



League of Women Voters of Clark County

VOTER

December, 2007

President's Message



I am so excited to be your League President! It will be challenging. It will be great fun. It will be frustrating at times, but it will be a true privilege and honor.

A President is only as strong as the team that stands with her. Standing beside me are Vice President Judie Stanton, Secretary Anne McEnerny-Ogle, and Treasurer Cindy Martin. Also, members have stepped forward to become Chairs and Directors. We are a strong team. Would you like to join us?

As League members, we each face the challenges of time and commitment. We are a group of strong individuals who are committed to our careers, our families, our communities, and our democratic process. We have diverse views. We are very busy people. I ask each of you for only a small portion of your time and energy.

We had a small and loyal group of League members who planned and produced a number of forums during election season, 2007. LWVCC presented: Camas Mayoral Forum and three other General Election Candidate Forums for Vancouver,

North Clark County, and East Clark County. Cindy Martin is chairing our own local Civics Project. See more information in this edition of the Voter and consider joining this dynamic group.

We'll soon be seeking member feedback on Washington State Ferry Study and the National 2-year Immigration Study.

Now more than ever do we need to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens.

Now more than ever do we need to demand that political dialogue, while often boisterous and controversial, be civil.

Now more than ever do we need to increase understanding of major public policy and legislative issues, and advocate for those on which we share consensus.

As so well stated by Ryunosuke Satoro, "Individually, we are one drop. Together we are an ocean." I hope you will join me in strengthening our League and making it a oceanic force in our community.

Molly Coston

2007 - 2008 LWVCC Leadership

Executive Board

Molly Coston	President
Judie Stanton	Vice President
Cindy Martin	Treasurer
Anne McEnerny-Ogle	Secretary

Board of Directors

Andree Mihalyo
Kathy Snider
Jeanne Stewart
Joann Swanson
Jane Van Dyke

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Here's what's happening

Skills for Democracy Committee

Cindy Martin is chairing a small but enthusiastic committee meeting monthly to plan a county-wide event. Here, briefly, is a report about what they are working on. The group would appreciate your help! If this looks interesting to you, contact Cindy (833-2097).

Constitution Day will be held Sept. 17th, 2008. We are checking out facilities such as Clark College and WSU for a possible site that could hold approximately 200 high school students. We also discussed a facility large enough to let students break out into groups of 10. Clark County has 17 high schools. We will invite 10 - 15 students from each school. In addition to providing speakers we will use a Constitutional Rights Activity. The students will evaluate the importance of rights guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution. Schools will need to be contacted in April with follow-up at the start of the school year. We agreed this event should be no longer than a half day probably starting around 8:00 and ending at noon.

The committee is looking for opening and closing speakers and checking out potential facilities. We would like to find a Clark County resident who immigrated and became a citizen to tell their story and what their Constitutional Rights mean to them.

Be a Part of History! Be with us on January 22, 2008!

Join us in the local consensus process for the LWVUS Immigration Study on January 22, 2008. We will meet at the home of a local member; beverages and snacks will be provided. Expect a challenging and illuminating discussion in this consensus process!

Consensus is neither a simple majority nor unanimity; instead, it is an overall sense of the group through discussion. Each local league across the US will provide their input; this grassroots agreement on positions is one of the League's greatest strength.

Educate yourself! Materials and background papers are provided in the National Immigration Study section of the LWVUS website at www.lwv.org. Much of this material will also be sent out to each of you via email in the next four weeks.

Get Involved! Would you like to become a member expert on an area of immigration? Or moderate the discussion? Or join a National Study Discussion list? Contact me at mlcoston@comcast.net.

The results of this study will allow LWV to affect national policy for years to come, just as we have been doing in other areas for 87 years - it's part of our organization's history!

Mark your calendars and start collecting stuff!

We have a fundraiser in the works. Jeanne Stewart suggested we hold a used book sale to help replenish our meager treasury. So Co-Chairs Anne McEnerney Ogle and Jeanne Stewart have expanded on that idea and now have a date and a place: **Saturday, February 9, 2008, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.** in the Community Room at Clark Public Utilities' Electric Center in Vancouver.

Anne and Jeanne are now collecting new or used books, puzzles, games, movies (DVD or VCR), video games and music (records, tapes or CDs). All you have to do is box these items up and call Anne (695-5124) or Jeanne (695-5154) and they'll arrange to pick them up! PLEASE help us make this a successful event as the funds are needed to help pay for our TRY publication, Skills in Democracy project, and basic expenses.

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Do you know the Fourth Branch of Government?

