other members making contributions to Seattle League include Nancy Ericsson and Patricia Matteson, both long-time and staunchly supportive members. Nancy has been the unit scribe for consensus questions for many years, as well as a faithful "telephone committee" reminding members of upcoming events. Nancy and her husband, Lowell, were instrumental in forming the Stanley Ann Dunham Scholarship Fund, which gives scholarships to Mercer Island High School female graduates, honoring President Barack Obama's mother, who graduated from Mercer Island High School.

Pat Matteson has served on both the Seattle board and the Education Fund Board, and made many trips to Olympia when she served on the King County Coordinating Committee. Pat is now a member of the Transportation Committee and helps keep the unit up-to-date on these issues.

We remember those who've passed away as well. Eileen Grace Brooks, known as "Brooksie" is remembered as a self-made woman, an original "Rosie the Riveter" during World War II. She served on the Voter Services committee and registered voters while dressed in a red, white and blue top hat, hailing registrants from afar to come to her booth. She was fun and effective - and always colorful. Estelle Wertheimer was another beloved unit member. For years she graciously hosted our annual year-end luncheon and a Great Decisions group. Estelle served on the CIS desk and was always gentle and humble; she is greatly missed.

Current Unit Chair and longtime member Cynthia Howe has an extensive history of civic involvement and volunteering, from early work with the Island preschool to being instrumental in the preservation and funding of parks. She is also active in community groups such as the Tree Task Force, Open Space Conservancy Trust Board, and Citizens Advisory Committee for the restoration of Lake Sammamish State Park. She has served on the Seattle League Board, been a dedicated volunteer on studies such as the Port of Seattle study and the Growth Management Act study, among others. For many years, Cynthia has also headed Seattle League's Citizen Information Service (CIS) volunteers. This is often the first contact people have with League – a vital function.

Past League Board members from the unit include Martha Jordan, who also served as unit chair for seven years, Kitty Mahon and Harriet Morton. There are currently two unit members on the Seattle-King County Board: Amanda Clarke and Paneen Davidson.

#### WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

**Donna Ellefson** graduated from Northwestern University, then lived in Chicago for 30 years where she married and had two children. She worked in a variety of editorial positions, including textbooks, an academic association and a managing consulting firm. 20 years ago, she moved to Seattle to be near her son, working for Microsoft as a content editor for Encarta Encyclopedia. After the birth of her first grandchild 5 years later, she retired in order to spend time with her grandchildren and to travel, always a dream of hers. Since retiring, she has also volunteered to teach English as a foreign language.

Donna joined Seattle League after being invited to attend a Climate Change committee meeting by Connie Voget (see separate biography below), another new member. She was very impressed with the knowledge and passion of the women there. "They knew the issues in detail and have

specific plans for change," she said, feeling that League is a place where she can make a difference on issues she cares about.

After graduating from Murray State University in Kentucky, **Bertina Hendrie** taught Home Economics, then earned an M.S. from Columbia in New York. She came to Seattle in 1957 to teach Home Economics at the University of Washington. Having three children in three and a half years, Bertina retired from teaching. Her last career was 20 years as a real estate broker.

Now that her grandchildren are adults, she has time for other interests. She is especially interested in two things in League: the parallel between teaching nutrition in high schools and the obesity epidemic, and the need for parent training in early childhood education. She believes children benefit from this training from the time they are born.

In addition to being a new League member, Bertina enjoys gardening and traveling.

Music has played a major role in **Connie Voget's** life. After earning a Bachelor's degree in Music, she taught piano and musicianship from her home-based studio, also doing instrumental and vocal accompaniments. Later, she became involved in early childhood and recreational music programs with Musikgarten, and acted as interim pianist at a local church.

Connie is deeply committed to achieving action on climate change. Her first step was to join the Climate Action Network of Sustainable Wallingford, which inspired her ongoing interest in and study of market-based policies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

She is also active in Sierra Club, and is a member of Earth Ministry and Climate Solutions. Recently, she became a Climate Captain with the Washington Environmental Council's program to promote climate policy during the 2015 legislative session. She has been active in her church, teaching and serving on many committees. Connie is a precinct committee organizer, and is proud of her track record in getting her

letters to the editor published!

At a recent Sierra Club meeting Connie learned that a Climate Change committee was forming at the League, and member Joey Gray invited her to attend and become a member. She is interested in quality information on key issues including climate change and expects, “to be empowered [by League] to be a more effective advocate for climate action and other issues.”

## Features

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### **Climate Change Committee Report**

At our November meeting, Rod Brown, Co-Chair of the Governor’s Task Force on Carbon Emissions, spoke to the Climate Change Committee via phone. The Task Force researched both a carbon tax and a cap and trade system, concluding that a composite of the two could provide the most utility and that the devil will be in the details. Since then, Governor Inslee has announced his proposal for carbon pricing.

His proposal consists of a modified cap and trade system whereby the approximately 130 largest polluters will participate in an auction that will provide roughly a billion dollars a year for transportation, education and tax rebates for low income communities. This “price of pollution” is expected to encourage polluters to switch to renewable sources of energy and conservation, but passing the necessary laws is expected to have a tough time in the legislature. Our committee is pleased to see legislation that will have teeth to curb carbon emissions, but of course what we say as an organization will need State League’s approval and may require an update of positions. But individuals can stay informed on this issue and be prepared to act as legislation is proposed.

Mary Moore, the State League Climate Change and Energy Chair, spoke to us about lobbying.

She encouraged us to sign up for the Legislative newsletter at the State League web site, and respond to action alerts as well as to lobby your legislators. Remember, we need to speak as individuals unless we have permission from the state. League strongly supports action on climate change, but particular legislation may go beyond League positions.

Next month, look for a recap of our January 15 meeting, where our guest was Sasha Pollack of the Washington Environment Council. We hope to work in concert with other organizations, so are interested in what WEC is planning to do about climate change legislation.

