



The Voter

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

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Forums for the 21st Century

by Julie Anne Kempf, Voter Services Co-Chair

When the League of Women Voters of South King County and the League of Women Voters of Seattle chose to merge a couple of years ago, we knew that the new local League formed from the two was going to both be something very special and something very challenging.

It has been both. On the special side, we are the largest local League in the nation. The activities of our membership around King County and from our little office on Capitol Hill collaborate to serve the voter education and information needs of 1,175,879 registered voters (in a population of 2 million). Our local League serves more people than the total population of 14 of the 50 states, and we are larger in territory than the state of Rhode Island.

We also feature the largest League unit in the country, the First Hill Unit based at Horizon House. With close to 100 active members, the First Hill Unit draws as many as three hundred attendees to the beautifully appointed Horizon House auditorium for candidate and educational forums.

Our more “normal-sized” units in King County are also active, producing candidate forums, issues nights including popular movie nights, election briefings at many senior and community centers, voter registration drives, and civics education presentations in schools. Individual members participate in a host of League committees, from voter ser-

vices to legislative action and lobbying. The primary work of the League is alive and well.

On the flip side, the vast territory of our new, larger League has presented some challenges. The Enumclaw Unit suddenly found itself nearly 50 miles away from the local office. The Federal Way Unit is nearly 30 miles away. The Issaquah and Bellevue-Kirkland-Redmond Units, which were annexed to the Seattle League in a merger several years ago, also are a significant distance from downtown Seattle. So expecting League members to travel to Seattle for League events is not always realistic.

Another growing pain of the merger has been that there's also a feeling, at times, of a disconnect between the issues important to Seattle Leaguers and those that matter to members in other parts of the county. The Seattle League had a tradition of being an “urban” League – meaning that ensuring that vulnerable and underserved groups, often ethnic minorities, were not being disenfranchised was a prominent part of its mission. LWV-Seattle also produced candidate forums which focused on Seattle and urban issues. The Lake Washington East and South King County Leagues served their voter populations differently by producing well-regarded local candidate forums, and registering voters and making civics education presentations in local middle and high schools.

While our voter service activities cover the wider county, with candidate forums and briefings on ballot issues, our monthly forums are still al-

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Connecting with the Leadership

Somehow my brain just thinks that the New Year begins in September. I know January is the beginning of the calendar year with all its symbolism of taking on new ideas and challenges but I feel pretty launched into my challenges for the New Year already. From my perch on the Transportation Committee, the challenge will be how to connect our positions and concerns to the new legislative session. From my perch on the Board of LWVS-KC, the challenge is planning the calendar into and through 2014 for the League. That means reaching out to all of the rest of you, including those who have long term commitments to the League and those who are just beginning to explore the various opportunities and roles that the league offers.

I encourage each of you to consider what you most value about yourself. What is your interest that energizes you or, perhaps more important, drains you of energy. I have found the League to be my best resource for acting on both those elements in myself. The League has offered me validating connections with so many remarkable people who share my concerns and are interested in joining me to focus my energy in ways that have stopped that feeling of being drained out. Many of us joined during the age when the brains of women were not valued anywhere. Really smart young women felt isolated in their homes with their young children and unable to find an outlet for their intelligence until they found the League. That is not the case for young women today. Most young women take their intelligence and energy into the professional world. However, that does not mean that all of our best qualities can be put to use there. The League is an important place to let those energies come into full bloom.

For those of you whose new year does begin in January, I'd like to invite you to take an invento-

ry of what your membership in the LWVS-KC means to you and to the rest of us. What are the best things that you have to offer? Has the league offered you the opportunity to use those best things? Are there new challenges that you can bring to us?

We will be asking some of you to consider joining our Board of Directors. We hope you will call us to tell us that you are interested. Serving on the Board has provided me with a remarkable perspective of League work and our reputation as a specially valued public servant. Serving on the Transportation Committee has taught me amazing things about transportation while it has challenged me to use my best efforts to increase my leadership skills. Please consider joining one of our various committees because they provide wonderful opportunities to learn as you grow.



January does mean PLANNING. Units have been discussing the issues that they are most interested in the League pursuing next and longer term. The Board is collecting and prioritizing those ideas as we plan for forums, hot topics, and perhaps a new study. If you haven't sent in your suggestion, do it today.

LWVUS is doing the same thing. Once again, the Board is soliciting suggestions for LWVUS advocacy priorities from members. The Board must prioritize and consider those issues where we, as a national organization, might be able to make a difference. Their deadline for ideas is January 11. So make a New Year's resolution to send in your idea. Go to www.lwv.org and click on members advocacy, projects and studies and then click on forms, tools & applications to submit your thoughts.

Janet Winans
1st VP - Action

January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			January 1 New Year's Day	2	3	4 Board Meeting 9:00 a.m.
5	6 Voter Deadline	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 Transportation Committee 10:00 a.m.	22	23 Education Committee 10:00 a.m.	24	25 Econ. & Tax. Committee 9:30 a.m.
26	27	28	29	30	31	February 1 Board Meeting 9:00 a.m.
2	3 Int'l Relations Committee 12:45 p.m. Voter Deadline	4	5	6 Gun Safety Forum 7:30 p.m.	7	8

Units meet during shaded period. The office will be closed until January 6, 2014.

JANUARY

Board Meeting
Saturday, January 4
9:00 a.m.
League Office

The Voter Deadline
Monday, January 6

Transportation Committee
Tuesday, January 21
10:00 a.m.
League Office

Education Committee
Thursday, January 23
10:00 a.m.
League Office

Economics & Taxation
Committee
Saturday, January 25
9:30 a.m.
909 E Newton #D-9, Seattle

FEBRUARY

Board Meeting
Saturday, February 1
9:00 a.m.
League Office

The Voter Deadline
Monday, February 3

International Relations
Committee
Monday, February 3
12:45-2:45 p.m.
League Office

Gun Safety Forum
Thursday, February 6
7:30 p.m.
Seattle First Baptist Church

Winter Weather Reminder!

If Seattle Schools are delayed or closed, then the office will delay opening or be closed.

Call the office or check the website for the status of forums or other events.

Check with committee chairs and unit leaders to verify if those meetings will be cancelled.

Please stay safe!

Forum Schedule

<p>January - No Forum</p> <p>February 6 - Gun Safety</p> <p>March 6 - Nat'l Agriculture Update</p> <p>April 3 - Living Wage</p> <p>May 1 - TBA</p>

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 7:30 p.m. Most forums are held at the Seattle First Baptist Church, but occasionally they are scheduled in other locations and times. The tentative schedule of upcoming forums for 2013-2014 appears at left; check *The Voter* each month or the LWVS-KC website, seattlelwv.org, for up-to-date information.

Board Briefs by Amanda Clark, Secretary

The League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County Board did not meet in December. The next meeting is scheduled for January 4, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.

(Cover Article continued:)

most exclusively held in Seattle. There's a reason for this beyond tradition – Seattle is a central location and has the largest number of members. But while some of these forums are well-attended, some are not, leading us to think that we may need to reexamine how we are using our resources. Can we use some of the organizational energy that goes into producing the forums in a way that benefits more people? With the decline in volunteer hours available, we have to make sure we use those hours wisely.

We are asking you, our members, how we can better serve this new, larger, and more diverse local League. As you participate, whether as an individual or a unit member, in program planning this month, please keep these issues in mind. In addition, we will be sending out a survey later in the month to ask some additional questions. Your thoughtful participation in all of this is essential to guiding us forward as we approach our centennial.



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

Meetings can sometimes be subject to last minute changes. Call the LWVS-KC office at 206-329-4848 to confirm.

Economics and Taxation Committee

DATE: Saturday, January 25

TIME: 9:30 a.m.

