

VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF KING COUNTY SOUTH

MARCH 2005

LWV Mission: The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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NOTE - CALENDAR INSIDE -

Support the League!

Enjoy the Show!

**Renton Civic Theater Presents:
REHEARSAL FOR MURDER
by B.D. Brooke**

**March 24 at 7:30 p.m.
Complimentary refreshments**

Address: 507 S. 3rd St. , Renton

**This is the major fundraiser for
LWV/KCS. Tickets are \$14. You should
have received four of them in the mail.
If you need more tickets, call the
League at 206-243-7161.**

From your March President, Charlotte Sullivan, who serves from February 2 to March 2 —

Are you as sick and tired of this ‘Red ‘ and ‘Blue’ division as I am? Why are we reduced to this simplistic range of thought, reason and feelings? Whatever happen to being a proud and informed citizen?

It feels like we are being ‘dumbed-down’ and forced to choose sides on all kinds of discussions. Decisions that will affect our well-being and the future of generations to come are on the table. We must take the time to become informed and resist the efforts of some to pit one side against the other.

There is no doubt that our world is a complicated place. Our future depends on people caring enough to become educated. We are facing serious questions about our environment, health care costs and the ability of people to count on financial security in advanced years.

A long time ago, the League of Women Voters recognized the seriousness of studying issues and then using that information to inform our fellow citizens. This month we are working through our state and local positions and deciding what we need to add, delete or rework. On a state level, we are faced again this election-year with frightful problems with our election process. We had hoped that election problems from the prior election were safely behind us. This State election brought further problems to light that must be addressed. It’s important that people have confidence in our system of electing our representatives.

These are not Red or Blue issues. Neither are any of the important matters in our government today. These are important issues that will have a profound consequence on our future. The LWV must continue our work of voter information. And it must be from a Red, White and Blue position.

This and That!

Since we are doing the VOTER electronically, it has been difficult to use the “Roadrunner Print and Copy” notice, which we had promised to do. **Roadrunner Print and Copy** is located at 120 SW 153rd, right next to Speedy Glass. The owner, Chief McAlpin, and his staff offer the League reasonable prices for the work they do for us - the VOTER, theatre tickets, and other projects. Consider visiting them for any copying or printing you need.

“The State We’re In: Washington” has been completely revised and will make a great textbook for classes from middle school through college. Own your own copy! Check it out and order it from www.WashingtonVoter.org.

The new “They Represent You” is hot off the press! Copies will be available at Unit meetings and at the office. If you take a bundle, let us know where you are placing them and how many you are taking. We should have plenty!

LOBBY DAY 2005 - Marge Henry, Action Chair

LWV/WA and AAUW/WA held their annual Lobby Day in Olympia, on January 24th, at the United First Methodist Church. Several LWV/KCS members attended.

The morning program included Lonnie Johns-Brown, new LWV/WA lobbyist, who discussed "Early Learning and Child Care", Patricia Lichiello, Senior Policy Researcher, Washington State Department of Health Services, UW School of Public Health and Community Medicine on "What might the outcome of the November elections mean for Washington State Health Policy?" and Catherine Ahl, LWV/WA, Education Portfolio Chair, member, North Kitsap School Board on "Education - where do we go from here?"

As it turned out, the underlying theme of these three topics was tax reform. Ms. Johns-Brown painted a realistic picture of loss of funding for State pre-school programs and child care on both the Federal and State levels. Loss of funding has jeopardized pre-school education for all children, especially those from low income families. These programs prepare children for K-12 (influence on WASL results?). Loss of funds from health care has resulted in cutting 40,000 children from programs. Child care has become increasingly unavailable for children whose mothers must work as a result of "Work First" programs.

Patricia Lichiello discussed the need for accessibility to health insurance for those under 65. Employer-based coverage, insurance for the self-employed, for children, as noted above, has declined. Twenty-six percent of low income adults are uninsured. Revenue for these programs has been drastically impacted by the constraints resulting from the passage of I-601 and I-695, the recession of recent years which has resulted in less sales-tax revenue, and cutbacks in Federal funding.

Catherine Ahl reviewed impacts in Washington K-12 education... low teachers' salaries, large class size, levy lids, unfunded mandates, the need for a simple majority to pass levies for K-12 education, and the impact of WASL.

All these speakers invoked the need to pay heed to the Gates Commission's conclusion on tax reform in Washington State, which has a regressive tax system. There is a need, they concluded, to consider a graduated income tax. They cited bills in the 'hopper' which strive to address their concerns.

We broke into groups to talk about issues such as the environment, government, natural resources and taxation. I chose the latter, This was a large group which, using the LWV/WA study on Washington's tax structure as a guide, agreed on the necessity for tax reform. This was one of the most informative discussions I have attended at this annual event.

We then dispersed to visit our legislators and express our concerns.

The, of necessity, "Botoxed" Capital Building is back in use, completely repaired and overhauled after extensive damage from the earthquake of 2002. One thinks that this elegant building represented the aspirations of those early 1900's citizens who wished to erect a truly fitting symbol of representative government.