### **Education Committee Report**

In December, our committee welcomed Rachel Schulkin, Outreach Manager of the Seattle Office of Education, who briefed us on the planning for the Seattle Preschool Program funded by Proposition 1B. She gave us copies of the Seattle Preschool Program Action Plan. The complete plan is online at: <http://murray.seattle.gov/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Seattle-Preschool-Program.pdf>.

Six community meetings have been held to date; notes from them are at: <http://www.seattle.gov/>

education/childcare-and-preschool/seattle-preschool-program/events. General information can also be found on Seattle's website at: <http://www.seattle.gov/education/childcare-and-preschool/seattle-preschool-program>.

Rachel expanded on the curriculum options being considered and how providers will be chosen. High Scope and Creative are both curricula used by educators; each has advantages and disadvantages. Washington is implementing Creative, and providers for the City program will be expected to adopt the one chosen. The City has a set of considerations that will be used to select providers, but the logistics of deciding among those who qualify is still in the preliminary stages. Known is that priority will be given to providers located in areas with the lowest academic achievement in 3rd grade reading and 4th grade math, and in areas with high concentrations of low-income households, English language learners, and incoming kindergartners. Providers with existing City contracts to provide preschool services will have an advantage, along with those that have scored well on providing high-quality programs as rated by measures such as the State Early Achievers. Some providers may not be located where the children are and the City is not planning to fund transportation. This is an ongoing dialogue.

After taking time to enjoy the holiday season, our committee is returning to our regular meeting time on the fourth Thursday of the month. Next month, look for our report on LWVWA Education Committee Chair Catherine Ahl, who will attend our January 22 meeting. We will be asking her questions regarding the upcoming legislative session and learning about charter schools in Washington state, and if the State Supreme Court has issued a decision regarding funding available for them.

In last month's Voter, we noted our sponsorship of the Paramount Duty education event. If you were unable to attend, there is a video available on the Seattle Channel: <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos?videoid=x30796>.

## Transportation Committee Meeting Report

On December 16, House Transportation Chair Judy Clibborn was scheduled to be our speaker, however, Governor Inslee's Transportation Budget announcement occurred at the same time. So we watched his presentation, where he combined transportation, carbon emissions and a new revenue source into this first announcement of his plans for the legislative session. He challenged the 130 biggest carbon polluters in Washington, saying they will be charged for the carbon they discharge and expects that those charges will provide most of the \$7.9 billion needed to fund his proposal to solve many state transportation problems.

Of course, the devil will be in the details. Those 130 carbon emitters have powerful legislative allies, including some that blocked passage of a transportation bill last year. After setting up a state commission to investigate regulating greenhouse gas emissions and transportation infrastructure conditions, the governor intends to change transportation to be a local issue so that legislators are accountable to constituents. Every district has infrastructure problems, and the state's economy depends in large part on efficient circulation of goods and services.

Our committee is interested in Puget Sound-wide issues and in learning from the LWVWA lobbying team. On February 17, our meeting speaker will be a representative from the Governor's new commission, informing us about Governor Inslee's plan to tax carbon discharge. This adds an entirely new revenue stream, and the energy that's going to bring to transportation innovation discussions (pun intended) will be fun and exciting to share in.

Our committee will also be tracking Sound Transit's proposal to seek legislative approval to send a Sound Transit 3 funding package to voters by 2016. We'll also be watching how they coordinate with regional transit systems to deal with many issues, including the "last mile" concerns that are now on commuters' minds.

BOOK REVIEW by Vicky Downs

## BEING MORTAL: MEDICINE AND WHAT MATTERS AT THE END

By Atul Gawande

Gawande is a surgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital and also a staff writer for the New Yorker. In this short book he explores aging, death and how the medical profession handles end-of-life issues. We learn that he thinks that too often these are mishandled. Using personal stories of his patients and relatives, he describes how emphasis tends to be on keeping people alive and safe rather than on helping them live a full, rewarding life that might also be more affordable.

We are in a time when our mortality is too often medicalized at the end. A good example of this is when doctors say, "We can try..." and then offers yet another procedure with no guarantee of how many days, weeks or months longer the patient might survive as a result. "Don't you give up on me," one man cries to his son, even though the surgery cannot cure his cancer. This man was "pursuing little more than a fantasy, at the risk of a prolonged and terrible death – which was precisely what he got," writes Gawande. Unfortunately, the man's doctor had not been trained to help his patients think about what would make their lives meaningful rather than just offering another sophisticated medical procedure.

Gawande details the ways in which nursing homes have become a way to deal with ever more patients, who can now be kept alive for longer than ever before. However, such facilities are often run under a military model, where safety, efficiency and staff needs are paramount, requiring that patients stay in wheelchairs or beds and eat pureed mush in front of the TV rather than allow them to do what they really want.

In contrast, the author examines the work of Dr. Bill Thomas, who proposed ways to bring life

into a New York nursing home. As its director, he planted a garden for residents to tend, and opened a day care facility so patients could interact with children. He also brought in parakeets to sing and a couple of dogs, all of whom the patients cared for. Death rates subsequently went down, along with the amount of sedatives used in the facility.

The author recounts how he learned to let go of his need to use his medical training to avoid death and instead to ask patients what they wanted. He quotes from a New Yorker article he wrote, in which a nurse asked her elderly father what it would take to make another medical procedure worth the pain and frustration. She was surprised when this man, whom she had always seen as academically inclined, replied that watching a football game and eating chocolate ice cream would make it worthwhile, sounding more like the boy she imagined he had been. But understanding his desire as he himself described it, she knew how to respond to her father's doctors.

I learned that it is important that each of us compose our own story about how we want our life to end, and that palliative care often provides a better quality of life and may prolong it as well.

Since League is focused on hospital mergers this month, I believe it is vital to know that for many of us, quality of life is, at the end, more important than simply extending it.