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

Our focus is on the issue of a “living wage.” Anyone interested in attending please call Jeannette Johnson, 206-724-3392.

Education Committee

DATE: Thursday, January 23

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

LOCATION: League Office

Speaker: Puget Sound Educational Service District Associate Superintendent for Early Learning, Luba Bezborodnikova.

If you have questions or comments, please leave a message for committee chair Joanna Cullen, at info@seattlelwv.org or 206-329-4848.

International Relations Committee

DATE: No meeting in January

TIME: 12:45 – 2:45 p.m.

PLACE: League Office

Next Meeting: February 3

Transportation Committee

DATE: Tuesday, January 21

TIME: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

PLACE: League Office

Subject: Engaging the Legislature
Speaker: Mike Lindblom, Seattle Times Transportation Reporter.

We encourage participation by all interested members in our committees. 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 in a more informal manner without regularly scheduled meetings. If not, we may be able to help connect you with like-minded people to start your own.

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

A NEW YEAR—A NEW BOARD

A few good women (perhaps even a man)—that's what we need!

The nominating committee is looking for new Board members to lead the Seattle-King County League in 2014-2015. This is an opportunity for a member to use her/his skills, to develop new ones, and to work with other interested and interesting people. We would like a Board that is diverse in age, geography, ethnicity, experience, skills, and interests.

Each Board member will have a particular portfolio or role that is interesting to her and is important to the success of the League. If you know someone who would be interested, or you yourself are interested, please let us know. This is a wonderful opportunity to engage in a meaningful activity that not only provides personal development but is vital for the League and, in turn, makes a considerable contribution to democracy.

Please contact me or any of the nominating committee members in the next week.

Judy Bevington, Chair, gbeving@eskimo.com

Judith Hance, judithhance2@gmail.com

Cynthia Howe, howe.john@comcast.net

Julie Anne Kempf, Julie@kempf.com

Lisa Peterson, m_k_productions@yahoo.com

MJ Vigil, mjvigil@starbucks.com

Or call the office, 206-329-4848, with your suggestions.

LAST CALL FOR GREAT DECISIONS

Members of the League of Women Voters of Seattle/King County can choose from four Great Decisions 2014 discussion groups.

Capitol Hill: at the home Vicky Downs, 909 East Newton D9, Seattle, beginning January 28, 7:15 to 9:00 p.m. and continuing on alternate Tuesdays through May 6. Call Vicky at 206-328-3926 or Carol Goldenberg at 206-527-8589 to let us know if you plan to participate.

South King County: at Wesley Homes Retirement Community in Des Moines will meet on alternate Wednesdays from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. beginning January 8. Call Mary Ehlers at 253-941-1930 for more information.

West Seattle: the first meeting on Friday, January 17, 12:30 to 2:30 p.m., will be at the home of Ethel Williams, 5905 Beach Drive SW, Seattle. Members will determine subsequent dates and locations. Call Adele Reynolds at 206-621-4867 for more information.

Mercer Island: at Island House, 7810 SE 30th. Contact Lael Braymer at 206-275-1452 for more information.

Participants need to order the \$20.00 Great Decisions 2014 briefing book from the Foreign Policy Association, 1-800-477-5836 or www.fpa.org

For more information on the program, refer to page 8 of the December *Voter*.

VOTER SERVICES by Joanna Cullen

Thank you to all of the great volunteers in Seattle-King County League and to Allison Feher. I look forward to continuing our work in 2014 and recruiting and training more volunteers for voter registration and speaker's bureau. I hope all are recovered from a pleasant holiday season and ready to reconnect. Contact Joanna Cullen jfoxcullen@gmail.com for more information.

Getting Connected Membership News

NEW MEMBER BIO by Carol Goldenberg

Barbara Dahl's interests in social and political affairs first found expression at the University of Minnesota when she became president of the Residential Council and received the Leadership Northstar Award upon graduation. She joined a nursing school faculty and became department chair in health care. Later, with two children in tow, she and her husband moved to Southern Illinois University where they pursued graduate studies. After receiving her M.A. she designed and directed a women's health care program for the University and became adjunct professor in the Psychology Department. She also developed a Women's Center for crisis services in the community.

Barbara's move to Seattle led to hospital administration at Swedish including the design of the first birthing center in Seattle. She moved into policy work at Group Health with the Consumer Cooperative division. She authored and managed the process of the first three levels of care program for long term care in the state. Continuing her interest in health issues, she joined Washington State's DSHS to become a certified federal survey regulator as an investigator and a quality assurance consultant for nursing homes.

Barbara has served on the board of University Unitarian Church and is a member of the Metropolitan Democratic Club, a volunteer for Seattle's theatre, opera, and symphony, and a docent for Seattle Art Museum's Olympic Sculpture Park. She attends University of Washington's Access classes in her passion for art history, architecture, and music. She enjoys art classes at the Frye Museum and the lecture series at the Seattle Asian Art Museum in Volunteer Park. In LWV she is looking forward to expanding her knowledge through League's "breadth of excellence and contribution to causes and issues."

WHAT WILL YOUR LEGACY BE?

by Lisa Unsoeld-Chang

By including the League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County in your estate plans, you leave a legacy of making democracy work for generations of citizens to come. Whether your passion is for League's voter service and education programs, good government advocacy, or both, consider including the League in your will, trust, insurance policy, or retirement plan. Dozens of passionate past and present League members have already stepped forward to express their most cherished values by leaving a deeply meaningful gift to the League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County in their estate plans.

We invite you to join this special group of LWVSKC supporters who have made responsible and informed citizenship an important part of their personal legacy. Whatever your stage of life and whatever your family and financial picture, there are flexible ways to plan a gift that works for you.

If you have questions about how to include the League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County in your estate plans, please call the League office today at 206-329-4848.

IN MEMORIAM

Susan Sanders, who died on November 12, was one of those LWV members working tirelessly behind the scenes on a number of projects including the *Voter* and some reading committees. She joined League after retiring from Boeing and served on the board of King County South for several years before its merger with Seattle-King County. She was instrumental in getting the KCS *Voter* online and was its editor for a number of years. Becky Cox recalls that when she took over the editing of the *Voter*, she still relied heavily on Susan for help, especially on technical issues. She described Susan as her “go-to person for all things computer.”

Susan also volunteered her meticulous editing and writing skills to the publication of the TRY even before her League chapter merged with Seattle-King County. Both before and after the merger, Susan was active in the Federal Way unit that later became the Southwest King County unit. She was passionate about public financing of political campaigns and women’s rights.

When not busy with a League project, Susan was a voracious reader and an active participant in the multi-cultural book group sponsored by King County Library. She loved rural living, classical music, theater and laughter.

Marguerite Kuhns was a member of the League for almost 42 years when she passed away in August. A UW graduate in Journalism, she was an advertising copywriter for the Bon Marché for 35 years. She put those skills to use for the League in many ways: serving on the Seattle Board as secretary and *Voter* editor, and as the Shoreline unit leader. She worked on the state study of Juvenile Justice and Corrections, and on the local studies of Drugs and the Community, Women’s Issues in the 1990’s, Homelessness, and Current Issues in Education (1996); she chaired the Seattle Policing study in 2002. In her “spare” time she wrote a number of letters to the editor that were published in the *Seattle Times*. Allison Fehrer remembers working with her on the Board - “she was a tireless worker with a sharp wit and an infectious smile. She will be missed.”

In 2008 she moved to Tacoma to be near her daughter, Marni Hamburg, who says: “She loved being a part of the League! I know she really missed it when she moved.” Marguerite included a generous donation to the League in her estate which her daughter matched. We thank her and her family for the many gifts she gave to the League.