As Ben Franklin was leaving the constitutional convention on a still, warm September afternoon in 1787, a young woman approached him and asked, “Well, Dr. Franklin, what have you given us?”

“A republic, if you can keep it,” was his reply.

How do people “keep” a republic? How does a person “keep” a republic? What kind of civic work does it take to keep a republic?

Our “we the people” republic is built upon the principle that the people occupy the most important position in government – the office of the citizen. The civic culture of our nation is built upon the Constitution of the United States and that Constitution provides the four branches of our government. The first three branches are known as the executive, judicial, and legislative branches, as conceptualized in the body of the Constitution and the several Amendments ratified after December 15, 1791. These three branches are supported by and depend upon the virtue of the fourth branch; the people, conceptualized in the Preamble to the Constitution and the first ten Amendments (Bill of Rights).

Given the importance of the office of citizen within the new republic, the founders of our nation were extremely uneasy about the lack of civic virtue (education) in the new nation.

Thomas Jefferson, particularly, argued long and eloquently that education for citizenship was the first responsibility of the republic and particularly of the states. To this end, he effectively proposed educational reforms for the State of Virginia as well as for the whole nation. George Washington wanted a national university for the training of political leaders, much like West Point trains military leaders. What was most interesting, however, was the notion that the Constitution and the Bill of Rights was seen as a national curriculum that each and every citizen would study, reflect upon, and use as a passageway to civic participation. Through participation, the citizen would go beyond self-serving private action and protection to manifest public or civic virtue, which, in reality, is the only true protection for private liberty.



Save the Dates

Lobby Day is Feb 1, 2008. Let Molly know if you want to join the carpool. She will make appointments with legislators for the afternoon of that day.

May 31 - June 1: LWVWA Council in Yakima
June 13 thru June 17 is the 48th LWVUS National Convention...in Portland!!

Hartoonian, Michael, We the People, Skills for Democracy Grades K – 6 Curriculum, Minnesota League of Women Voters Education Fund, St. Paul, MN 1994.

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Meet our members

Welcome to new member **Alicia Muñoz**

Alicia has worked for many years in the area of mental health education and illness prevention. Her community service involved local, state and national legislators from Southern California. Her State Senator awarded her "Woman of the Year" in 2003.

Ms. Munoz has since moved to Vancouver and works at RS Medical as a Quality Project Specialist. Her education is in health care administration and has a Masters degree from the University of California, San Diego.

She looks forward to learning more about the Vancouver community, learning about local health needs assessments, and working with local legislators and community leaders.

League beginnings by veteran member

Joann Swanson

When my husband and I arrived in Vancouver to begin his first "job" as a Veterinarian, I was shortly blessed by sage advice (orders) from his employer's wife. She explained that since the veterinary profession meant my husband would be away from the house day and night with no regular hours, I must do two important things: "1. Always have a baked potato ready for the usual five-minute warning for a rapidly-eaten-on-the-fly dinner, and 2. Contribute to the betterment of the community because he will not have the time or energy."

It wasn't long before she introduced me to the League of Women Voters, which was the beginning of my long and proud association with, at the time, the most influential women in Vancouver. I was not allowed to become a member until I had attended three unit meetings and had shown a true interest in the workings of the local, state and national governments. As a

result of the committee work, participating in the research for and production of many studies, I was chosen by the County for a number of appointed committees and commissions.

I thank the League for the development of my investigative talents, giving me the bursts of courage to take part in TV productions to present both sides of ballot issues, and moderate forums and most of all—to be able to discuss issues intelligently with those who had the power to change things. League also taught me how to be objective in looking at both sides of all the issues so that I could vote my own opinions with confidence. The many friendships which have been fostered through League connections are very precious to me.

One of the most important things I believe we as Leaguers must remember—our non-partisanship is the key to being respected and effective participants in, and lobbyists for, sensible government actions. Our reward for the past, present and future--:) "We have made, and will continue to "make a difference!"



Joann was honored as a 50 year (plus!) member at the LWVWA State Convention in Vancouver in June.

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LWVWA State Convention 2007



Molly Coston has full attention of LWVWA President Barbara Seitle (in light green jacket) at lunch.

We hosted the LWVWA State Convention at the Heathman Lodge in June of this year. Molly Coston and Judie Stanton co-chaired the event and many Leaguers assisted. Anne McEnery Ogle wowed the attendees with her creative and ever-changing table décor.

The convention was so successful we were asked whether we'd be willing to host it again in two years!

Thanks to all our cheerful and welcoming volunteers!



Jane Johnson and Linda Franklin helped out, as did many Leaguers, at the registration desk.

The Vancouver Heritage Ambassadors provided educational entertainment after the Saturday banquet.