*Opinions in this review are personal and do not represent those of the League.*

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## February Program

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# Hospital Mergers



## How Will They Affect Your Care?

Report by Cynthia Stewart  
Co-Chair, LWVWA Hospital Mergers Committee

## UNIT MEETINGS

Welcome and Introductions  
Announcements/Volunteer Sign Ups

### Discussion Questions

1. What do you think the most significant implication of hospital mergers is for the Seattle-King County region?
2. How do you think the general public is affected by the hospital mergers as they have been described?
3. Given the complexity of these issues, how might the hospital merger topic effectively be conveyed to the general public?
4. What is the most appropriate role on this issue for League at all levels: local, state, and national?
5. What questions do you have that the LWVWA Hospital Merger Committee could answer for you?

## HOSPITAL MERGERS

### BACKGROUND

All across the country, hospitals, clinics, and even pharmacies have been reconfiguring into new corporations or affiliating with each other in various ways. The methods vary widely, but the goal is typically to create more cost-effective health care delivery systems that are able to compete financially in the new marketplace. This is partly a result of financial problems related to external factors such as the economy, partly because of how medical costs are paid for and partly due to provisions of the Federal Affordable Care Act that require cost efficiencies.

Among the provisions of the Affordable Care Act that create cost savings are:

- Accountable Care Organizations are established to encourage hospitals, primary care physicians and other medical providers to join forces and coordinate patient care. If they meet certain quality targets, they share in the savings realized by Medicare by being paid more.
- Health insurance policies must cover preventive care, reducing long-term costs for health care coverage by reducing need for treatment. People receiving preventive care are less likely to suffer from chronic health conditions that end up costing much more to treat.
- By expanding the number of people who have coverage, the Affordable Care Act reduces the number of people using costly emergency room services for primary care.
- Hospitals that have an excess number of patients prematurely released and must be readmitted within one month for heart attacks, heart failure and pneumonia will receive reduced Medicare reimbursements.

Additionally, the Affordable Care Act mandates:

- If insurers of large companies do not spend at least 85% of premium revenue on patient care, they must reimburse their customers for the difference.
- Health insurance companies that pay less than 80% of the premiums they receive to reimburse the insured for services they were provided must refund the difference to their customers.
- Capitation (per person) payments, rather than fees-for-service are emphasized in the Affordable Care Act. This changes how patients are treated, with a lower cost outcome. However, an unintended short-term consequence is that the associated financial risk in prepayment arrangements requires hospitals to have large financial reserves.

In order to achieve these reforms, the health care world is changing shape rather quickly and, in some cases, dramatically. The Washington State Hospital Association web site lists 15 hospital mergers and acquisitions in the state since 2009.<sup>1</sup> These arrangements are variously labeled “affiliation”, “acquisition”, “system integration”, and “strategic partnership.” Comparable arrangements among clinic systems are not identified.

Some examples of recent changes (a limited number chosen only to illuminate the issues) include:

### **San Juan Hospital District –PeaceHealth Public-Private Partnership**

The San Juan County Public Hospital District is a junior taxing district of the County, serving the Town of Friday Harbor, San Juan Island, and the islands of Brown, Pearl, Henry, Spieden, Stuart and Johns. The District was formed by a vote of the people in 1989 to authorize taxes to

provide hospital services to District residents. The District levies two separate property taxes to provide distinct health care services:

- The first tax helps fund San Juan Island EMS and MedEvac, which provides 9-1-1 advanced life support emergency medical response and critical care transport via ground, water, and air. 100% of funds raised from this levy support San Juan Island EMS.
- The second levy is for subsidizing emergency and underfunded primary care for district residents.

In 2009, as a result of ongoing financial problems, the Hospital District contracted with PeaceHealth to build and operate what is now called PeaceHealth Peace Island Medical Center. PeaceHealth is a faith-based hospital system founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace operating in Washington, Oregon and Alaska.

### **Swedish Health Services and Providence Health & Services - Merger**

In 2010, Providence and Swedish together were saddled with more than \$210 million in charity care, unpaid patient bills and bad debt, according to the *Puget Sound Business Journal*.<sup>2</sup> As reported in *Seattle Business*,<sup>4</sup> Swedish Health Services had spent heavily to acquire specialty doctors' groups and urgent care facilities across the region to increase referrals to their hospitals. They also upgraded an urgent care facility in Issaquah to a full-service medical center at a cost of \$360 million. As a result of this spending, Swedish experienced financial problems, causing an operating loss of \$19 million and began employee layoffs in 2012.

Swedish, which had operated as an independent entity for more than a century, then became a part of Providence Health & Services, a 155-year-old medical system with 42 hospitals and 64,000 employees across five states, through an agreement announced in February 2012. According to *The Seattle Times*,<sup>5</sup> the intention behind this agreement was to create a new or-

ganization for the greater Puget Sound area, including all of Swedish's operations in King and South Snohomish counties, and Providence's operations in King, Snohomish, Thurston and Lewis counties, offering electronic medical records through more providers in a larger area. The CEO and President of Swedish became one of two group Presidents in the Providence system, and another officer of Swedish was appointed as the new CEO for Swedish Health Services within the Providence system. Although initially announced as "not a merger or acquisition", the agreement combined the two formerly independent entities so that Swedish is now a division of Providence, which controls the Board.

### **UW Medical Center – PeaceHealth Affiliation**

As described in *The Seattle Times*,<sup>6</sup> UW Medicine and PeaceHealth announced a "strategic affiliation" in May 2013, with details to emerge. UW Medicine, which receives taxpayer support, includes the University of Washington and Harborview Medical Centers, Northwest Hospital & Medical Center, Valley Medical Center, UW Neighborhood Clinics, UW Physicians, UW School of Medicine, and Airlift Northwest. PeaceHealth, as noted above, is a faith-based system, operating in three western states. According to the announcement, the two organizations will remain legally separate and independent.

Under this agreement, UW Medicine is the preferred health care system of choice for complex tertiary and quaternary care for patients receiving care through PeaceHealth's Northwest Network, but the affiliation does not involve a change in ownership or governance of either UW Medicine or PeaceHealth.<sup>7</sup>

### **Group Health and Bartell Drug Stores - Partnership**

Group Health, originally founded as a consumer-governed, prepaid group medical coverage cooperative with one clinic and one hospital in 1947,<sup>8</sup> has grown to a large system with more than half a million enrollees and clinics throughout Washington and northern Idaho.