Features

NEWS FROM THE ECONOMICS AND TAXATION COMMITTEE

By Jeanette Johnson, Chair

This is the fifth in a series of articles about America's growing economic inequality crisis and what we can do about it based on Timothy Noah's book, *The Great Divergence*. This month I begin to look at how some policies of the federal government have helped to promote economic inequality.

Until recently, most economists argued that the gap between the haves and have-nots was not the result of federal policy making, but rather the inevitable result of the global free market system becoming increasingly more efficient. Underlying this argument was the belief that the have-nots were somehow in that position because they lacked the training or education necessary to participate in the new economy. Lately this consensus has begun to unravel as academics have been digging into the reasons why the level of economic inequality in the U.S. is so much more extreme than in other industrialized democracies.

Before getting into the specifics of some of these findings, it's useful to provide some history as to how we got to this point. After WWII and into the early 1960s, business in the U.S. flourished. This began to change in the mid-1960s when corporate profits as a share of national income peaked and then fell rapidly during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Increasingly, the business community saw itself under attack and blamed their problems on government.

Business grew even more alarmed when, during President Nixon's first term, Congress created the Environmental Protection Agency, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the Consumer Product and Safety Commission, and approved a raise in the maximum capital gains rate, a reduction in the oil depletion allowance, and other legislation viewed as being anti-business.

In response, the Chamber of Commerce and others mounted an all-out campaign to promote the interests of business and counter what it viewed as attacks on the business sector. By 1980 the membership of the Chamber had doubled and its budget tripled. At the same time, the number of lobbyists in Washington D.C. proliferated. Today, more than \$3 billion annually is spent on lobbying, dominated mostly by business groups and individual corporations. It is worth noting that not one labor union is included among the top 20 lobbying groups in Washington D. C. and the only group not affiliated with business is the AARP.

It would be hard to overestimate the impact these efforts have had on public policy. Suddenly the conversation changed from discussions about legislation to promote the general welfare to discussions about the need to support business, reduce the size of government, reduce regulations, and collapse the top income tax rates. It is no coincidence that since the late 1970's corporate profits have skyrocketed and corporate income taxes have declined.

How have governmental policies impacted economic inequality? One specific mechanism is the federal income tax. The evidence is well documented, according to Thomas Piketty and Emmanuel Saez of the Paris School of Economics and Berkeley, respectively, that U.S. federal taxes have become more regressive since the late 1970s. The surprise is that it's not primarily due to the steep drop in the top marginal tax rate, but rather due to a decrease in corporate income taxes and to a smaller degree a drop in estate and gift taxes. Another key factor has been a shift by the top income earners away from highly-taxed categories of income into other areas which provide greater shelter against tax liabilities.

I will explore more about how federal governmental policies have impacted economic inequality in a future article.

UPDATE ON SEATTLE'S PRESCHOOL FOR ALL PLAN

by Nancy Bagley

Councilmember Tim Burgess, Chair of the Seattle City Council Education Committee, met with our Education Committee on December 5 to discuss moving forward on the Preschool for All Plan adopted by the City Council in September. Last month the City Council adopted a budget that adds over \$650,000 to increase early learning opportunities for Seattle's children, including \$488,000 to fund the design and implementation standards for a voluntary, high quality universal preschool program for all of Seattle's three- and four-year-olds.

Research shows that investing in early learning is a cost-effective way to prepare children for kindergarten, reduce gaps in academic achievement, and reduce high drop out rates. When asked about the wisdom of emphasizing academic achievement in preschool, Burgess assured us that social development is the skill most needed for school readiness, and that Seattle's program will be play oriented and appropriate for young children. He envisions a full-day program that includes about four hours of curriculum for cognitive development. A parent could drop the child off on the way to work, and pick her up on the way home. A committee member suggested using a more comprehensive term like "early learning" for the program rather than "preschool."

Consultants who have worked on successful universal early learning programs in other parts of the country will be hired soon to help develop a plan by the end of April 2014 under the direction of the City's Office for Education. An analysis is under way of the numbers of young children currently enrolled in early learning programs in Seattle and how many are not being served.

Issues that must be addressed include assuring high quality curriculum, well-trained and well-paid teachers, equal access for all eligible children, and parental engagement. How to fund the program is the thorniest issue. The annual cost of a high quality preschool program can range from \$8,000 to \$17,000 per child. The City hopes to make the program free for all families up to the federal poverty level, with a sliding scale for the rest of the families depending on their income. One funding possibility would be an increase in local property taxes.

Join the Education Committee for a conversation with Puget Sound Educational Service District Associate Superintendent for Early Learning Luba Bezborodnikova on Thursday, January 23, 2014, at 10:00 a.m. at the League office. Associate Superintendent Bezborodnikova will provide a more regional overview of early childhood education programs and models and outline the type of support available through the Educational Service District.

Our Education Committee will continue to follow the development of the Preschool for All Plan. We welcome the involvement of all members in this exciting program. For more information, see the Preschool for All website: www.seattle.gov/council/issues/Preschoolforall/default.html

News Update: Friday, December 13, 2013, Superior Court Judge Jean Rietschel ruled that Charter Schools are constitutional, but that they are not constitutionally "common schools" and cannot receive common school funding. The summary judgment can be read at the following link: <http://ourvoicewashingtonea.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Order-on-Motion-for-Summary-Judgment.pdf>

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE REPORT by Janet Winans, Chair

House Transportation Committee Chair Judy Clibborn was the LWV Transportation Committee speaker for the November meeting, which was postponed until December 3.

Just a reminder: The 2013 legislature ended after two special sessions without a transportation bill. Because advocates for the many different elements of transportation mounted intense pressure on the Senate Transportation Committee, Co-Chairs Curtis King (R) and Tracy Eide (D) held a series of “listening sessions” all across the state. Both senators and their colleagues responded to that constituent energy by agreeing to work together again to create a solution that met the critical demands of the Democratic majority in the House and the Republican majority in the Senate. The two most difficult issues are quite interesting. The Democrats in the House and the Senate see transportation as a multi-modal enterprise, i.e., all modes of moving people and cargo, requiring state funding in all areas of the state. The Republicans see transportation as roads based, automotive, single driver in a road using vehicle, and gas tax funded. The gas tax can not be used for any purpose other than roads by the 18th Amendment to the State Constitution.

Representative Clibborn has been working daily since October to craft a transportation bill that both houses of the legislature will pass. She hopes to finish her draft before the new session begins in January. She believes that it is now or never because only issues with bipartisan support will move quickly enough through the system to pass.

The House budget does address the multi-modal, multi-regional necessity to maintain current infrastructure and the necessity to provide new infrastructure for both the present and the future of the state’s economy. That means we need new revenue to fund it and new methods to create that new revenue. It is interesting to note that

the gas tax revenue is completely committed until 2035 because of projects authorized in 2003. The Senate Republicans are adamantly opposed to creating any new kinds of revenue. Instead, while their budget allows for some of the road projects included in the House budget, they intend to fund those projects with existing revenue, such as redirecting the sales tax the state pays for the materials used in road building and maintenance.

That does sound logical. Why should the state pay sales tax on its purchases? Doesn’t that just add to the costs of its projects? Yes, BUT. In the scheme of the managing of money that is politics, the sales tax is one of the only sources of revenue available to the General Fund Budget, out of which non-road services are funded. Allocating the sales tax for roads to road funding will reduce the General Fund budget by exactly those “savings.”

Multi-modalism is the second serious difference between the House and Senate. Multi-modalism includes mass transit for Democrats, but Republicans have a very different attitude toward mass transit. After much effort, urban elected officials and urban constituents convinced the Senate committee that mass transit equals congestion relief and congestion is a road problem. The Senate budget from the 2013 session did not even provide the legislation necessary to allow urban regions to tax themselves by raising sales tax to cover transit. That is why Metro Transit is again planning to reduce services further. Their new budget does include authorization for King and Spokane counties to tax themselves, but it does not include any state funding to share in the costs for those urban areas or for extending mass transit out of particular urban areas.