CALENDAR FOR MARCH 2005 and a Wee Bit of April!

March 2, 9:45 to noon	League Board Meeting, Wells Fargo Bank, 152nd and Ambaum, Burien
March 3, 7:30 p.m.	Seattle League's "First Thursday" forum - Call Seattle League for more information - 206-329-4848, 9:30 - 3:30, M-F
March 15 - 1-3 p.m.	Highline Unit Meeting* Jean Hueston, Chair Phone: 206-878-8706
March 17 - 2:30 p.m.	Vashon Unit Meeting* Ellen Kritzman, Co-Chair:206-567-4837 Enid Dolstad, Co-chair: 206-567-4798
March 16 - 7 p.m.	Federal Way Unit Meeting* Kathy Jorgenson, Chair Phone: 253-859-8349
March 24, 7:30 p.m. Doors open at 7	Theatre Fundraiser RENTON CIVIC THEATRE Details, page 1
April 9	LWV/KCS Mayors' Breakfast, hosted by Renton. No units in April, so please make an effort to attend this function instead.

***March Unit Meetings**

For once in a blue moon, we have no study deadlines. At our March Units, the last for this Spring, you are invited to bring a topic of special interest to you for presentation and discussion. Time for each topic will be allocated on the basis of the number brought to the meeting. Some hot topics might include:

- Health Care Reform
- Washington State Election Reform
- Women's History Month - Have the barriers really been broken down?
- The Fiscal Crisis
- Do the young care about our civil liberties?
- The Crisis in Education
- Environmental Concerns
- Addressing poverty among children and women
- How the world views the United States
- Any issue of special concern to your local community

However, you may choose any topic.

Consider looking at League positions as they relate to the topic you choose.

League of Women Voters of Washington 2005 Legislative Session Issues
(These are repeated from last month. Our League lobbyists will still be working on these for a few months to come.)

We advocate and support:

Children & Welfare - Funding programs that promote safe and healthy development of all children including developmentally appropriate childcare, with flexible hours, infant/toddler care, and transportation . Legislation that keeps children safe in the environment and in the home, especially reduction of toxic exposures . Provide community resources for children experiencing child abuse, neglect and domestic violence

Education - Equitable and sufficient public financing of all levels of public education . Simple majority vote for passage of school levies . Education and training essential for family-wage employment

Energy - Incentives for utilities to diversify their energy resources with clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency . Energy bill-payment assistance for low income households . Adopt green building principles in the construction of state funded buildings

Global Climate Change - Incentives for businesses and individuals to utilize renewable energy sources . Increased vehicular fuel efficiency, and funding for mass transit . Incentives to increase rail transport of goods and produce

Government - Protecting the right of all citizens to vote and encouraging all citizens to vote . Public financing of political campaigns for legislative and statewide offices . Legislation providing voters with information on: effect of initiative and referendum on revenue and budget, sponsors and financial supporters, and advisory opinion on constitutionality

Growth Management and Land Use - Provisions and implementation of Growth Management Act (GMA) . Emphasis on sustainability in community and economic development legislation

Gun Control - Closing the gun show loophole and reducing illegal access to firearms

Health Care - Implementation of the prescription drug purchasing pool . Maintaining a single insurance pool for the small business market . Enact mental health parity

Natural Resources - Protection of water resources, including groundwater, surface water and marine water, aquatic wildlife and habitat . Provisions and implementation of State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) . Preservation of forests

Reproductive Rights - Action to protect the constitutional right to privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices

Taxes - Including income as part of the state tax base

Transportation - A balanced transportation system including appropriate infrastructure

CREATIVE FUNDRAISING FOR LEAGUE

MaryEllen Hamblin hosted a luncheon fund-raiser for the League on Sunday, February 12.. She, Christel Brunnenkant, and Jacqueline Hughes (new Issaquah member) traveled together to the Yucatan last November and used their travel tales to entertain those attending and raise some money for LWV-KCS at the same time. The excellent meal and the decorations featured the "Love the League" theme, Yucatan style.

MaryEllen is especially good at making visits to far away places seem like a normal trip, even though the places she has visited are exotic. Christel has shared some of her adventures at a fund-raiser several years ago, along with the Fithian's travels.

The LWV-KCS thanks each of them for their efforts.

JOIN US AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE, ZIP CODE _____

TELEPHONE (INCLUDE AREA CODE) _____

ANNUAL DUES

	INDIVIDUAL	HOUSEHOLD
SUSTAINING	\$75.00	\$112.50
BASIC	50.00	75.00
LIGHT	35.00	52.50

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO LWV-KCS AND MAIL TO; P O BOX 66037, SEATTLE, WA 98166-0037

DUES \$ _____

DONATIONS (always appreciated) _____

TOTAL \$ _____

VOTING DISTRICTS

US _____
Wash. State _____
King County _____

LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS KCS
PO Box 66037
SEATTLE, WA
98166-0037

206-243-7161

We now offer the option to receive this VOTER via e-mail. If you are interested, please leave your e-mail address on the LWV office phone at 206-243-7161.