Affiliations with hospital providers and other organizations became a part of how Group Health operated between 1980's and today. One of the most significant arrangements was a "strategic alliance" with Virginia Mason, through which hospital referrals were made by Group Health to Virginia Mason. Another was a 1997 alliance with Kaiser Permanente, in which patients of both organizations could receive reciprocal care while both organizations remained independent. Group Health has been a national leader in the use of electronic medical records and scheduling.

Bartell Drugs is still a family owned and locally-operated company founded in 1890, with 62 stores throughout the Puget Sound area.

In 2014, Bartell's and Group Health opened several walk-in primary care clinics staffed by Group Health medical employees,<sup>9</sup> but located in Bartell stores. These clinics are open to all, not just Group Health enrollees, and most insurance plans are accepted. This is an entirely new way of operating for Group Health and for Bartell's.

### **ISSUES**

These examples and other cases have been called "hospital mergers" for the purpose of analyzing them, even though in many cases, the arrangements are not formal mergers. And, in the case of Group Health with Bartell's, not hospitals. The LWVWA Hospital Merger Committee has put together a glossary (attached) that distinguishes various categories of affiliations. But for the remainder of this article, "hospital merger" will refer to all of them.

In most cases, these arrangements appear on the surface to make sense financially and to serve affected patients well. However, what causes concern about many of these mergers is the question of what policies will apply in the new or reconfigured entity. When organizations merge or affiliate, decisions must be made about

which policies will be used. Two previously-independent organizations would have to mutually agree on policies covering both parties in the new configuration. Although in affiliations the hospitals can have separate policies, there must still be negotiations regarding the terms of the affiliation. Mutual agreement is required when Boards are co-mingled.

In the case of mergers where a faith-based organization controls policy, concerns about application of "Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services (ERDS)" arise.

This issue has led to controversy in Washington state and elsewhere. Some people have concerns about access to services such as contraception, abortion and end of life options and equal protection for LGBT individuals, with worries about whether the new entity will allow those services when the new entity is controlled by a faith-based organization under the ERDS. Another issue is the question of the relationship of church and state, specifically in cases where public institutions have affiliated with faith-based health care providers.

As a result of these concerns, various groups of activists, including members of the League of Women Voters, have become involved in the issue. Several adopted positions of League are relevant:

- Abortion: the right to abortion (privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices).<sup>10</sup>
- Access to Care: universal access to affordable health services with seamless coverage regardless of health status.<sup>11</sup>
- Equal Rights: The League of Women Voters of Washington believes all levels of government share the responsibility to provide equality of opportunity for education, employment and housing for all persons regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation or

disability.<sup>12</sup>

These issues apply to the above illustrations in the following ways:

**San Juan Hospital District –PeaceHealth Public-Private Partnership** In this case, questions arose about whether a public taxing district may contract its policy role to a private entity. As a result of citizen activism (including League’s), a request to the Washington State Attorney General was made to clarify the extent to which this is allowable. In part, the Attorney General (AG)’s opinion<sup>13</sup> clearly lays out the responsibility of the public hospital district to retain control of policy. It states, “Each public hospital district is governed by an elected board of commissioners, which is statutorily responsible for operation of its hospital affairs, including the delivery of health care services, whether the district provides services directly or by contracting with a provider. RCW 70.44.060.”

With regard to services offered, the AG’s opinion goes on to define the relationship between the Hospital District and PeaceHealth as, “San Juan County Public Hospital District No. 1 has entered into an agreement with PeaceHealth, a Catholic health care corporation, to construct and operate a hospital. Under the agreement, the district subsidizes the operation of the hospital by providing at least 95 percent of the district’s annual tax revenues, and PeaceHealth conducts all patient reviews. The agreement allows PeaceHealth to provide only services consistent with its religious doctrine[2]”. The opinion further declares, “The state cannot ‘discriminate against the exercise of these rights in the regulation or provision of benefits, facilities, services, or information.’ RCW 9.02.100(4).

RCW 9.02.160 provides:

If the state provides, directly or by contract, maternity care benefits, services, or information to women through any program administered or funded in whole or in part by the state, the state shall also provide women otherwise eligible for

any such program with substantially equivalent benefits, services, or information to permit them to voluntarily terminate their pregnancies.

RCW 9.02.170(6) defines ‘state’ to mean ‘the state of Washington and counties, cities, towns, municipal corporations, and quasi-municipal corporations in the state of Washington.’ Because public hospital districts are organized as municipal corporations under RCW 70.44.010, a public hospital district is the ‘state’ hospital for purposes of RCW 9.02.100 and .160. RCW 9.02.160 thus requires a public hospital district to provide ‘substantially equivalent benefits, services, or information to permit [women] to voluntarily terminate their pregnancies’ if two conditions are satisfied: (1) the district provides, directly or by contract, ‘maternity care benefits, services, or information to women,’ and (2) those benefits, services, or information are provided through a program that is ‘administered or funded in whole or in part’ by the ‘state.’

The AG’s opinion goes on to say, “...Our conclusion as to the meaning of RCW 9.02.160 is bolstered by RCW 9.02.100. RCW 9.02.100 declares: ‘(1) Every individual has the fundamental right to choose or refuse birth control,’ and ‘(2) Every woman has the fundamental right to choose or refuse to have an abortion, except as specifically limited by’ RCW 9.02. The state cannot ‘discriminate against the exercise of these rights in the regulation or provision of benefits, facilities, services, or information.’ RCW 9.02.100(4) [16]. A public hospital district that provides ‘maternity care benefits, services, or information to women’ while refusing to provide the ‘substantially equivalent benefits, services, or information’ required in RCW 9.02.160 violates both that section and RCW 9.02.100(4), because the district effectively discriminates against the fundamental rights protected by RCW 9.02.100.”