As I write this on December 12, these differences are still unresolved. We see the evidence of this failure to act in the cuts to Metro. However, even the office overseeing the 520 bridge is in jeopardy. The 2014 legislative session has a lot of work ahead.

BOOK REVIEW by Vicky Downs

THE OATH: THE OBAMA WHITE HOUSE AND THE SUPREME COURT

By Jeffrey Toobin

My father was a lawyer, so conversations about the law occasionally took place at the dinner table. Though I learned such things as the meaning of “tort,” I have no memory of any conversation at all about specific judges or about the justices on the Supreme Court.

In marked contrast, the current Supreme Court’s bitterly contested 5-to-4 decisions such as *Citizens United* that deregulated much campaign finance, or the Affordable Care Act that was upheld, are discussed by many of us, and we often know how each justice voted. This book tells us how the personalities of the justices can and do affect their view of the law, and thereby affect us all.

Toobin has written a very readable book about the Supreme Court describing how it has changed under Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr. He uses President Barack H. Obama as a comparison. Both Obama and Roberts possess “a powerful intellect and considerable charm,” both graduated from Harvard Law School and they are both gifted writers. But, when considering the Constitution and existing law, the “apostle of change” is Roberts. The author says he uses the justice system to make change while the President prefers to use “elections” as his “battlefield of choice.”

We learn that in recent years the stakes have often been high on some of the 5-to-4 decisions, and the personalities of the justices are influential. We learn that Justice Antonin Scalia can’t resist making jokes, that Justice Clarence Thomas acts as the “conservative intellectual path breaker” and is the justice who paid “far less deference to prior ruling [precedent]...than anyone else on the Court.” We also learn that Justice Samuel Alito probably asks the most astute questions of lawyers who come before the Court, and Justice Anthony Kennedy has a “judge-centered, al-

most messianic approach to law,” while Justice Sonia Sotomayor can often be counted on to ask practical questions.

Toobin describes how profoundly eager the five conservative justices have been to find ways to overturn *Roe v. Wade*. He begins to explain this by quoting former Justice Sandra Day O’Connor, a “moderate Republican” who said, when getting ready to leave the Court, “What makes this harder, is that it’s my party that’s destroying the country.” Among other things, she would no longer be the swing vote to save *Roe v. Wade*, once a more conservative justice took her seat on the Court.

The grand finale of the book revolves around the case to uphold or destroy President Obama’s Affordable Care Act. In Toobin’s opinion, the conservative justices “went too far” trying to utterly nullify the health care law. He suggests that if the law were demolished, the Democrats would have argued forcefully against the Supreme Court itself and thereby eroded both its moral and perhaps even its legal authority. To save the reputation of the Court, he suggests that Roberts found a way to use taxes to uphold most of the health care law. In doing so, Roberts may have saved “Obamacare,” but he also opened the way to scaling back the scope of the Commerce Clause. Toobin quotes Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s opinion that Roberts’ “rigid reading of the Commerce Clause makes scant sense and is stunningly retrogressive.” He says that in future rulings the Court could chip away at economic regulations.

Jeffrey Toobin is good at explaining complicated law and he made this book a page-turner!

The opinions in this review are personal and do not represent those of the LWV.

January Program: Program Planning

2014 - 2015 Local and National Program Planning

Choosing issues for study and emphasis for the coming year to two years

Principles of the League of Women Voters

- *The League of Women Voters believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States.*
- *The League of Women Voters believes that good democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens.*
- *The League of Women Voters believes that the right to vote must be protected for every citizen; that every person should have access to free public education which provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic, or administrative discrimination.*
- *The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government.*
- *The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; that government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation; promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest; share in the solution of economic and social problems which affect the general welfare; promote a sound economy; and adopt domestic policies which facilitate the solution of international problems.*
- *The League of Women Voters believes that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems and that the development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of peace.*

This year, we will be participating in the program planning process at the national and local levels. Please prepare for the program planning unit meetings by reviewing the national and local positions for completeness and relevance. Positions in brief appear in this *Voter*. Links to our full positions and the national positions (aka Impact on Issues 2012 – 2014) can be found on our website, seattlelwv.org/advocacy. For a print copy call the LWVS-KC office. At unit meetings, discussion time should be divided between national and local program planning. There is a form to be completed for each.

Local Program Planning:

At the local level, program planning consists of identifying the issues League should be working on in the coming year. The first step is to review the existing positions and determine whether we need new positions in order to be able to act on a current issue; whether any existing positions need to be updated; and whether there are positions that are no longer relevant and should be eliminated.

If members see a need for new local positions, they may want to suggest a study. An appropriate issue for a study must:

- fall within the principles of the LWV;
- be one on which governmental action is needed;
- be within the province of local government;
- be one to which the League can make a significant contribution; and
- be timely.

In addition, options must exist for citizen action, and there must be sufficient energy within League to carry out the work of a study committee.

Please note that studies are adopted by the League at the Annual Meeting in May. By that

time, members interested in working on the study should have defined a scope and focus for the study.

However, there are many current issues on which our positions are up-to-date, but on which League action or citizen education is nevertheless desirable. Such issues are appropriate for “hot topic” forums. Unlike studies, hot topics need not be limited to local issues. The planning form on page 17 lists the most popular topics suggested by our members and committees. We are asking units to pick their top three from this list and rank them 1, 2, 3. In addition, we are asking members to indicate which topics they might be willing to work on. This does not require a huge commitment of time; it simply means helping to find speakers and background readings for one month’s program. But we do need such help: the topics that appear on the final schedule will be those on which people are willing to work.

We are fortunate to have engaged and active standing committees which have plans for next year, including a study of the living wage proposed by the Economics and Taxation Committee and a proposal for a forum on Early Childhood Education by the Education Committee. A new Climate Change Committee, chaired by Judy Bevington and Raelene Gold plans to begin meeting soon. Our committees always welcome new members; see page 6 for information on meeting times or check our website for the latest information.

National Program Planning:

National program planning follows a similar process to ours but with a few more layers involved. In recent years Washington has been a strong player at convention with the successful adoption of a concurrence on the update of our arms control position and the adoption of the study on privatization in 2010. In 2012 we fell 3

votes short of adopting review of our campaign finance positions. This year there is little chatter among the local leagues around the country and the only item we've heard suggested is a recommendation the League get back to holding the Presidential debates. Topics being suggested locally that might also be worth considering for national study or update include: health of the oceans, aging issues, job safety, factory farms, hospital mergers (religious affiliations), and income/wage gap.

The criteria for adoption of a study listed in the local program planning section above, particularly with respect to the time and other resources it will require, apply to national studies as well. Suggestions that have names attached will be given considerably more weight. If you have an issue you are particularly passionate about and want to see recommended, we suggest emailing the unit leaders and asking them to discuss it at their meeting. The board will need a scope and focus to submit to national right away and then you might want to plan a trip to Dallas in early June to caucus and lobby for your idea!

STUDIES FROM THE LAST TEN YEARS

Local:

- Air Quality
- Public Health
- King County Finances
- Economic Development in the Seattle Area
- Human Rights in Post 9/11 Foreign Policy
- Early Care and Education of Young Children
- Corporate Subsidies in our Communities
- Immigration
- Water Drainage
- Privatization
- Port of Seattle
- Reclaimed Water
- Central Waterfront

National:

- Immigration Issues
- Women and Climate Change
- National Popular Vote
- Role of the Federal Gov't in Education
- Privatization

Note to Unit Leaders:

Please keep an eye out for the reporting forms that we will be mailing to you. They will include some additional information and announcements for your units and will have more space for writing your responses.

As always, please be sure to include the number of members attending the meeting and the number of guests, if any.

REPORTING FORM: 2014-2015 LOCAL PROGRAM PLANNING SUGGESTIONS**1. New study or update proposal**

Topic/focus:

Members willing to work on issue (please indicate whether you would be willing to chair a study committee):

2. Hot topic selections

Please make three choices from the topics below and rank according to which ones members would most like to see in next year's program. 1 is the highest rank.

Topic	Rank	Interested Members
Climate Change		
Human trafficking in county		
Transportation/mass transit in county		
Aging issues		
Hospital mergers		
Police department issues		
Affordable Care Act in WA		
Homelessness in Seattle/KC		
Mental health issues		
Coal trains		

3. Other suggestions

We received too many suggestions to include them all in the list above. However, if there is a topic that at least three members of your unit would be willing to work on, please list it below and it will be considered.

Topic	Interested Members
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4. Comments on program & the planning process

Program Planning forms must be returned to the League office by January 24th.

REPORTING FORM: 2014 -2016 NATIONAL PROGRAM PLANNING SUGGESTIONS**1. Review/Update of an existing League Position (see *Impact on Issues*)**

What is the position you wish to review?

Why does it need review?

2. New Study or Program Item

Topic and scope of study or program item:

3. Concurrence

Title:

Name and location of the local or state League study/position with which your unit is recommending concurrence:

Please include the names of individuals interested in working on the above recommendations.

Program Planning forms must be returned to the League office by January 24th.



The League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County Local Positions in Brief

as of May 16, 2013

Editor's Note: The positions that follow have been shortened because of limitations of space. The subheadings and criteria listings have been removed. The years listed after the position are those in which it was adopted or revised. For a complete set of the current positions, including the national and state positions, visit our website: www.seattlelww.org/advocacy.

CITY GOVERNMENT

Citizen Participation

- Support measures to ensure communications between city officials, local governmental entities and the public so as to bring city government closer to the people and make it more responsive to their needs. 1963, 1972, 1982, 1984, 1985, 1994, 1995, 1999, 2003

Vision of the City

- Support measures to achieve our vision of the most livable city through cooperation by city government with individuals, community organizations and business. 1974, 1976, 1983, 1984, 1990, 1994

Economic Development

- Support measures to achieve a healthy economy characterized by services that meet basic human needs. 1995
- Support measures to enhance the economy. 1995
- Support the use of public funds for economic development that benefits the public. 2006
- Support the evaluation of publicly-funded economic development activities to ensure that stated goals are achieved. 2006
- Support business regulation that is clear and consistent, and that protects public health, worker safety, and the environment. 2006
- Support legislation that links the granting and continuation of corporate subsidies, tax preferences, and incentives to specific criteria which ensures transparency and accountability. 2006

Neighborhoods

- Support communication and cooperation between the city, other local governmental entities and neighborhoods to plan for, create and maintain healthy neighborhoods. 1992, 1993, 1994, 2002, 2003
- Support a process that allows stakeholders to participate in the development and implementation of neighborhood plans. 2002

Land Use Planning and Zoning

- Support measures to achieve comprehensive, coordinated, long and short-range planning for the city with provision for periodic revisions. 1972, 1976, 1983, 1984, 1994, 2004
- Support zoning processes that allow flexibility and diversity in the neighborhoods and which provide for early neighborhood involvement in proposed development. 1965, 1966, 1973, 1977, 1990, 1992, 1994
- Support the interdisciplinary approach in comprehensive planning. 1969, 1972, 1974, 1984
- Support density that is well planned, respects neighborhoods, facilitates public transportation, is environmentally sensitive and complies with growth management open space goals. 1992, 1994

Publicly Owned Property

- Support legally required procedures for determining when and what kinds of property are considered surplus. LWE 2004

Public-Private Partnerships

- Support measures to ensure accountability and adequate citizen participation/oversight in public-private partnerships. Our vision recognizes that public-private partnerships may serve as a mechanism for the City to work in concert with the private sector to achieve public objectives if specific elements are present. 2002

Privatization

- The following core services, functions and assets critical to the well-being of the people, should remain with government and not be transferred to the private sector: Courts, police, public health, public schools, prisons, voter services, taxation, parks, lakes, water and mineral rights, beaches, streams, and forests. 2010
- Specific criteria should be the basis for decisions regarding whether core government services, functions and assets not listed in the preceding section should be transferred to the private for-profit sector. 2010
- Public agencies are required to make a documented finding of adequate return on investment for the public for any government contribution of funds or assets to the private sector. Periodic performance audits should be required and made public regarding whether stated public benefits were met. 2010
- Government employees and elected officials after leaving government service should be prohibited for two years from working for any private company for which they had oversight responsibilities or authority over awarding contracts. 2010

Governmental Structures

- Support home rule for the city of Seattle. 1963, 1975, 1984
- The city should have control over those matters which are of strictly local concern.
- Support measures to increase accountability, responsiveness and efficiency of city government.
- Support the separation of powers and an adequate system of checks and balances among the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government (and these respective functions), with the responsibilities of each being clearly defined. 1963, 1969, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1990
- Support non-partisan municipal elections and the short ballot principle. 1963, 1969, 1973, 1975, 1996

- Support election criteria to foster fair and effective representation. 1996

Budget and Finance

- Support adequate financial resources for city government.
- Support criteria for use in prioritizing programs and projects. 1988
- Support measures and procedures to ensure that the city's budget and the budgets of other local governmental entities are prepared using sound financial management procedures and that citizens have ample opportunity to participate in the development and review of the proposed annual budget. 1983, 1988, 2003

Capital Improvement Projects

- Support specific methods for financing capital improvements. 1985, 1987
- Support measures to evaluate the development and implementation of capital improvement projects. 1985

Law Enforcement/Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation

- Support a well-trained and adequate police force, responsive to public needs. 1969, 1979, 2002
- Support police policies based on adequate planning, adequate staffing and adequate training, that protect the rights of free speech and assembly, while providing safety for all. 2002, 2008
- Support an emphasis in law enforcement on building trust in immigrant communities, to include the policy of asking about an individual's immigration status only if he/she has been charged with a felony or misdemeanor. 2008
- Support local governmental programs for crime prevention and rehabilitation. 1970, 1979, 1994

Trade

- Support the encouragement of more trade activity if this growth is well planned and sensitive to environmental concerns and to the needs of workers both in the U.S. and internationally. 1978, 1982
- Support an international trade policy set primarily at the national level. The State and City should be involved in formulating this policy.

Municipal Court

- Support a municipal court system organized to effectively and efficiently meet the needs of our urban community. 1986

Ethics in Government

- Support ethics in government and measures to ensure that public officials and employees and members of boards, commissions, and advisory committees perform their responsibilities in the public interest in accordance with the highest ethical standards and measures to increase citizen confidence in government. 1994, 2003

Public Library

- Support a public library system that provides the public with fundamental library services and access to information technology. 1993

HUMAN RESOURCES/SOCIAL POLICY

Human Services

- Support measures to provide basic food, shelter and health care for those unable to provide for themselves and to provide training and opportunity for employment. 1982, 1984, 1990, 2004
- Support funding for community mental health services that addresses factors such as the number of individuals needing services, complexity of client needs, and local factors such as housing and labor markets that affect the cost of providing services. 2004
- Support removal of artificial barriers to advancement in employment. 1993
- Support the involvement of local government in sponsoring ESL classes for all immigrants. 2008
- Support measures to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, religion, age, gender, physical or mental disability, race, national origin, marital status or socio-economic status, and promote equal rights for all persons. 1994, 2000