It is worth reiterating that Initiative 120 does not require a public hospital district to provide ‘maternity care benefits, services, or informa-

tion to women.’ A public hospital district does not violate RCW 9.02.160 by choosing not to provide such benefits, services, or information. But if a public hospital district provides “maternity care benefits, services, or information to women,” directly or by contract, then it must also provide the “substantially equivalent benefits, services, or information” required in RCW 9.02.160. A public hospital district cannot avoid the RCW 9.02.160’s requirement by delegating management responsibility to an administrator under RCW 70.44.060—whether that administrator is an individual or a corporate health care system—both because RCW 9.02.160 precludes a public hospital district from doing by contract what it cannot do directly and because the board of commissioners of a public hospital district remains legally responsible for operations and policy.”

**Swedish Health Services and Providence Health & Services – Merger** In this case, Swedish as a secular hospital has had a preeminent role in provision of maternity services for the western Washington and also allowed abortions. However, with the Providence merger, it was publicly announced that elective terminations of pregnancy would no longer be done at Swedish Hospital or its affiliated campuses,<sup>14</sup> reducing the options for care in the Seattle area. Representatives of ACLU and Planned Parenthood have been active in vocalizing these concerns to the Swedish administration and to major donors. As a result, Swedish has publicly stated that it will refer elective abortions to Planned Parenthood and gave \$2 million to Planned Parenthood to open a clinic adjacent to Swedish’s main Seattle hospital.<sup>15</sup>

**UW Medical Center – PeaceHealth Affiliation**

As a major part of the University of Washington, the UW Medical Center is funded significantly with public money, raising the question of validity of any policy control by PeaceHealth as a result of the recent affiliation. UW Medical Center administrators have not articulated how it will assure that it plans to remain in charge of

policies there. Activists among the medical students and staff, however, have been attempting to gain assurance that if students are trained at PeaceHealth facilities they will receive the full scope of training, including abortion, reproductive services and end of life options. Recently, PeaceHealth announced that they have formed a separate corporation to utilize for mergers with secular institutions, in order to operate without control by the ERD’s. How this is being implemented is among the issues being monitored by the coalition.

**Group Health-Bartell Drug Stores Partnership and More**

This arrangement has no faith-based implications for care and appears to be a practical arrangement to more economically meet the needs of people who don’t have a regular doctor or access to medical care during non-standard hours. But Group Health has also changed its long-standing relationship with Virginia Mason and is now referring patients to Swedish. It has also closed its renowned birthing center in favor of referrals to Swedish. These actions concern activists on behalf of patients who may need abortions or who have complications that require pregnancy terminations while patients are in the hospital. Additionally, Group Health contracts with faith-based hospitals for most hospital care outside the Seattle area. The ability of Group Health patients to be referred for care that would normally be provided by Group Health, and is allowed by state statute, has become an issue for activists within the organization.

Recently, at the Group Health membership meeting, a resolution was passed that assures Group Health patients will be informed and properly referred. The new policy states,

“Group Health is committed to honoring our patients’ rights to receive patient-centered, high-quality and affordable health care. This policy affirms that Group Health will ensure that all Group Health members shall have access to all legal, medically appropriate, and covered

services. Group Health will continue to maintain policies and procedures at the clinical and health plan operational level that are consistent with the principles of this policy.”

### **CONCLUSION**

The trend toward consolidation of services among health care providers is not likely to end in the near future. The high cost of health care and legal and economic demands that services be less expensive will continue to drive health care providers into new configurations of provider relationships. In Washington state, this trend has resulted in a high percentage of cases where faith-based hospitals are the only option for care, and the faith-based policies are not as inclusive as League and other organizations would like them to be.

The League of Women Voters and other interested groups will continue to monitor the extent to which services are provided or denied. One recent activity of the coalition following this matter has been to prepare a checklist of hospital policies, available online in the near future. This checklist will inform the public and potential patients of what they can expect from each hospital. If a hospital has no policy on certain points, then the question of whether there should be a policy will be asked. If a hospital has a policy, it will be examined to determine whether it facilitates, hinders or is neutral regarding access to specific necessary and legal services.

Legislation in Olympia is being considered that could affect how hospitals address these matters, but no specific text has yet been provided.

Continued activism on this issue is important for the foreseeable future to assure that necessary and legal medical services are available and accessible throughout the state.

### **Endnotes**

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2. <https://www.peacehealth.org/about-peace-health/Pages/mission-values.aspx>
3. Neurath, Peter, Swedish-Providence Affiliation Complete, Puget Sound Business Journal, February 1, 2012
4. Porterfield, Elaine, The Swedish/Providence Alliance, Seattle Business, November 2013
5. Ostrom, Carole M., Swedish alliance with Providence is now complete, Seattle Times, February 1, 2012
6. Ostrom, Carol M., UW Medicine, Catholic health system to have ‘strategic affiliation’, SeattleTimes, May 20, 2013
7. <http://www.peacehealth.org/Pages/UW-Affiliation.aspx>
8. <http://care-clinic.org/>
9. According to the Seattle Times, these employees will be Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners (ARNPs); see Ostrom, Carol M., Bartell Drugs, Group Health partner for walk-in “Care Clinics”, Seattle Times, December 2, 2013
10. <http://www.lwv.org/content/public-policy-reproductive-choices>
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13. AGO 2013 No. 3, August 21, 2013, <http://www.atg.wa.gov/AGOOpinions/Opinion.aspx?section=archive&id=31350#.VFzvD-ZUtBD8>
14. Syracopoulos, Tahlia, Posts Tagged ‘hospital mergers’; Hospital Mergers, A Brewing Storm, Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action, February 3, 2014
15. Martin, Nina, Catholic Hospitals Grow, and With Them Questions of Care, ProPublica, October 17, 2013

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Purpose** – This is provided to assist with understanding the words and phrases used in publications related to hospital mergers and affiliations. These are not legal definitions but rather general descriptions.