Housing

- Support programs that promote individual choice of housing by enhancing the availability and affordability of alternatives throughout the city. 1992, 2000, 2004
- Support low-income housing programs which meet the needs of low-income persons, are well located with respect to schools, jobs, medical care, shopping and transportation, and contribute to the diversity of the neighborhood. 1978, 1982, 1994, 1995, 2000
- Support programs to aid homeless families and single adults and to prevent homelessness. 1995, 2004

- Support efforts to limit the damaging environmental and social effects of sprawl. 2000
- Support the efforts of government at all levels to increase the supply of affordable housing through a variety of programs. 2000
- Support policies which increase the density and the supply of affordable housing. 2000

Health and Safety

- Support provision of public health services to all residents without regard to their citizenship status. 2008
- Support measures to reduce the exposure of the population to toxics in the home such as: educating the public and public officials, informing the media, developing advocacy groups, improving building standards. 1990, 2001
- Support incentives to promote healthy homes. 1994, 2001
- Support research and education in the area of indoor toxics. 1994, 2001
- Support public health as a basic function of government that must receive adequate and sustained public funding. The activities that are critical in sustaining community health include: community-based preventive services; control of communicable diseases; emergency preparedness, and ensuring a safe and health environment. 2005

Human Rights

- Support a human rights agency as a necessary and useful local government function. 1966, 1969, 1976

Microlending

- Support the concept of microlending. 2000

Women

- Support local government policies that enable women to make economic and personal decisions for themselves and their families. 1981, 1993, 1994
- Support policies that promote gender equity in employment. 1993
- Support policies that promote awards of spousal maintenance. 1994
- Support a uniform system of legislation protecting a divorced spouse's rights to pension benefits obtained during a marriage. 1994
- Support policies that promote reproductive choice. 1994

Teens

- Support government funding of programs to ensure health, safety, education and welfare of teens. 1995
- Support prevention and intervention programs to overcome problems of violence, suicide, homelessness, and family dysfunction. 1995

Children

- Support measures to assure that children have adequate food, clothing, education, medical care and a safe home environment free from abuse and neglect. While primary responsibility rests with the family, the community must provide the support if the family does not. 1985, 2003
- Support programs that provide parenting education and assist parents in problem resolution which is important in fostering positive child development and preventing delinquency. 2003

Early Childhood Programs

- Support the use of public funds for programs that meet the cognitive, physical and social needs of children from birth through age eight; that encourage parent education and involvement; and that provide health and human services to these children and their families. 1990, 2006

Drug Abuse and the Community

- Support measures to expand and fund drug abuse prevention education and drug abuse treatment programs as a means to reduce the demand for drugs. 1992, 2004

Juvenile Justice

- Support measures to develop and provide family, child and youth development programs to prevent delinquency, crime, and/or recidivism. 2002.

Cultural Activities

- Support city involvement in cultural activities. 1989, 1994

Historic Preservation

- Support the following criteria to be applied in designating an historic landmark: historical, architectural, and aesthetic values. 1986
- Support historic preservation policies which decide each designation on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration other public priorities, particularly human needs. 1986
- Support sharing the costs and benefits of historic preservation by the public and private sector 1986
- Support a process for determining landmark designation that includes a broad-based

commission, public hearings, and final approval by the City Council, with provisions for appeal. 1986

SCHOOLS

- Support an educational system that provides quality staffing and citizen involvement and will permit each child to acquire basic skills, to develop the ability to reason, to develop self-esteem and social skills and that will challenge all children to achieve their full potential. A variety of educational approaches should be provided to achieve these goals. 1974, 1987, 2012

Financing

- Support adequate long-range financing for our public schools. 1962, 1968, 1970

Policy-Making

- Support a curriculum which includes academics, the arts, physical education and work skills. LWE 2004
- Support an elected school board whose primary role is making policy, and who has final decision-making powers. 1962, 1966, 1970, 1971, 1994, 1997

Governance

- Support measures that clearly delineate authority and responsibility at the school building level and a governance structure that involves the community. 1997

Educational Reform

- Support educational reforms that address individual student needs and measures that allow innovation and flexibility in education. 1997

Administration

- Support the delegation of administrative functions to an appointed superintendent responsible to the board. 1962, 1970, 1971, 1987
- Support the school board and administration using all effective means of communicating with the public.
- The board must actively seek the counsel of parents, teachers, students and other citizens throughout all phases of the policy-making process. 1962, 1971
- Support the school board and administration establishing and implementing procedures for participation of school building staffs in district decision making.
- School building staff should be involved in the district decision making processes which affect them and their work with students. 1987

Teacher Compensation

- Support teacher compensation systems that reflect geographic cost of living variables and special demographic factors, and that reward teacher growth and excellence. 1992

Teachers

- Support an evaluation system for teachers that includes information from multiple measures of student growth. The measures should reflect the overall performance of the student. 2012
- The following criteria should be used in determining a reduction in force (RIF) caused by budget reductions: seniority based on years of experience, teacher evaluations, and the needs of the school. 2012
- Support funding for professional development and teacher collaboration time as a priority for improving teacher effectiveness. 2012

Citizen Participation in Budget Process

- Support citizen and school building staff involvement in the budget-making process for public schools. 1973, 1987

Children at Risk

- Support programs and staff to provide early identification of children at risk and appropriate counseling and/or referral. 1985

NATURAL RESOURCES

- Support measures which are precautionary in their approach to the use of processes and materials which may have unintended harmful effects. 2004

Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenbelts

- Support comprehensive planning, acquisitions, development, preservation and use of parks, open spaces, unique areas, habitats, and green belts, both public and private, to provide a wide variety of facilities for all age groups. LW 2004
- Support of the city's park and open space plan. MI 2004
- Support measures to achieve a well-maintained, adequately funded, diverse and safe system of parks, recreation and open space which is accessible to all, with emphasis on public service that is flexible and responsive to changing demographics and social needs. 1990.
- Support preservation, acquisition and enhancement of open spaces, selected ecosystems and environmentally sensitive areas, and promotion of

environmental awareness and sense of stewardship in the public. 1990, 1991

- Support Seattle Center as a unique urban park with a wide variety of activities and open space made available to residents and to non-residents of the city. 1981, 1989

Energy

- Support the formulation of clearly-defined governmental policies on energy. 1975
- Support the adjustment of the economy to zero energy growth, and the establishment of a definite target date. 1975, 1982
- Support governmental controls to accomplish energy conservation. 1975, 1994
- Support research and development on a wide variety of new energy sources such as solar, solid waste, wind, geothermal, tides and nuclear fusion. 1975
- Deregulation of the electric industry should be approached cautiously because of its possible impact on the environment and various stakeholders. 1998

Solid Waste Management

- Support measures to achieve waste reduction and recycling of solid waste as a first priority with environmentally safe disposal of the remainder. 1985

Air Quality

- Support reducing the amount of carbon dioxide produced to achieve a sustainable system. Incorporate the best available science to achieve best practices which may include mitigation. 2005

Litter

- Support measures to control litter as an environmental and aesthetic problem. 2005
- Support the role of individuals, business, volunteer groups and government in controlling litter. 2005
- Support the efforts of all individuals/groups to change attitudes so a litter-free environment is valued. 2005

Drainage and Wastewater Management

- Support the development of governmental policies, legislation and processes for storm water management that protect and maintain habitats as part of a sustainable ecosystem. 2009
- Support emerging scientifically-based practices that encourage best management practices, low impact development and natural drainage systems. 2009

KING COUNTY**Governance**

- Support a county-wide policy-making body with legal authority to establish policy for functions which require area-wide solutions. 1997, 2000
- Support a form of county government that is representative of the areas governed. 1997, 2000
- Support a form of county government that would have the power and resources to carry out its functions including adequate financial resources. 1997, 2000, 2005
- Support increased efficiency and cost-effectiveness. 2000
- Support coordination and cooperation among all local governments, including ports, schools and special districts. 1997, 2000
- Support establishment of long-range goals, plans to attain them, and a performance budget in an understandable form, including a long-range capital improvement program. 1997, 2000
- Support maintaining discretionary county services, especially in the areas of health and human services. 2005
- Support cost containment through:
 - efficient administration of county systems
 - consolidation of special services, where appropriate
 - coordination between the cities and the county, particularly in the area of criminal justice
 - preventive services, including alternatives to incarceration. 2005
- Support the use of tools that would promote the annexation of urban areas, e.g. education, state mandates, and financial incentives. 2005

Ethics in Government

- Support ethics in government and measures to ensure that public officials and employees perform their responsibilities in the public interest in accordance with the highest ethical standards and measures to increase citizen confidence in government. 1994, 2000, 2003

Courts

- Support implementing a strong court administration responsible for unified customer service, efficient management systems and coordinated technology. 1999

- Support reducing jurisdictional overlap except to provide flexibility in dealing with case overloads. 1999
- Support changes to the judicial selection system that would ensure qualified judges, increase public awareness of judicial elections and provide the public the information needed to make informed decisions. 1999

Special Districts

- Support consolidation of like special districts and setting of minimum, enforceable, county-wide standards for special districts.

Farmland

- Support a flexible combination of governmental programs to prevent a nonreversible alteration to lands with prime or productive soils. The principal use of those lands should ultimately be food production. Governmental policies and programs including taxation and zoning should support King County agriculture (land and industry).

Solid Waste Management

- Support measures to achieve waste reduction and recycling of solid waste as a first priority with environmentally safe disposal of the remainder. 1985.
- Dependence on landfills for disposal of solid waste should be greatly reduced.

Transportation and Growth Management

- Support the concentration of population growth by coordinating growth management plans in order to support a mass transit system and to reduce sprawl. 2004
- Support a diverse, seamless, balanced transportation system that includes such features as regional and commuter rail, passenger-only and auto ferries, maximum development of high-occupancy vehicle lanes, express, local and feeder buses, transportation for special-needs, promotion of bicycle use, and adequate, safe pedestrian access to all transit and community services. 2004
- Support growth management/transportation planning and funding that includes cooperation and coordination among transportation systems to implement effective regional multi-modal transportation choices. 2004
- Support the use of public transportation

- systems through incentives such as convenient, affordable, secure transit services and pricing disincentives such as user-based taxes. 2004
- Support incentives for additional employer auto-trip reduction programs. 2004
 - Support adequate and secure park-and-ride lots, community transportation centers and transit-oriented development where appropriate. 2004
 - Support an increase in the amount of state, regional and local transportation funds to implement the most appropriate high priority transportation improvements consistent with adopted growth management and transportation plans. 2004
 - Support coordination among all levels of government and industry in order to (1) share equipment, money and expertise and (2) form regulations to control transportation of hazardous material. The response procedure should be simplified, allowing for a distinct chain of command and easy access to resource information. The importance of adequate training, for both the personnel responsible for transporting the hazardous material and the personnel handling the incidents, should be stressed. The funding for enforcement of regulations and training of personnel should be provided by the private sector and government. The state must provide adequate inspection and enforcement regulations. 2004
- “Allocation of waters among potential uses and users shall be based on the securing of the maximum net benefits for the people of the state. Maximum net benefits shall constitute total benefits less cost including opportunities lost.” (Water Resources Act, 1971)
 - Support federal and state standards and guidelines on a watershed basis. Other governments should meet or exceed federal and state regulations. County government should be the most restrictive. 1996
 - All wells (Class A, B, and single family residential wells) should be measured and the data regarding water withdrawal, use and claims be reported to King County and the Department of Ecology.

PORT DISTRICTS

- Support public port districts as authorized by R.C.W. Title 53.04.01 (as of 1985) with emphasis on coordinated planning, public accountability, purposes of the port and environmental sensitivity. Puget Sound Leagues of Women Voters’ position adopted by LWV Seattle in 1982; amended in 1989.

REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY

- Support water conservation efforts by all users including education programs, voluntary and mandatory conservation requirements that take into account previous conservation efforts and alternative types of water reuse. 1996, 1999
- Support a regional approach to water resources, watersheds, basins, and aquifers and to the accountability of any decision-making bodies to citizens. 1999
- Support a legal framework to create a regional water entity to manage regional water development. 1996

WASHINGTON STATE WATER RIGHTS AND GROUNDWATER PROTECTION

- Support the principle of maximum net benefits including human health and safety, riparian habitat, concurrency of supply with permitted demand, Indian treaty rights, protection of in-stream flow, and hydraulic continuity. 1996, 1999

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS

League of Women Voters® of the United States

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.

Voting Rights

Citizen's Right to Vote. Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote.

DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation. Secure for the citizens of the District of Columbia the rights of self-government and full voting representation in both houses of Congress.

Election Process

Apportionment. Support apportionment of congressional districts and elected legislative bodies at all levels of government based substantially on population.

Campaign Finance. Improve methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the political process.

Selection of the President. Promote the election of the President and Vice-President by direct-popular-vote. Support uniform national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. Support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates.

Citizen Rights

Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation. Protect the citizen's right to know and facilitate citizen participation in government decision-making.

Individual Liberties. Oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights.

Public Policy on Reproductive Choices. Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

Congress and the Presidency

Congress. Support responsive legislative processes characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision making capability and effective performance.

The Presidency. Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive and legislative branches within the framework set by the Constitution.

Privatization

Ensure transparency, accountability, positive community impact and preservation of the common good when considering the transfer of governmental services, assets and/or functions to the private sector.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.

United Nations

Support a strong, effective United Nations to promote international peace and security and to address the social, economic and humanitarian needs of all people.

Trade

Support U.S. trade policies that reduce trade barriers, expand international trade and advance the achievement of humanitarian, environmental and social goals.

U.S. Relations with Developing Countries.

Promote U.S. policies that meet long-term social and economic needs of developing countries.

Arms Control

Reduce the risk of war through support of arms control measures.

Military Policy and Defense Spending

Work to limit reliance on military force. Examine defense spending in the context of total national needs.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.

Natural Resources

Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems.

Resource Management

Promote resource conservation, stewardship and long-range planning, with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government.

Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health and the environment.

Air Quality. Promote measures to reduce pollution from mobile and stationary sources.

Energy. Support environmentally sound policies that reduce energy growth rates, emphasize energy conservation and encourage the use of renewable resources.

Land Use. Promote policies that manage land as a finite resource and that incorporate principles of stewardship.

Water Resources. Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater and drinking water.

Waste Management. Promote policies to reduce the generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes.

Nuclear Issues. Promote the maximum protection of public health and safety and the environment.

Public Participation

Promote public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources.

Agriculture Policy

Promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers and support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices and increased reliance on the free market.

SOCIAL POLICY

Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.

Equality of Opportunity

Equal Rights. Support ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA.

Education, Employment and Housing. Support equal access to education, employment and housing.

Federal Role in Public Education. Support federal policies that provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12.

Fiscal Policy

Tax Policy. Support adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad-based income tax.

Federal Deficit. Promote responsible deficit policies.

Funding of Entitlements. Support a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance.

Health Care

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents and controls health care costs.

Immigration

Promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises; and provide for student visas. Ensure fair treatment under the law for all persons. In transition to a reformed system, support provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status.

Meeting Basic Human Needs

Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

Income Assistance. Support income assistance programs, based on need, that provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing and shelter.

Support Services. Provide essential support services.

Housing Supply. Support policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.

Child Care

Support programs and policies to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it.

Early Intervention for Children at Risk

Support policies and programs that promote the well-

being, development and safety of all children.