|                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Accountable Care Organizations (ACO) | ACO's are groups of doctors, hospitals and other health care providers who come together to give coordinated care to their Medicare patients. The goal is to ensure that the patients get the right care at the right time while avoiding unnecessary duplication of services and while preventing medical errors. When an ACO provides high quality care and spends health dollars more efficiently, it shares in the savings it achieves for Medicare.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Acquisition                          | A corporate action in which a company buys most or all of the target company's stake in order to assume control of it. Acquisitions are usually part of a company's growth strategy when it is deemed beneficial to take over existing firms' operations rather than expand its own. The purchase is usually in cash and/or stocks.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Affiliation                          | An official connection or association with another organization (hospital or health care system) involving a formal agreement to join forces. There is no transfer of ownership or property.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Carve Out                            | A service or population not covered in the health insurance company's main contract with the provider and where services are reimbursed according to a different arrangement or rate formula, such as "fee for service" rather than capitation. Examples include high-risk patients and organ transplants.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Certificate of Need (CON)            | Regulatory process requiring certain health care providers to obtain state approval before building specific types of facilities or expanding services. The purpose of the CON process is to ensure the need for specific services or equipment within a particular region or community.<br><br>Certificate of Need programs are aimed at curbing health care facility costs and allowing coordinated planning of new services and construction. Laws authorizing these programs are one mechanism by which state governments seek to reduce overall health and medical costs. Many CON laws were initially put into effect nationally as part of the Federal Health Planning Resources Development Act of 1974. Despite numerous changes in the past 40 years, about 36 states, including Washington, retain some type of CON program, law or agency as of December 2013. |
| Charitable Assets Law                | Charitable organizations must utilize prudent management and proper expenditure of the charities' assets, and donor wishes and expectations must be honored when spending the assets. Adherence to the laws is monitored by the State Attorney General.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Conversion                           | Change from non-profit hospital status or health care system to a for-profit hospital or health system.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Conversion Law                                                            | State statutes and regulations governing the conversion of a non-profit hospital to a for-profit entity. Taxation and anti-trust considerations relative to nonprofit conversions fall under the jurisdiction of the IRS, the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Justice. Health conversion foundations may be formed using the nonprofit's charitable assets and utilized to fund health-related activities for the benefit of the community.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Critical Access Hospital                                                  | A Medicare-certified hospital, located in a rural area more than 35 miles from another hospital, or 15 miles in mountainous terrain, with only secondary roads and limited to fewer than 25 inpatient beds that can be used either for inpatient care or as a swing bed (swing bed means skilled nursing facility care can be provided following inpatient care). The average length of stay is 96 hours, and the hospital must provide 24-hour emergency services. Payment rates from Medicare and Medicaid are typically higher to these hospitals in recognition of the size of the hospital.                                                                                                                                                          |
| Disproportionate Share Hospital                                           | Hospital that serves a large number of Medicaid and uninsured individuals as determined by a federal formula. Additional Medicaid reimbursement is made to these hospitals to help cover their uncompensated care costs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services (ERDs) | Guide established by Catholic Bishops that currently forbid doctors at Catholic hospitals from prescribing contraceptives for the sole purpose of family planning, performing tubal ligations, vasectomies, terminating pregnancy unless the mother's life is in danger or assisting terminally ill patients seeking to end their lives under Washington's Death with Dignity Act.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Federal Trade Commission (FTC)                                            | The federal agency that works to prevent business practices that are anticompetitive, unfair or deceptive to consumers. The FTC works to ensure consumer choice among businesses and providers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Hospice Care                                                              | Multidisciplinary care for terminally ill patients, designed to relieve symptoms rather than provide a cure. Focus is on comfort and quality of life. One objective of Hospice is to keep the patient at home in familiar surroundings for as long as possible.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Medically Necessary                                                       | Per Washington State law, medically necessary describes a requested service that is reasonably calculated to prevent, diagnose, correct, cure, alleviate or prevent worsening of conditions in the patient that could endanger life, cause suffering or pain, or result in an illness or infirmity or threaten to cause or aggravate a handicap, or cause physical deformity or malfunction. Generally, it also means that there is no other equally effective or substantially less costly course of treatment available or suitable for the patient needing the service. "Course of treatment" may include only observation or no treatment at all. The most common examples of non-medically necessary services are cosmetic or experimental services. |
| Merger                                                                    | The consolidation of two or more companies to form a new company by transferring properties to the one surviving company.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

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|                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Palliative Care         | Multidisciplinary care designed to relieve disease symptoms rather than cure them. Focus is on comfort and quality of life. Similar to Hospice care, but may be provided in all stages of a disease.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Partnership             | A form of business organization in which two or more entities manage and operate. Each partner has a fixed proportion of the partnership's assets and losses. A general partnership does not have to be registered.                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Safety Net Hospital     | A hospital that has an "open door" policy to serve patients regardless of their ability to pay. These hospitals serve vulnerable populations including the uninsured, and may also include Medicaid-eligible patients due to the difficulty Medicaid individuals have in accessing care because of low provider reimbursement rates.                                                                                                   |
| Sole Community Hospital | A rural hospital located 15 to 25 miles from another hospital, or travel time to another hospital is at least 45 minutes, or another hospital is inaccessible during severe weather lasting 30 days or more. The hospital is limited to less than 50 beds where no more than 25% of the patients are transferred to another hospital. Enhanced reimbursement is available from Medicare and Medicaid.                                  |
| Standard of Care        | Medical guidelines specifying appropriate treatment based on scientific evidence and collaboration between medical and/or psychological professionals involved in the treatment of a given condition, or diagnosis and treatment processes that should be followed for a certain type of patient, illness or clinical circumstance. An indigent person is as entitled to the same standard of care as a person paying for the service. |
| Usual And Customary     | Payment made to out-of-network service providers based on the rate other health care professionals in a geographic area charge for the same services. Also called "the prevailing rate." In-network providers are paid based on their contract provisions, which could include capitated rates, bundled services rates or fee-for-service payments, share of savings, etc.)                                                            |
| Western HealthConnect   | Entity created by Providence to keep secular medical groups and hospitals independent from Providence's religious policies on end of life and reproductive health care.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

*Cover article continued:*

due to concerns about the potential loss of options for patients who need access to certain kinds of care. The League, along with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), Planned Parenthood, Compassion & Choices and other non-profit organizations, are monitoring the changes occurring among health care providers and will weigh in when positions or policies of the League are affected. For League, the issue is not a specific religion; it is the need to preserve access to health care services that are legally allowable to those who need them.

Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup>Syracopoulos, Thalia, Hospital Mergers: A Brewing Storm, Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action, February 3, 2014.

<sup>2</sup>Syracopoulos, op. cit.

# Unit Meetings

(Unit times and locations subject to change; please verify with unit leader.)

Meetings are open to all.

| Unit Leader email               | Phone        | Time       | Location                                                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Monday, February 9</b>       |              |            |                                                                   |
| <b>FIRST HILL – Joan Lawson</b> |              |            |                                                                   |
| joanvlawson@gmail.com           | 206-382-3147 | 10:00 a.m. | Horizon House, Forum & Social Room<br>900 University St., Seattle |

|                                                        |              |           |                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| <b>SOUTH SEATTLE - Marian Wolfe and Vivian Montoya</b> |              |           |                           |
| hedgwolfe@aol.com                                      | 206-763-9430 | 7:00 p.m. | Hostess: Kassie Koledin   |
| montoyaviv@yahoo.com                                   | 206-695-2620 |           | 5046 Bowen Pl. S, Seattle |

|                                |              |           |                                                                     |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>CAPITOL HILL/MONTLAKE –</b> |              |           |                                                                     |
|                                | 206-329-4848 | 7:15 p.m. | Hostess: Linnea Hirst<br>1602 E McGraw St., Seattle<br>206-322-3076 |

|                                                  |              |            |                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Tuesday, February 10</b>                      |              |            |                                                         |
| <b>BELLEVUE/KIRKLAND/REDMOND – Bonnie Rimawi</b> |              |            |                                                         |
| bonnierim@aol.com                                | 425-820-7127 | 12:00 p.m. | Bellevue Library, Room 6<br>1111 110th Ave NE, Bellevue |

|                                      |              |           |                                                       |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>WEST SEATTLE – Ethel Williams</b> |              |           |                                                       |
| etheljw1@q.com                       | 206-932-7887 | 1:00 p.m. | Daystar Retirement Village<br>2615 SW Barton, Seattle |

|                                                           |              |            |                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Wednesday, February 11</b>                             |              |            |                                                                       |
| <b>NORTHEAST SEATTLE (formerly View Ridge) – Kay Beck</b> |              |            |                                                                       |
| kbeck25@comcast.net                                       | 206-523-3127 | 12:45 p.m. | Brig Bldg. (6344) in Magnuson Park<br>7400 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle |

*Directions: Go into the Park through North entrance at 74<sup>th</sup> and drive EAST toward water. At the STOP sign, turn LEFT to park in front of the Brig, or RIGHT, for more parking. There will be a speaker.*

|                                                                             |              |           |                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>QUEEN ANNE/MAGNOLIA/BALLARD EVENING - Teddy Geokezas and Elsie Simon</b> |              |           |                                      |
| tgeokezas@msn.com                                                           | 206-782-5036 | 7:30 p.m. | Lighthouse Roasters                  |
| elsiesimon@comcast.net                                                      | 206-283-6297 |           | 400 N 43rd St. (at Phinney), Seattle |

(Unit times and locations subject to change; please verify with unit leader.)

| Unit Leader email | Phone | Time | Location |
|-------------------|-------|------|----------|
|-------------------|-------|------|----------|

Thursday, February 12

**ISSAQUAH** – Dorris Martin

|                    |              |            |                                                       |
|--------------------|--------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| dorrismrtn@aol.com | 425-746-9960 | 10:00 a.m. | Hostess: Dorris Martin<br>4210 135th Pl. SE, Bellevue |
|--------------------|--------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------|

**SOUTHEAST KING COUNTY/ENUMCLAW** - Cathy Dormaier

|                      |              |            |                                               |
|----------------------|--------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| clcathy@skynetbb.com | 360-802-6799 | 11:30 a.m. | Kelly's Mercantile<br>1444 Cole St., Enumclaw |
|----------------------|--------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------|

**NORTH CENTRAL** – Jan Orlando

|                 |              |           |                                                                 |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| orlanre@aol.com | 206-524-0936 | 2:00 p.m. | Hostess: Alice Rasp<br>4523 5th Ave NE, Seattle<br>206-633-1835 |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|

Wednesday, February 18

**NORTH KING COUNTY** – Toni Potter/Marjorie Hawkes

|                           |              |           |                                       |
|---------------------------|--------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|
| antoniapotter@comcast.net | 206-365-8949 | 9:15 a.m. | Third Place Commons Mtg Room          |
| mshawkesis@gmail.com      | 425-582-2481 |           | 17171 Bothell Way NE, Lake Forest Pk. |

**SOUTHWEST KING COUNTY** – Mary Ehlers and Kathy Jorgensen

|                        |              |           |                              |
|------------------------|--------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| maryehlers@comcast.net | 253-941-1930 | 7:00 p.m. | Foundation House             |
| kjorgensen@juno.com    | 253-859-8349 |           | 32290 1st Ave S, Federal Way |

Thursday, February 19

**MERCER ISLAND** – Cynthia Howe

|                       |              |           |                                                              |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| howe.john@comcast.net | 206-236-0593 | 9:30 a.m. | Emmanuel Episcopal Church<br>4400 86th Ave SE, Mercer Island |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------|

**UNIVERSITY HOUSE/WALLINGFORD**

|  |              |            |                                                           |
|--|--------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
|  | 206-329-4848 | 10:00 a.m. | University House, Auditorium<br>4400 Stone Way N, Seattle |
|--|--------------|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|