Violence Prevention

Support violence prevention programs in communities.

Gun Control

Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.

Urban Policy

Promote the economic health of cities and improve the quality of urban life.

Death Penalty

The LWVUS supports abolition of the death penalty.

Sentencing Policy

The LWVUS believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime. The LWVUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.

Whatever the issue, the League believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibilities, adequate financing, coordination among levels of government, effective enforcement and well defined channels for citizen input and review.

Unit Meetings

(Unit Meeting dates and times are subject to change. If you plan to drop in, please feel free to do so but we highly recommend you contact the unit leader to make sure you have the most current information.)

Unit Leader email	Phone	Time	Location
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Wednesday, January 8			
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VIEW RIDGE – Gail Winberg

winbergeng@q.com	206-524-7801	12:45 p.m.	Brig Bldg. (6344) in Magnuson Park 7400 Sand Point Way, Seattle
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Directions: Go into the Park through North entrance at 74th 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.

Thursday, January 9			
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UNIVERSITY HOUSE/WALLINGFORD – Alice Chew

achoo92@q.com	206-547-5395	10:00 a.m.	University House, Auditorium 4400 Stone Way N, Seattle
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Saturday, January 11			
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BALLARD/MAGNOLIA/QUEEN ANNE DAY – Joan Peterson

joanmepeterson@gmail.com	206-789-7447	10:00 a.m.	Hostess: Lisa and Kerry Peterson 3932 Midvale Ave. N, Seattle 206-547-3029
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Monday, January 13			
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FIRST HILL – Joan Lawson

joanvlawson@gmail.com	206-382-3147	10:00 a.m.	Horizon House, Forum & Social Room 900 University St, Seattle
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CAPITOL HILL/MONTLAKE

	206-329-4848	7:15 p.m.	Hostess: Linnea Hirst 1602 E McGraw, Seattle 206-322-3076
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SOUTHEND - Marian Wolfe and Vivian Montoya

hedgwolfe@aol.com	206-763-9430	7:30 p.m.	Hostess: Laura Weese
montoyaviv@yahoo.com	206-695-2620		3721 Cascadia Ave S, Seattle 206-722-0868

Tuesday, January 14			
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SOUTHEAST KING COUNTY/ENUMCLAW - Cathy Dormaier

clcathy@skynetbb.com	360-802-6799	11:30 a.m.	Bangkok Thai Restaurant 1240 Griffin St, Enumclaw
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Lunch and discussion (Program go-around and local and state topics TBD)

(Unit Meeting dates and times are subject to change. If you plan to drop in, please feel free to do so but we highly recommend you contact the unit leader to make sure you have the most current information.)

Unit Leader email	Phone	Time	Location
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Tuesday, January 14			
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BELLEVUE/KIRKLAND/REDMOND - Bonnie Rimawi

bonnierim@aol.com	425-820-7127	12:00 p.m.	The Bellevue Library, Room 6 1111 110th Ave NE, Bellevue
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WEST SEATTLE – Amanda Berry and Ethel Williams

amandaberry@earthlink.net	206-724-7518	1:00 p.m.	The Kenney
etheljw1@q.com	206-932-7887		7125 Fauntleroy Way SW, Seattle

Wednesday, January 15			
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NORTH KING COUNTY – Toni Potter

antoniapotter@comcast.net	206-365-8949	9:15 a.m.	Third Place Commons Meeting Room 17171 Bothell Way NE, Lake Forest Pk
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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

QUEEN ANNE/MAGNOLIA/BALLARD EVENING - Teddy Geokezas

tgeokezas@msn.com	206-782-5036	7:30 p.m.	Hostess: Barbara Reid 316 NE 54th St, Seattle 206-523-3381
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Thursday, January 16			
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ISSAQUAH DAY – Margaret Austin

margaret.austin@comcast.net	425-392-5760	10:00 a.m.	ECHO room, Issaquah City Hall 130 E Sunset Way, Issaquah
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NORTH CENTRAL – Jan Orlando

orlanre@aol.com	206-524-0936	7:30 p.m.	Hostess: Alice Rasp 4523 5th Ave NE, Seattle 206-633-1835
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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
2012-14	<i>2nd VP-Program</i>	Beatrice Crane	206-783-8485	bscrane@comcast.net
2013-15	<i>Secretary</i>	Amanda Clark	206-236-0517	amandac5@comcast.net
2013-14	<i>Treasurer</i>	Cindy Piennett	206-329-4848	cindypiennett@gmail.com

Term Directors

2012-14	<i>Voter Editor</i>	Marge Baker	206-535-7299	votereditor@seattlelwv.org
2012-14	<i>Program</i>	Carol Burton	206-691-1298	ctburton7@gmail.com
2013-15	<i>Voter Services</i>	Joanna Cullen	206-329-8514	jfoxcullen@gmail.com
2013-15	<i>Social Justice</i>	Jayne Freitag	425-922-9501	mjafreitag@comcast.net
2012-14	<i>Membership</i>	Susan K. Jones	206-725-2902	susan@monckjones.com
2012-14	<i>Voter Services</i>	Julie Anne Kempf	206-329-4848	julie@kempf.com
2013-15	<i>Outreach</i>	Marianne Scholl	206-329-4848	outreach@seattlelwv.org
2012-14	<i>Unit Coordinator</i>	Lindsay Soyer	406-546-9314	lindsaysoyer@gmail.com
2012-14	<i>Development</i>	Lisa Unsoeld-Chang	206-329-4848	lisac@seattlelwv.org
2012-14	<i>Outreach</i>	Mary Jo Vigil	206-318-6939	mjvigil@starbucks.com

Note: All board members listed above, with the exception of the Treasurer, are also members of the Education Fund Board

Term Education Fund Officers

2013-14	<i>President</i>	Ellen Barton	206-329-4848	president@seattlelwv.org
2013-14	<i>1st VP</i>	Lisa Unsoeld-Chang	206-329-4848	lisac@seattlelwv.org
2013-15	<i>Secretary</i>	Amanda Clark	206-236-0517	amandac5@comcast.net
2013-15	<i>Treasurer</i>	Ginna Owens	206-215-1408	ginnao@earthlink.net
2013-14	<i>Director</i>	Pat McCann	206-878-2799	thomaspa@centurylink.net

Term Nominating Committee

2013-14	<i>Chair</i>	Judy Bevington	206-329-4848	judybevington@q.com
2013-14		Judith Hance	206-329-4848	judithhance2@gmail.com
2013-14		Cynthia Howe	206-329-4848	howe.john@comcast.net
2013-14		Lisa Peterson	206-329-4848	

Note: Two members of the board will be appointed to serve on the nominating committee when meetings begin.

Off Board Positions

Campaign Finance	Jean Carlson	206-774-6649	jean.carlson@att.net
KC South Liaison	Mary Ehlers	253-941-1930	maryehlers@comcast.net
CIS Coordinator	Cynthia Howe	206-236-0593	howe.john@comcast.net
Observer Corps	Pat McCann	206-878-2799	thomaspa@centurylink.net

Committees

<i>Economics & Taxation</i>	Jeanette Johnson		jeanettejohnson10@msn.com
<i>Education</i>	Joanna Cullen	206-329-8514	jfoxcullen@gmail.com
<i>International Relations</i>	see page 6		
<i>Social Justice</i>	Jayne Freitag	425-922-9501	mjafreitag@comcast.net
<i>Transportation</i>	Janet Winans	206-323-4825	janetwinans@earthlink.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

LWV SEATTLE-KING COUNTY:

No Forum this month

Program Planning is
happening now. Check
inside for details.

Unit meetings are essential to program
planning. Please try to attend one this
month. Remember, it doesn't have to be
a particular unit, you can attend anywhere
it's convenient.