Saturday, February 21

**BALLARD/MAGNOLIA/QUEEN ANNE DAY** – Alice Peterson

|                             |              |            |                                                                            |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| peterson-alice-jack@msn.com | 206-524-5530 | 10:00 a.m. | The Ballard Condos - 2nd Flr.<br>1525 NW 57th St., Seattle<br>206-789-7447 |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## Board & Committee Contacts

### Term Executive Committee

|         |                      |                |              |                           |
|---------|----------------------|----------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| 2013-15 | <i>President</i>     | Ellen Barton   | 206-329-4848 | president@seattlelwv.org  |
| 2013-15 | <i>1st VP-Action</i> | Janet Winans   | 206-323-4825 | janetwinans@earthlink.net |
| 2014-15 | <i>2nd VP</i>        | Mary Jo Vigil  | 206-783-8485 | maryjovigil@icloud.com    |
| 2013-15 | <i>Secretary</i>     | Amanda Clark   | 206-236-0517 | amandac5@comcast.net      |
| 2014-16 | <i>Treasurer</i>     | Cindy Piennett | 206-329-4848 | cindypiennett@gmail.com   |

### Directors

|         |                         |                  |              |                             |
|---------|-------------------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|
| 2013-15 | <i>Program/Outreach</i> | Joanna Cullen    | 206-329-8514 | jfoxcullen@gmail.com        |
| 2014-16 | <i>Membership</i>       | Paneen Davidson  | 206-329-4848 | membership@seattlelwv.org   |
| 2013-15 | <i>Social Justice</i>   | Jayne Freitag    | 425-223-5827 | mjafreitag@comcast.net      |
| 2014-16 | <i>Action</i>           | Pat Griffith     | 206-285-2452 | pgseattle@q.com             |
| 2014-16 | <i>Voter Services</i>   | Julie Anne Kempf | 206-329-4848 | julie@kempf.com             |
| 2014-16 | <i>Program</i>          | Joan Lawson      | 206-329-4848 | joanvlawson@gmail.com       |
| 2014-15 | <i>Voter Editor</i>     | Lisa Peterson    | 206-329-4848 | votereditor@seattlelwv.org  |
| 2014-16 | <i>Voter Services</i>   | Amelia Woolley   | 206-329-4848 | voterservice@seattlelwv.org |

*Note: All board members listed above are also members of the Education Fund Board*

### Education Fund Officers

|         |                  |                  |              |                            |
|---------|------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| 2013-15 | <i>President</i> | Ellen Barton     | 206-329-4848 | president@seattlelwv.org   |
| 2014-15 | <i>1st VP</i>    | Janet Winans     | 206-323-4825 | janetwinans@earthlink.net  |
| 2014-15 | <i>2nd VP</i>    | Julie Anne Kempf | 206-329-4848 | julie@kempf.com            |
| 2013-15 | <i>Secretary</i> | Amanda Clark     | 206-236-0517 | amandac5@comcast.net       |
| 2014-15 | <i>Treasurer</i> | Katie Dudley     | 206-329-4848 | eftreasurer@seattlelwv.org |

### Nominating Committee

|         |              |                      |              |                           |
|---------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| 2014-15 | <i>Chair</i> | Jeannette Kahlenberg | 206-329-4848 | kahlenb@gmail.com         |
| 2014-15 |              | Jeanette Johnson     | 206-329-4848 | jeanettejohnson10@msn.com |
| 2014-15 |              | Carol Goldenberg     | 206-329-4848 | carolsamgo@q.com          |

*Note: Board members Amanda Clark and Amelia Woolley have been appointed to serve on the nominating committee.*

### Off Board Positions

|                  |              |              |                        |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------|
| Campaign Finance | Jean Carlson | 206-774-6649 | carlson.jean@gmail.com |
| KC South Liaison | Mary Ehlers  | 253-941-1930 | maryehlers@comcast.net |
| CIS Coordinator  | Cynthia Howe | 206-236-0593 | howe.john@comcast.net  |

### Committees

|                                 |                        |              |                           |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| <i>Climate Change</i>           | Judy Bevington         |              | gbeving@eskimo.com        |
| <i>Climate Change</i>           | Raelene Gold           |              | raelene@seanet.com        |
| <i>Economics &amp; Taxation</i> | Laura Weese            |              | laura899@earthlink.net    |
| <i>Education</i>                | Joanna Cullen          | 206-329-8514 | jfoxcullen@gmail.com      |
| <i>International Relations</i>  | Carol Goldenberg       |              | carolsamgo@q.com          |
| <i>Social Justice</i>           | Jayne Freitag          | 425-223-5827 | mjafreitag@comcast.net    |
| <i>Transportation</i>           | Janet Winans           | 206-323-4825 | janetwinans@earthlink.net |
| <i>Waterfront</i>               | Nancy & Charles Bagley | 206-282-1578 | candnbagley@comcast.net   |

The League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County  
1620 18th Ave, Suite 101  
Seattle WA 98122

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**Moving? Let us know!**

Call the League office at (206) 329-4848 or  
email [info@seattlelwv.org](mailto:info@seattlelwv.org)

**LWV SEATTLE-KING COUNTY:**

**Hospital Mergers: How Will They Affect Your Care?**

**Thursday, February 5**

6:30 p.m. - Doors open  
*(no discussion leader briefing)*

7:00 p.m. - Forum begins

Seattle First Baptist Church  
1111 Harvard Ave (at Seneca)  
Seattle, WA  
*Accessible entrance on Harvard*

This forum is free and open to the public.

Panelists:

- **Prof. Jamie Shirley**, Full-time Lecturer, UW School of Nursing, Bothell
- **Theresa Connor**, Compassion & Choices
- **Leah Rutman**, Policy Counsel to the ACLU of Washington

We will discuss how hospital mergers between religious affiliated and secular hospitals have the potential to affect care, particularly access to family planning and end-of-life services, and how to address these issues.